

Hebrews 11:1- "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

This last week, I was helping a friend build a fence out here in Graham. He told me a testimony that last month he was short on what he owed in taxes. He was in the Lake Chelan Area and was doing some early morning fishing. He was praying and thinking about how he was going to get his tax payment together.

As he was praying, the story out of Matthew 17 came to his mind, where Jesus told Simon to go catch a fish and pull a coin out of the fish for the temple tax. As he prayed and considered this passage, he got a fish on his line. He pulled the fish in and later that day when he went to clean the fish he found a small marker on the fish that would credit him \$250 if he took it to the game warden. He did so and received \$250 cash. Now I am not sure why this marker was on the fish or why it was refundable for cash, but I did see the pictures to prove this story is accurate.

The point of the story is that our God responds to faith. Faith is being assured that what we hope for will come to pass. It's a deep conviction that what we do not currently possess we will when we surrender our understanding to God.

Faith is a lifestyle; faith is a choice; faith is a heart position; faith is a mindset. Allowing our faith to be active in our lives is not about the results of our desires or prayers, it's about our complete surrender to our God amid the circumstances. We have specific requests we make to God in prayer, and we absolutely should make those requests and petitions. Faith activates when we surrender the outcome and keep our eyes on the Lord.

Imagine if we received the exact answer to every prayer we made. We wouldn't need faith. Imagine if we could forgive our own sins. We wouldn't need a complete trust in Jesus to be the final word of forgiveness.

Faith is defined and discussed and articulated in so many ways because it is so unnatural to us as humans to put our trust in someone we cannot see. But we do in fact see the fruit of our faith in how we follow and trust the Lord in every situation.

Faith is not easy, but each step we take toward our God is an act of faith in our God. Let's make conscious and prayerful efforts this week to allow our faith to be active regardless of our circumstances.

I love you and God loves you!

Pastor Eric