

**Adult Sunday School Class**

**Objective:** Review the fundamentals of faith and apply them to our current situations.

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you Father, we pause now to acknowledge your presence..... I thank you that you always hear me. That you never leave me or forsake me and that you are an ever present help. I ask for a special anointing on this lesson plan and the time we will spend together today. Bless both speaker and listener. Open our hearts to receive a fresh revelation from your Spirit. I bind forces that would hinder and welcome the Holy Spirit as our teacher today. In Jesus name!

**Read:** Hebrews 11

**Statement:** Since we've been talking about the fundamentals of faith over the period of time I've been teaching this class I thought for this lesson I'd try approaching the subject a little differently than I have in the past.

Q – What did Abel, Noah and Abraham do that caused them to be considered men of faith? - They obeyed God and acted according to those things that had been revealed to their hearts.

Q – How is it that they were selected to serve God in a such a pivotal way?

- The short answer is, we don't know.
- There is nothing in scripture that identifies the criteria God used to select them other than in the foreknowledge of God, He knew of their willingness to obey and following His direction.

Q – Using these 3 as examples what do you conclude about the principals of faith? - It's as simple as believing those things about God that have been revealed to your heart and acting accordingly.

Q – Since the scriptures had not yet been written, how do you envision that God communicated His word or promises to these 3 individuals?

Q – Did He send an angel to speak to them?

Q – Did He speak to them in a vision?

Q – Did He appear to them in person?

Q – Did He reveal Himself to them in the same or similar way that He does to us?

S – I suspect He revealed Himself to them by speaking in an inaudible “voice” to their spirits.

S – He spoke to them in much the same way He speaks to our hearts.

Q – Is it easy or difficult to act consistent with the things God has revealed to your heart?

- At times it's easy.
- However it can also be a real challenge especially in difficult circumstances.

Q – We don't have a lot of day to day information about Abel and Noah but we do know some of the details of Abraham's life. Was it easy for Abraham to act consistent with what had been revealed to his heart?

- Again, at times it was but at other times it was difficult.
- As you know, he eventually took matters into his own hands to try bring about the promise of God that he would be the father of many nations.

Q – Are you telling me that Abraham, the person held up as a great example of faith, took matters into his own hands when he didn't see the promises of God being played out in the way he envisioned them?

- I am!
- This great example of faith had “feet of clay” or human tendencies just as we do.

Q – What is one of the most basic tenants of faith?

- Without faith it is impossible to please God.
- Because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11:6)

Q – Why is it considered faith to believe that God exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek him?

- Natural mankind experiences things with their 5 senses, sight, touch, hearing, smell and taste.
- We do not experience faith with our 5 natural senses.
- Faith is a spiritual force.
- God is a spirit and those who worship Him must do so in spirit and truth. (John 4:24)
- Anyone who believes God exists does so because it has been revealed to them by a divine source.
- By using the term “revealed knowledge” we mean it has been divinely imparted to the spirit of the person who is open and willing to receive it as opposed to their mental capacities.

Q – What do you consider the fundamental elements of faith to be? - A confidence that:

- There is a God.
- To Believe (know beyond a shadow of a doubt) that He exists.
- He is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient.
- God is love.
  - For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)
- His word and promises are true.
- He is the same yesterday, today and forever.
- He knows exactly where you are and the things you are going through.
- He cares for you.
- He never leaves you or forsakes you and is an ever present help in time of trouble.

Q – Do you believe God chose and equipped the 3 individuals mentioned above for the specific assignments they had in life? - I do.

Q – Why is it that we can believe God chose Noah, Abraham and David for the assignments they had in life and we struggle with the fact that we were also chosen and equipped for the assignments we find ourselves in?

- In their cases we have a high level or panoramic view of their lives.
- However, we know the intimate details of our own life.
  - We know the choices we've made as well as the places of indecision.
  - Where we stumbled and fell, of failure and of learning the hard way.
  - We are inclined not of focus on their weaknesses or failures because of the way they were used by God.

Q – Did God call you and equip you to serve Him in the place where you find yourself? - I believe He did!

Q – Is there a better place in this world for a person other than the place where God has called them to be?

- No there isn't.
- We just wish it was a little easier at times or that the “other grass didn't look so green”.

Q – Does anyone know the lyrics to the song “One day at a time”? - Some might

Q – What follows this phrase “show me the staircase” ? - “I have to climb”, Lord for my sake teach me to take one day at a time.

Q – What is the essence of the thought the author is stating in those lines?

- God (Sweet Jesus is the name used in the song) has assigned the author a specific assignment that he finds difficult at times to handle.
- He's asking for God's help to deal with aspects of his assignment.

- In addition, he has discovered he does best when he only deals with the issues “one day at a time”.
- When we attempt to deal with what may happen tomorrow we are often overwhelmed because the circumstances we envision cause us to lose sight of the one who holds tomorrow.

Q – Who can tell us about the time Jesus sent his disciples ahead of him in a boat and came walking on the water to rejoin them? - Most will recognize this as the time when Peter walked on water.

- Let's read about this incident. **Matthew 14:22**) Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. 23) After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, 24) and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. 25) Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. 26) When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear. 27) But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” 28) “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.” 29) “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30) But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” 31) Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

Q – Was Peter's initial statement one of faith?

- No, it was NOT!
- He said “Lord, **if its you**, tell me to come to you on the water”.

Q – What does that statement remind you of?

- The one made by the father of the boy who was demon possessed.
- “Help now my unbelief.”

Q – What caused Peter to step out of the boat and begin walking toward Jesus on the water? - The confidence or faith that because Jesus told him to walk on the water he could do it.

Q – What caused him to begin to sink and cry out for help?

- When he took his eyes off of Jesus.
- He was so overwhelmed by the circumstances of his situation.
- He could not longer focus on the word Jesus had revealed to his heart.
- Q – Have you ever been so overwhelmed by circumstances that you couldn't maintain the sense of perspective of Who's you are and what He has promised to you and yours? - I have!

Q – Does wind and waves have anything to do with buoyancy?

- They do not!
- A cork will float on top of the water both when it's calm and in a raging storm.
- It will move a lot more in a storm and may get splashed over.
- But always at or near the surface of the water.

Q – So why did Peter's faith fail him in this situation?

- Because he lost confidence in his ability to follow the instructions Jesus had given him.
- He could no longer focus on Jesus or His word.
- The “symptoms” of the storm were raging, the waves were lashing at his feet and he lost focus.

Q – What is the parallel thought, resulting at times, in the failure of our faith?

- When the “storms of life rage around us” we no longer focus on the promises of God.
- Like Peter, our focus becomes fixed on the circumstances of the situation.
- When this happens, our faith begins to falter.

Q – How might He have responded to Peter if He had chosen to handle the situation in the same way he did with the demon possessed boy's father?

- What do you mean **if it's you**?
- Who else do you know that can walk on water in the midst of a storm?

Q – Why do you believe Jesus didn't respond to Peter in the same way he did to the father of the demon possessed boy?

- I believe He was attempting to build up Peter's faith.
- While in the case of the demon possessed boy He was both pressed for time in that crowd and a bit disappointed with the unbelief being displayed by all those involved.
- Let's read the account of the boy's deliverance.
- **Mark 9: 14)** When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. 15) As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him. 16) “What are you arguing with them about?” he asked. 17) A man in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. 18) Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.” 19) “You unbelieving generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.” 20) So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. 21) Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?” “From childhood,” he answered. 22) “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” 23) “If you can?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.” 24) Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!” 25) When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. “You deaf and mute spirit,” he said, “I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.” 26) The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, “He’s dead.” 27) But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up. 28) After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” 29) He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.”

Q – What was so remarkable about the faith of the Roman Centurion? - He recognized both the authority or deity of Jesus and the power of words in the spiritual realm.

- Let's read the account of his faith.
- **Matthew 8:5)** When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. 6) “Lord,” he said, “my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly.” 7) Jesus said to him, “Shall I come and heal him?” 8) The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9) For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and that one, ‘Come,’ and he comes. I say to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” 10) When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, “Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. 11) I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12) But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” 13) Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that moment.

Q – Do words have power in both a positive and negative sense in the spiritual realm? - They do, Jesus said by your words you are justified and by your words you are condemned.

Q – What did we learn about the word or promises of God in the parable of the sower?

- They are vital to our success in the spiritual realm.

- **Matthew 13:18)** “Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: 19) When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. 20 ) The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21) But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. 22) The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. 23) But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Q – What is said in this parable that confirms to us Jesus is speaking of the spiritual realm? - The evil one (Satan) comes to take away the word or promises of God.....if allowed to do so.

Q – Why does trouble or persecution arise? - Because of the word or the promises of God.

Q – What causes our faith to fail or said another way, the word of God to become unfruitful?

- The cares of this life.
- The deceitfulness of riches.
- The desire for other things.

Q – What did Jesus say to Peter just prior to leaving the last supper?

- **Luke 22:31)** “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. 32) But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

Q – How did Jesus predict Peter's failure in this statement? - When he said “when you have turned back strengthen your brothers”.

Q – Was Jesus speaking exclusively to Peter? - No, He said Satan has asked to sift **ALL** of you like wheat.

Q – How did John describe the mission statement of Satan? - John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Q – How did Peter describe Satan's tactics?

- I Peter 5:8) Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9) Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

**Lyrics: One Day At A Time.**

I'm only human I'm just a man  
 Help me to believe in what I could be and all that I am  
 Show me the stairway that I have to climb  
 Lord for my sake teach me to take one day at a time.

One day at a time sweet Jesus that's all I'm asking from you  
 Give me the strength to do everyday what I have to do  
 Yesterday's gone sweet Jesus and tomorrow may never be mine  
 So for my sake teach me to take one day at a time.