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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..” Acts 16:31a* And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Romans 10:9,10* *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13* *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1*

Faith Ideas

Intro:

The Bible tells us that we're to live by faith, that we're to walk by faith and that apart from faith it's impossible to please God. We've also seen that as we come down to the end of the age that the angelic conflict will intensify making it more and more difficult for God's people to live in the spiritual life dynamic and keep moving forward in the plan of God by faith. And because the enemies of faith are all around us, it is of extreme importance that we keep our faith up and operating, and our forward momentum going, and any study that encourages and strengthens our faith is vital.

A. We find some interesting dynamics going on in Galatians 5:6 where it says, “*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*”, εν γαρ χριστω ιησου ουτε περιτομη τι ισχυει ουτε ακροβυστια αλλα πιστις δι αγαπης ενεργουμενη, *en gar christo iesou oute peritome ti ischuo oute akrobusitia alla pistis di'agapes energoumene.*

Now Paul is talking about circumcision, (versus uncircumcision), and how it is utterly powerless to accomplish salvation for anyone and the need for faith. And the word he uses for *availeth* here is *ischuo*. *Ischuo* is one of the words for power in the Greek, but it has the idea of having the power to prevail in a situation, to overcome all obstacles and opposition so one can accomplish the goal.

Two armies meet on the battlefield and one walks away the victor. It is the victor that prevailed in the battle and he did so because he had the power necessary to do so. His *power* might have been superior numbers, superior technology, superior weapons, greater moral, or the element of surprise. Whatever it was, he had the power to prevail in the battle.

And what Paul was saying is that circumcision, or any other activity of the flesh, lacks what it takes to prevail in the matter of getting us saved! It is only a dead ritual in dead flesh and lacks the spiritual power to accomplish anything. Only faith, (in Christ), has the power to prevail over the world, the flesh and the devil and get us saved! But he's also giving us an insight into how faith operates! **It is through the exercise of faith that one has the power to prevail, to be victorious over any situation.**

What Paul is also saying is that through the operation of faith one has the power to change things in their lives! The Gospels are full of examples of how demons were cast out and people healed by the exercising of faith. Christ himself said that we could move mountains if we just had faith the size of a mustard seed! So the key for us is to get back to the place that we are exercising faith in our lives, and when we do, we will not only see things change for the better, but we will be able to prevail in victory over the things that have been defeating us!

But this verse is also telling us something else! It's telling us what faith can do; it's telling us about the power found in faith, (or how faith accesses the power of God); it's telling us about how faith inspires us in our souls, and it's also telling us where faith comes from. And it's found in the expression, “*but faith which worketh by love*”, *alla pistis di'agapes energoumene*. Now on the surface this may not seem very important, but when one goes back to the ideas found connected with the word, *energeo*, it opens up a whole new world.

The word used here, *energeo* or *energeia*, was a word connected to the cosmic powers in the Greek

mind. Now in their minds the cosmic powers could be either good or bad. But before we get into that, perhaps we need to set some sort of backdrop to help us in our understanding. To begin with, they regarded the *daimones*, (demons, cosmic powers), as not being necessarily bad. Actually, they used the term *daimones* to refer to a race of superior beings who came to earth from far away galaxies to impart knowledge to man.

Now when one of these cosmic powers imparted useful knowledge to someone, that impartation of knowledge was what *energeo* was about. The word we would use today would be **inspired**. They were inspired with an idea. Of course we have been seeing this go on for thousands of years with the demons inspiring mankind with their evil ideas.

We might as well bring in the idea behind the word genius. When one of these *daimones*, who were also called genii, inspired someone with an idea, then that person was said to be a genius because he had a genii!

But getting back to our story, the key idea that we want to take away from this is that *energeo* is talking about being inspired with an idea or a concept. The demons inspired the ancient Greeks, (and people today), with their ideas. And the Christian today, who is filled with the Holy Spirit will be inspired with faith ideas. “*But faith which worketh by, or, is inspired by, agape love*”, *alla pistis di'agapes energoumene*. Faith in our souls is activated by means of *agape*.

What this tells us that the spiritual mental attitude of *agape*, which is brought about by the filling of the Holy Spirit, is the instrumental agency by which we have faith; it is the means by which we are **inspired with faith and faith ideas!** The Christian, who is under the teaching of the Word of God, and living in the filling of the Holy Spirit, whose mind is dominated by the *agape* love mental attitude and is concentrating on the Word of God **will be inspired with faith and that faith will create in our minds faith ideas!**

But what is an idea? It is a thought or conception, that potentially or actually exists in the mind as a product of mental activity. The mind set of faith will lead us to come up with ideas in our minds, all sorts of ideas, and it will also establish the mind set that this is possible, that this can come to be!

When God sent the twelve spies into the land of Canaan to spy it out, two of them came back and said, we can do this! But the other ten came back, after looking at the same thing, and said, it can't be done! The idea that the two had in their minds was that they could conquer the land, just as God had promised to them. While the ten said that it can't be done, not even with God's help! Their excuse was because the giants were in the land. The two had faith; the ten had no faith.

And the reason why the two had faith is because they believed the Word of God! They believed that God couldn't and wouldn't lie, and that he had the power to do whatever he said he would do, so they could trust him. They were convinced by the Word of God. And for us to have today we have to be convinced by the Word of God. For it is out of the Word that we have faith! “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Romans 10:17 The preposition ek, used with hearing the Word of God, tells us that the origin of faith is from the Word of God. So what we need to do is turn our souls in total concentration on what the Word of God is telling us, especially concerning this matter of faith, then a miraculous thing will happen. We will find our mind change from being negative and unbelieving to one of faith and hope!

B. Faith I.D.E.A.S.

I – Idea - Inspired by faith
D – Decision - Made by faith
E – Energy - Provided through faith
A – Activity - Motivated by faith
S – Success - Accomplished by faith

Faith Ideas is an acronym that gives us insight into the process of taking an idea, thought, or concept that one only has in their minds and seeing it become reality in life. Think of it! One is taking thought and making it become reality! And by the use of faith, combined with the power of God, is exactly what is happening. But we want to note that one cannot leave out any of these concepts. There has to be the faith idea, the decision concerning that idea, the energy to carry it out and the activity to see it through. If all of these are there, then there will be the faith success.

It begins with the filling of the Holy Spirit, who produces, along with all the other fruits of the Spirit, the *agape* mental attitude of love in our souls. This mental attitude is devoid of all negativity, all sin, of anything along the lines of it can't be done. Our souls become clear, and once they are clear of all negative concepts, they are now free to think along positive faith lines.

The result of this is that **the believer's soul will start to be filled with faith and faith ideas**. What is actually taking place is that the Holy Spirit is inspiring us with faith ideas! When the believer focuses his soul on the Word of God, and especially those concepts that deal with faith, then he or she will find that their souls will start really believing that *all things are possible*!

Isn't this what the Lord said in Mark 9:23? “*Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*” Do we believe what Christ said? Or do we find ourselves believing what our theological group says? Christ said that all things are possible to the one who believes. But theologians will explain all that away. It was a different time, or that doesn't apply to us, well it doesn't mean everything...and consequently our faith goes out the window.

Perhaps we need to focus our thinking and faith on what the Word of God says and not listen to other people! “*But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but **with God all things are possible**.*” Matthew 19:26 “*And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for **with God all things are possible**.*” Mark 10:27 “*And he said, The things which are impossible with men **are possible with God**.*” Luke 18:27 “*But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but **with God all things are possible**.*” Mark 14:36 “*Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: **is there any thing too hard for me?***” Jeremiah 32:27 “*Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*” Mark 9:23

So, as we look into the Word of God, filled with the Holy Spirit and believing his Word, we begin to start believing once again. Now that we're starting to have faith ideas, we then need to make a decision concerning them. For without that **decision**, then nothing else will follow. We need to take the faith idea out of the realm of thought and onto the road of reality and that's where the decision comes in. And the decision is expressed by means of prayer to God. God provides the power to make our desire become reality, but he also has to give the permission concerning it. What we are doing when we pray to God is asking him to make our faith idea come to pass.

When we talk about making the decision, we are talking about the will of the individual. Everyone on

earth has a will. But we need to remember that God the Father has a will also! And, as the sovereign of the universe, his will is above his creatures. There is his direct will, that which he wants us to do. There is his permissive will, that which he allows us to do. And there is his eternal purpose, that which he is going to do regardless of what man wants.

So when to go to God in prayer and express our desire that we want him to make happen, we are deferring our will to his. It may be against his will for our lives; it may not be good for us; and then again he may grant it. James tells us that we have not, because we ask not; and that we have not because we ask for the gratification of our lusts. *“yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.”* James 4:2b,3

The Apostle John also wrote that if we ask anything according to his will, (our will lining up with God's will), then he will hear us and grant the request. *“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.”* 1 John 5:14,15

Now after having the faith idea, and making a decision based upon faith, and determining that it isn't a lust, (which it wouldn't be if the idea came to you while you were operating in your new nature filled with the Holy Spirit), and putting it before the Lord in faith, the believer can pray the prayer of faith, James 5:15a, *“And the prayer of faith”*, with full confidence that the faith idea will be granted. And the faith aspect involved in this is that we actually believe that he will! It might do well for us to remember that God honors our faith.

We might address the problem with doubt concerning if it's the will of God for my life, or if I'm just dealing with some lust, or if I'm doing the wrong thing. For once the doubt enters in the faith leaves. Remember, the mental attitude of *agape* love inspires faith and faith ideas. And the *agape* mental attitude comes about as the result of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. **The spiritual state of agape inspires faith ideas! It doesn't inspire lust ideas!!!**

There are four areas that we can get ideas from: the world, the flesh, the devil and from the Holy Spirit. And remember, an idea is a thought or concept in one's mind that comes as the result of mental activity.

We can get all kinds of ideas from the **world system**: money, power, success, ambition, having more things, materialism, power, etc.. We are constantly fed worldly ideas all day long from television, radio, newspapers, co-workers, friends, etc.. But these ideas are from the world system not from God!

The **flesh nature** gives us ideas as well: bad ideas, wrong ideas, lust gratification ideas, the subjective thinking ideas from the emotions, garbage in the soul ideas, defense mechanism ideas, human viewpoint ideas, stupid ideas, the list is a long one.

The **devil** also gives us ideas: satanic viewpoint ideas, cosmic viewpoint ideas, evil viewpoint ideas; ideas contrary to the nature and will of God.

And finally, the **Holy Spirit** gives us ideas, faith ideas, and the list for this is endless. So how do we know that our ideas are from God, the devil, the world, our flesh nature, or other people's flesh natures? It goes back to the filling of the Holy Spirit, who produces the *agape* state of mind in our souls. When we have the filling of the Holy Spirit, then the ideas we have are true faith ideas.

The next thing is the **energy**. There has to be power or energy involved in making our faith dreams

become reality. And the believer is empowered by Christ as he or she lives in the sphere of faith. “*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*” Romans 15:13

The phrase, in believing, is referring to living in the sphere of faith. As we walk by faith we will be filled with all joy and peace and will abound in hope, (the confident faith mental attitude that good things are awaiting us in the future), by the power of the Holy Spirit. So we find that we are also empowered by faith as well.

Paul expressed it again in Philippians 4:13, where he wrote, “*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*” And the word he used for strengthening him was *endunamoo*, which meant to be strengthened inwardly. Actually the word for, *I can do*, is *ischuo* which meant that **one has the strength to meet any situation in life and to come through it victoriously because Christ gives us the strength to prevail!** It takes energy or power to keep moving forward in faith in life, to accomplish our faith goals, to accomplish the Father's will for our lives, to deal with our flesh natures, the world system and the attacks of the devil, and Christ's power gives us that strength!

The next thing we see in Faith Ideas is the **activity** of faith. Faith believes the promises of God, but make no mistake about it faith has activity! In fact, the Apostle James says that without works, *ergos* – activity, faith is dead. “*Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*” James 1:17

To give you an idea as to how this works, let's say for example, that a believer has been inspired by the idea of going to college. Now it might be one thing for someone just out of High School, but let's say that they are older in life now. They have this faith idea about going to school. They believe they can do this, so they next make the decision to do so and enroll in school. Here we see their faith has motivated them to make a decision, and then motivated them to action by enrolling in school.

When we look at Hebrews chapter eleven, which deals with the matter of faith, we see a long list of believers who had an idea, maybe it was theirs, maybe God gave it to them; they made a decision, there was the activity involved, there was success, and there was the power, the energy granted to them by God which enabled them to do it!

Abel believed God about the proper sacrifice, made the decision concerning it, and there was his activity involved in doing so. Noah believed God about the ark and the flood, (so much so he became alarmed), made the decision to build the ark, went out and built the ark, and was strengthened by God for those 120 years while he built it!

Moses believed God and chose to suffer with the people of God. Abraham believed God about the city and chose to live a semi-nomadic life on his own land! Abraham believed God about the sacrifice and offered up his own son Isaac! All these had an idea given to them by God, they believed in faith, their faith motivated them to make the decision, and then it motivated them to take action, and then they finally had the success.

By the exercise of faith in the promises of God, Abraham was able to have sex again. “*And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*” Romans 4:21 And even Sarah herself was able to conceive once again by her exercising faith in the promise of God! “*Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.*” Hebrews 11:11

So when we talk about this matter of faith, and the ideas that faith gives us, we see that faith, believing, is the key from beginning to end. We come up with an idea by faith, by faith we make the decision to do it, or pursue after it, by faith we draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit while involved in it, by faith we keep moving forward in our goal, and by faith, one day, we will see the goal realized!

This is also what the idea of hope is all about. Hope is the confident mental attitude that good awaits you in the future. Now hope is something that always deals with the future; it is not in the world of reality yet. **It is not unreal; it is only unrealized!** Then one day, when that which one has hoped for becomes reality, it is no longer hope!

The final result of Faith Ideas is success, biblical success, faith success. If the believer wants to have true success in life, not worldly success, they must live by faith, walk by faith, be filled with the Holy Spirit thinking faith ideas, make the decision to pursue their faith ideas, pursue their faith ideas and one day their faith ideas will become reality!

These faith ideas now become faith objectives, faith goals that we are now going toward in our Christian walk. And, as we go from one faith goal to the next, we will find that our entire lives are characterized by living by faith!

Proverbs talks about this as well. *“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.”* Proverbs 16:3 *“In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.”* Proverbs 16:9 And, concerning the sovereignty of God in the matter, *“Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.”* Proverbs 19:21 NIV

There is a tremendous misuse of faith and the Christian life going on in churches today, for they are using certain concepts as a means of gaining what this world has to offer and gratifying their lusts! *“Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.”* 1 Timothy 6:5

They think that living the spiritual life, *godliness*, is a means to financial gain, but that is perverting the point of it all. Living life by faith in the filling of the Holy Spirit is not about worldly success, or getting the “wampum” the world has to offer. It's about a life of contentment, peace and joy! There is success, but it is the consummation of our faith and glorifies God. *“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”* 1 Timothy 6:6

But even in this, we must not focus on the errors of other believers, but in living our own life of faith. We must be like the man who said, *“Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”* Mark 9:24b He was a believer, he had faith, but he was also honest enough to admit that he had unbelief. So he asked the Lord to help him, *boethos*, in getting rid of the unbelief in his soul to the place that he had total faith.

All of us need to constantly be reading and studying the Word to find things that not only build up our knowledge of God's Word, but also that build up our faith! And one of the things that will help us is that God has given faith to each one of us. He gave us the faith we needed so we could believe on Christ as our Savior and it is this same faith that can believe all things are possible!

Remember when Peter walked on the water? An act of faith? We need to remember that all the other disciples had the same faith given to them as had been given to Peter. The difference is that Peter exercised his faith and the others didn't!

C. Concepts concerning faith.

Faith is a choice; one chooses to believe or not.

It is not an operation of the senses, nor the rationalizing of the mind.

It has no doubts in it. Faith says it's true.

Unbelief, not doubt, is the antithesis of faith.

Doubt is the wavering between faith and unbelief.

Faith is the complete confidence that something will be, that it will come to pass.

Ultimately, biblical faith is in a person- *Yahweh*, the God of the universe.

Faith becomes trust; completely depending on that person.

Faith can look to the person's attributes, his integrity, power, mercy, etc..

It looks at the possibilities, not the problem.

It looks towards God's ability, not our inability.

It needs to be persuaded from time to time.

It needs to be convinced of God's intentions toward us, that they are good, by the persuasion of argument or the display of evidence.

It is persistent and perseveres.

It needs to be reminded of the fact that God is covenanted to us.

Encouragement by other believers is helpful to faith.

The Holy Spirit gives us faith.

The Word develops faith.

Prayer is a vehicle that develops faith.

Spiritual activity (works) proceeds out of faith.

Faith is a sign of the new nature created by God.

Faith is concentration on the Word of God.

Faith focuses on the Lord and his Word, blocking out the rest.

It can grow, develop and become completed.

Faith is the means by which the power of the Holy Spirit is channeled into the believer who has come to the end of his works of power.

Only faith works with grace. It is the only thing that responds to and corresponds with grace. Man's works reject grace, and grace rejects man's works.

Faith says, "I can't, but God can".

Faith is in the circle with grace and truth.

Faith must always have an object, and for God's people, it's God and his Word.

It cannot be taken away by Satan. We will always be able to believe, but he will try to keep us from exercising it.

Faith looks to God and his essence as the basis for trusting him. *Yahweh* is:

Sovereign- He is in total control and has a perfect plan for my life.

Righteous- All his dealings with me are good.

Justice- He will always be fair with me.

Love- His love for me is perfect and complete.

Eternal- My faith is safe, because he will live forever, always has, always will.

Omnipotent- He has the power to handle every situation in my life.

Omnipresent- He is with me wherever I go.

Omniscient- He possesses all knowledge and has all the answers for me.

Immutable- He never changes, so I can count on him.

Veracity- He's always truthful, making him totally reliable.

D. Some synonyms for faith.

Committing- Looks at the volitional decision to entrust a matter to the Lord.

Depending- Counting on the Lord to handle the matter.

Trust- Helpless dependence on the Lord.

Hope- The confident mental attitude that good things will happen to you in the future.

Waiting- The mental attitude of faith from the time of the request until its fulfillment.

Patience- The mental attitude of faith while persevering in a trial.

Leaning- A relying upon the Lord to hold you up.

Following- Trusting in the Lord's plan, authority and leadership.

Believing- The verb form of faith.

Resting- Total reliance on the Lord and the non stress mental attitude it brings.

Relying- Same as depending. Looks to his faithfulness.

Looking to- Another synonym for faith.

Confidence- Faith developed to completion.

Praying- An expression of faith.

Call out- Another expression for faith.

Cast your burden- A pictorial mechanic of faith.

Cry out- An intensified concept motivated by faith.

Confident statements- Confident statements concerning the future are statements of faith.

Put it in the Lord's hands- Expression of faith.

Boldness- Confidence of faith before God.

Walk with God- Living by faith.

Persistent- Faith that won't let go.

Looking to the City- Stabilizing view toward eternity.

Pleasing the Lord- Only done by faith.

The Christian's victory- Over death, Satan and the world.

The Shield- Metaphor for faith using the armor concept.

As a breastplate- With love.

As eating- The metabolizing of God's Word by faith.

What we've got to do is start developing our faith in the Lord and living by faith. And in this matter we are going to have to start avoiding the ideas and influences of those who are negative to faith and having a positive mental attitude. For there is nothing that can destroy a positive faith mental attitude faster than being around negative people and influences. We have to realize that the world is anti faith, our flesh natures are anti faith and most definitely the devil is anti faith! The last thing he wants to see is the power of God go into operation again in another believer.

Why not become a child again in our hearts in the sense that we start *dreaming* once more? Children are so wonderful to be around because they dream about the possibilities in life. Compare them with so many adults, who trudge along like zombies who have given up. They get up in the morning, go to work, come home, go to bed, take little side trips in life, buy a home, retire, then die! And why? Because they have given up on their dreams and their faith!

If this is us, then we can turn all this around by starting to live by faith once again and the way that we can begin this is by believing in the possibility of all things; by believing *all things are possible to the one who believes!* By combining faith ideas and the grace and power of God, the sky becomes the limit and that's how we need to live.

E. Possibility Thinking

*“And he said, The things which are impossible with men **are possible with God.**” Luke 18:27*

A **possibility** refers to the prospect or potential for something to be true, or come true, for something to come to be, for that which does not exist to come into existence. It's opposite, **impossible**, means that something cannot happen or will not happen.

So, what kind of thinking do we have that governs our lives? Something won't happen? Something can't happen? It probably won't be! Is our thinking along the lines of possibility? Or impossibility? Perhaps we need to review once again what the Word of God says.

We need to focus our thinking and faith on what the Word of God says and not listen to other people or our own negative thoughts! *“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; **but with God all things are possible.**” Matthew 19:26 “And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: **for with God all things are possible.**” Mark 10:27 “And he said, The things which are impossible with men **are possible with God.**” Luke 18:27 “But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; **but with God all things are possible.**” Mark 14:36 “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: **is there any thing too hard for me?** Jeremiah 32:27 “Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, **all things are possible to him that believeth.**” Mark 9:23*

This is it! This is what we have to believe! If we want to get our faith up and running again; the one thing that we have to have is we have to be totally and thoroughly convinced of the idea of possibilities! Not to just adopt the concept of looking at the different possibilities that there are in life, or the various possibilities there are to deal with our problems, but **to adopt the possibility thinking that all things are possible with God!**

The key to all this is to start focusing our complete attention, once again, back on the teaching of the Word of God. For it is as we start concentrating on the Word with our entire soul, and having confessed any sins we might have committed, that we recover the filling of the Holy Spirit; and it is there in the sphere of the filling of the Holy Spirit that **our faith starts to soar.**

Some believers only look at the impossibility of things, while other believers look at the possibilities. Some look at things from the eyes of faith, while others look at things from the standpoint of unbelief. When the twelve spies went into the land, ten came back and said it was impossible. Too many giants (problems). While the two came back and said we can do this! Their reasoning was that if God told us he was giving us the land, and if God told us to go into the land and conquer it, **then God was going to make it all possible.** They were looking at the possibilities of it all because they believed the God with whom all things are possible!

The possibility thinking of faith gives us freedom, while the negative thinking of unbelief binds us, restricts us, enslaves us. Possibility thinking gives us freedom from our past, our present circumstances, our weaknesses, our failures, the opinions of others, the world, flesh and the devil. Possibility thinking is “the sky's the limits”, while negative thinking is “this is the best it'll ever get”.

The possibility thinker looks not to himself, but to God who has the power. He knows that he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him. While the negative thinker looks to himself, to his circumstances, to his abilities, and says it can't be done...(because I can't do it)!

But we don't have to concentrate on a doctrine dealing with faith to get our faith back up and running, we can look at many passages of scriptures. For example, we can look at a passage that deals with the difference between the soul and our bodies, "*For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*" 2 Corinthians 4:16. The body is decaying each day, which can be quite painful and discouraging. But when we concentrate on the soul, the inner man, which is the real us inside, we see that it can be renewed each day. And Paul said because of that they didn't lose heart, faint, get discouraged.

There are many and mighty workings of God's power when his people exercise their faith, as both the Old and New Testaments attest to, but there are other wonderful workings of faith that may seem smaller in comparison, but nonetheless just as wonderful and powerful as the others. Such as, to be encouraged instead of discouraged, to have hope instead of despair, to go on in life with a smile on your face, instead of sitting down and giving up!

Or the type of faith that applies the Word of God to our lives which motivates us to keep moving forward in life with faith in the Lord and his Word after suffering disappointment, or failure, or the loss of friends, or the loss of loved ones. "*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*" Philippians 3:13

Then there was the story of the man who had a young son who was demon possessed. Now the man recognized what was going on with the boy, but he knew that he didn't have the ability to do anything about it. So he took the boy to the disciples to have them cast it out, but they couldn't. Finally he took the boy to the Lord to have him cast it out. "*And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;*" Mark 9:17 He had a faith idea!

Here's where we see that the Lord reproached them, not for not believing on him, they had already done that, but for **lacking the faith necessary to accomplish the job!** "*He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.*" Mark 9:17 The way he words it implies that they **all** should have been able to do this!

Afterward the disciples came to the Lord to ask why they weren't able to do it themselves, to which he replied that this category of demon required prayer and fasting. "*And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.*" Mark 9:28,29 Prayer and fasting was a setting aside of normal things in life so one could give himself over to the Word and faith.

Christ told the disciples that **all things are possible to the one who believes**. "*Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, (and you can), all things are possible to him that believeth.*" Mark 9:21 In Matthew 19:26 the Lord said, "*But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.*" The word for *with* in the statement, but with God, *para de theo*, is *para*, which is used to designate motion to a position alongside, which is to say that, **when God comes alongside a matter that we can't handle, He can do it!**

And that's where prayer and our faith idea comes in. When we go to God in prayer asking him to do something for us, something that we can't do, and believe that he will do it, then God comes in alongside the matter and takes care of it! **But we have to go to God in prayer and we have to believe that he will do what we have asked him to do!** "*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, (you) believing, ye shall receive.*" Matthew 21:22

F. Facing The Mountain

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.” Matthew 21:21 αποκριθεις δε ο ιησους ειπεν αυτοις αμην λεγω υμιν εαν εχητε πιστιν και μη διακριθητε ου μονον το της συκης ποιησετε αλλα καν τω ορει τουτω ειπητε αρθητι και βληθητι εις την θαλασσαν γενησεται

When the Lord had cursed the fig tree, and they all came back by it the next day, the disciples were amazed at what had happened, that it had withered so quickly. So they asked the Lord, “**How soon is the fig tree withered away!**” Matthew 21:20 The word *pos* is an interrogative particle which asks the question of how, or in what manner did something take place. They saw that the fig tree was withered, but they wanted to know how it happened! And with the use of the word, *parachrema*, they wanted to know how it happened so quickly. *Parachrema* meant immediately, at once, or so quickly.

Apparently the disciples were more interested in the physical phenomenon of the tree withering than they were in the spiritual lesson about the spiritually dead nation of Israel and how it was being cursed by God, or the spiritual dynamics of faith and the power that comes alongside the exercise of faith.

But the Lord answers their question of **how** it happened in verse twenty one. The passage begins with the word *apokrinomai*, which meant to answer a question, or to reply to someone's statement, and then he goes into the mechanics of this destructive miracle, the only one recorded in the NT, and tells them that **it was accomplished by the exercise of his faith**. And he also tells them that **they too can do such things, if only they believe**.

He begins his statement with the phrase, “*Verily I say unto you*” or, “*I tell you the truth*” *amen lego humin*. *Amen lego humin* was a solemn introductory formula used at the beginning of a statement to alert the listener that what he was going to hear was of the utmost importance, that they needed to listen to it, understand it and do what it says!

Here the Lord is giving the disciples the secret for accomplishing these mighty works of power, (which actually come from God), but it is a two fold condition: **one**, there must be faith, and **two**, there can be no doubting. Both conditions have to be present. What we are looking at here is the secret of the universe: a faith idea, truth, grace and the power of God.

He then says, “*If ye have faith*”, *ean exhete pistin*. *Echete* is the present active subjunctive of the verb *echo*, which means to have or to possess something. So what he's saying is, **if** you have or possess faith. But when we have *ean* used with the subjunctive mood of the verb it brings out a third class condition of *if*, where the condition for something to be fulfilled is first stated, and then if the condition is there, then its fulfillment will come to be.

For example, 1 John 1:9, “*If we confess our sins*, (maybe we will and maybe we won't), (but if we do, then), *he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*. Which tells us that the condition that God sets for him forgiving our sins and cleansing us is based upon our confessing or stating our sins to him.

But the other part of the condition in addition to faith is, “*and doubt not*”, *kai me diakrithete*. *Diakrithete* is the aorist passive subjunctive of *diakrino*, the word for wavering back and forth between two positions. The subjunctive mood is also used with this verb, along with the connective use of *kai*, which tells us that these two ideas are connected together in the condition.

Which tells us that **we must be exercising our faith**, active voice revealing the activity of the will in all this, and at the same time **not be doubting**. *Diakrino*, to doubt, meant to waver back and forth between two positions or opinions, which means to be believing that God will do something, then go back to not believing that he will. It's to go back and forth between the positions of faith and unbelief. Maybe it will, maybe it won't. Will it? Won't it? Yes? No?

To *believe* is used here in the active voice, which shows the activity of the believer's will is involved in choosing to believe. But to *doubt* is found in the passive voice indicating that there is something in all of us, the fallen flesh nature, that acts upon the believer in such a way that causes him to doubt, that causes him to go back and forth between faith and unbelief.

Mark's statement on the mountain emphasizes the idea of prayer. Whenever there is something that the believer wants, then it is expressed to God in prayer. So **Mark's faith is a faith that believes and prays**. “*For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*” Mark 11:23,24

Prayer is the vehicle by which one's will is expressed and directed toward God; God's almighty **power** is its source and assurance; **faith** is the opening through which his power works; and God's **sovereignty** is its only restriction.

Christ tells the disciples that if they have faith, they will be able to not only do what he did, but even more, “*ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain*”. And we notice the word *ye*, or *you*. It's not just that **he** did it, but by the inclusion of the word **you**, he's telling them that **they** can do it! If they have faith. **They**, if **they** have faith, could say to the mountain, “*Be thou removed and be thrown into the sea*”, then it would do that!

The first command in Mark is *artheti*, the orist passive imperative of airo. The second command is *bletheti*, the orist passive imperative of ballo. We notice that both words have the same grammatical construction; they are both orist passive imperatives, which tells us that two commands are directed toward the mountain, to be *removed*, (from its place), and be *thrown...where?...into the sea*.

The passive voice tells us something else. If they were in the active voice, it would tell us that the mountain had volition, which it doesn't. There is no animus, no soul life in a mountain, so it is incapable of volitionally obeying a command. But because it is in the passive voice, it tells us that the mountain has been the recipient of a command and will be the recipient of the action.

Which is to say that the mountain will be removed and be thrown, passive voice, into the sea. It will receive the action of the commands. But there will be something else, or I should say, someone else who will be the causative agent behind all this and that is the power of God the Father.

The question and issue for all of us is, 'Do you believe this?' Not just do you believe that Christ could do this? But do you believe that any believer in Christ could do this? I think the resounding answer from most, if not all, believers is, No! Even the yes' would have a loud no behind them. So was this just idle chit chat? Was he describing a hypothetical situation that could never exist? Then why did Christ take the time to talk about it? **And then why did he use the second person plural and tell them that they could do this, if they had the faith?**

Mark 11:23 adds, “*and shall not doubt in his heart*”, *kai me diakrithe en te kardia autou*, the aorist passive subjunctive of *diakrino*. This is the second part of the two-fold condition for getting God to answer our prayers. One, we must be believing, and two, we must not be doubting.

“*In the heart*” is the dative case of *en te kardia*, telling us where the location of doubting comes from, the heart. Included also is the causative sense, which is to say, that **it is our hearts that cause us to doubt**. Our minds may believe something to be true, but it is our hearts that cause us to doubt. **It's the things going on in our heart that influence us away from the position of truth and faith.**

The Lord talks about the heart in Matthew 15:19, “*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:*”, and Mark 7:21, “*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,*” Quite a list of negative dynamics going on in the heart and all of them detract from faith.

Matthew has *dialogismoï poneroi* for evil thoughts, tending toward the idea of sexually impure thoughts, carnality, etc.. While Mark has *dialogismoï hoi kakoi*, tending toward the idea of evil reasonings, or the process of human rationalism devoid of faith, which has the idea of worldly viewpoint, the thinking of the world and its people, thinking based upon emotions, assumptions, etc..

It is this process of rationalism that we have to be on guard for in the life of faith. The mind reasons that it can't be done. The reasoning process of the world's people says it can't be done. And this is where doubt enters into our minds. We must believe God when he says it can be done! This is exactly what Proverbs 3:5 is about, “*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*” Trust in the Lord and stop leaning on our ability to reason things out with our minds!

Doubting is not unbelief. It is the wavering back and forth, the going back and forth between the two positions of belief and unbelief. This is exactly what Elijah was describing in 1 Kings 18:21, “*And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*” If Yahweh is God, then follow him. But if *Baal* is God, then follow him! If you think that Satan, or the people of the world, or your own thinking is true, then believe it! **But if you think that Christ's words are the truth, then believe and act on them!**

The heart tends toward unbelief because of its reasonings and doubts, so it acts upon the believer in such a way that it creates an opposing viewpoint to faith. The writer of Hebrews told us about the problem of the unbelieving heart in Hebrews 3:12, “*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*”

The Apostle James told us to purify our hearts, James 4:8, “*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*” To purify, *katharizo*, was to cleanse something from dirt or evil. It had the idea that something was new or clean, but became dirty, so the dirt, the unbelief, needed to be removed from it.

James addressed this very problem in our prayers to God where we are to believe while we are praying and not be wavering back and forth between faith and unbelief. He said that the believer who does this is a *double minded* believer, *dipsichos*, literally a double souled believer and is unstable in all he does. “*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*” James 1:6-8

Another doctrinal concept that we can use to purify our hearts, because we have so many problems with the heart, is having our mind's set on the things above, not on the things on the earth. “*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*” Colossians 3:2 By looking forward to heaven, the New Jerusalem and our eternal inheritance with Christ we will purify our hearts. “*And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*” 1 John 3:3

The Holy Spirit inspires faith ideas, not lust ideas. But the flesh will deceive us into thinking that our lust ideas are faith ideas! So how can we know the difference? It goes back to understanding and knowing what the various categories of lust are so we can eliminate them from our prayers. “*Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*” James 4:3

G. Believing.

“*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, **believing**, ye shall receive.*” Matthew 21:22 και παντα οσα αν αιτησητε εν τη προσευχη πιστευοντες ληψεσθε

Mark has it as, “*For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall **believe** that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.*” Mark 11:23

While Matthew writes, “*Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.*” Matthew 21:21

Matthew has “it shall be done” and Mark has “shall come to pass”. Both passages use the verb *ginomai*, which signifies a change of condition, state, or place. And would be better translated as to become, or come to be. It doesn't exist now, but **it will** in the future. So when he says, “*if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it will come to be.*”

Mark emphasizes the contrast between faith and unbelief in his passage by the use of *alla*, the conjunction of contrast. He says that if we do not doubt in our hearts, **but** believe that those things that we say shall come to pass, we will have whatsoever we ask.

In an odd sort of way unbelief is a sort of faith, a negative faith, a belief that something won't happen, that it won't come to pass! When the twelve spies went into the land and came back with their reports, two believed they could, while the ten believed they couldn't! It becomes unbelief when it goes against what God says. If God says we can do it, faith says that we can!

We not only can change our life by the exercise of faith, but we can also change life on earth! The power of God coupled with our faith can change both the spiritual world and the material world. By the exercise of faith we can not only change our lives, our circumstances, our environment, but the lives of people that we don't even know, both in the present and in the future!

Hebrews 6:4-6 deals with this concept of power, “*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the **powers** of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*”

Many Christians incorrectly think that to “fall away”, *parapipto*, means to lose their salvation. But *parapipto* was a nautical term and what it actually meant was to drift off course. At one time these believers were attending a local church, taking in Bible Doctrine and living life in the filling of the Holy Spirit. But because they were under so much social and economic pressure by the religionists, they drifted off course from grace by going back to the temple, thus crucifying the Lord afresh. And as long as they were doing that they couldn't be spiritually renewed.

They had a taste of the powers to come in eternity future that God has for the entire Royal Family of God; powers that they could see in operation through the exercise of their faith in the Word, prayer and the filling of the Holy Spirit. **God's power that we can see operate today, if we exercise faith!**

We begin with Matthew 21:22, “*And all things, whatsoever*”, which tells us that this is open to **all things!** Whatever it is that we desire, and that is not to be confused with lust, whatever our faith idea is, is open to being put before God in our prayer requests for him to answer.

The word for ask is *aiteo* and is the word used for an inferior party, say a subject of a kingdom, placing his request before the superior party, his king. It speaks of the believer in Christ going before the eternal God with his prayer requests.

“*In prayer*” is *en te proseuche*, or *in the prayer, or by means of prayer*. Whatever things we ask for in the prayer. Which tells us that prayer, once again, is the vehicle by which we make known our requests to God. And all things whatsoever you ask for in your prayer.

“*Believing*” is *pisteuontes* and is found in the present active participle, whose action occurs at the same time as the main verb, which is asking in prayer. **So what it tells us is that we are to be believing while we are praying to God!**

And then we have the word “*ye shall receive*”, *lambano*, which is in the future middle indicative. The first thing we notice about this is that the action of the future tense always takes place at some time in the future. The next thing is that it is found in the indicative mood, the mood of reality, which also has the idea of absolute certainty. So God will grant our prayer requests, but we have to remember that **there will always be a time factor involved**, in that **the answer to our prayers will come some time in the future!** The last thing is that it is found in the middle voice, which tells us that we will be benefitted by the action of receiving that answer to our prayers. Which also brings out the point that **whatever God does for us will benefit us, which is why he does not grant our lust requests!**

Mark has it as, “*Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*” Mark 11:24 δια τουτο λεγω υμιν παντα οσα αν προσευχομενοι αιτεισθε πιστευετε οτι λαμβανετε και εσται υμιν

“*Because of this I say to you, what things soever you ask for, when you pray, believe that you have received them and you will.*” Again we see the all things whatsoever idea in this passage, and we also see the concept of asking is taking place at the same time as our prayers to God. Here Mark tells us that while we are praying to God asking him for this and that, we are to be **believing that we already have them**, and when we do, we will!

In Matthew 21:21 the Lord is telling us that if we have faith, then whatever it is that we ask for, whether in commanding a mountain to be moved or asking God for something, will come to be. Here he uses the word *ginomai*, which signifies a change of condition or state. That which is not will be, or it will come to be, or come into existence.

November 2008

H. Anger blocks our faith, our faith ideas and our prayers.

“And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” Mark 11:25 και οταν στηκητε προσευχομενοι αφιετε ει τι εχετε κατα τινος ινα και ο πατηρ υμων ο εν τοις ουρανοις αφη υμιν τα παραπτωματα υμων

The temporal particle hotan indicates an action that is potential, conditional and repeated and refers here to the matter of prayer. So, whenever we pray, and as often as we pray, there is a condition attached to it, that is, we are not to be angry toward someone. If we are, then we are to forgive them.

“If ye have ought against any”, or, “If you hold anything against anyone”. ει τι εχετε κατα τινος. The word for *against* is *kata* and it denotes having an hostile attitude toward someone. This covers the entire anger complex of bitterness, resentment, malice, etc.. And it deals with not only people in the present time, but people in our past that have hurt us.

The word for *have* is the present active indicative of echo, to have and to hold. The present tense tells us that this is something that is going on in the present, but it could also be linked to something that went on in the past! In our culture we would say, “hanging on to something”. So it's describing the believer who is still angry over something. Now they might be angry over something that has recently happened, or they may still be angry over something that happened a long time ago.

The word *if* is in the first class condition, which is, if you are hanging on to your anger over something, and let's assume for the sake of the study that you are, then you need to forgive them. Or it may be anger that pops up from time to time over a past event.

The solution for anger is forgiveness. Here we find that, if we are presently angry, then that anger blocks our faith and our prayers. Meaning that God won't grant them. Now something may have recently happened that we are still “steaming” over. Or something could have happened a long time ago, even in our childhood, that we never fully dealt with and that anger over the incident still pops up.

The word for *forgive* is *aphiete*, which is the present active imperative of aphiem, which means to let it go. **Nothing can be done about the things that happened to us in the past, and revenge tactics will not give us the peace we need either. There is only one way that we can deal with the hurt that we have suffered, and there is so much injustice in this world, (but not from God), and the only way to deal with it all is forgive!**

We have to ask ourselves, is being angry worth it? Usually the people that we are angry at don't even know that we are! We're trying to hurt them with our feelings of anger, but the only person that we are hurting is ourselves and those around us! And to add to that, are prayers are not being granted, we're out of fellowship, not filled with the Holy Spirit and just plain miserable. So is it worth it?

Our anger blocks the filling of the Holy Spirit, and without the filling of the Holy Spirit we have no *agape* love mental attitude, no joy and no peace. We also don't have any faith or faith ideas. And without the protection of the spiritual life inside us, then our soul is run over by the sin nature to the place we are totally miserable. **So is it worth it?** And the answer becomes quite clear, no! That's why we have to let these things go, and we have to adopt the lifestyle of just letting things go by! It's not worth it!

I. From faith unto faith.

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1:17 ε□κ πίστεως ει□ς πίστιν

We might stop and take a look at the necessity for living by faith in the lives of all Christians. We are saved by faith, (in Christ); we are empowered by the Holy Spirit as we live in the sphere of faith; and we are to walk by faith. Faith in God; faith in his promises; faith in Bible Doctrine.

Now this translation has translated *ek pisteos eis pistin* as “from faith to faith”. The preposition ek denotes the **origin** of something, that something has come from, or out of, something else, or that it is the source of something, and in some cases it denotes the material out of which something else is made. Iron comes out of, or from, ore, because the ore contains iron. So what we have is “*out of faith*” telling us that one must begin with faith first, and from that faith, then one is able to go on in faith unto faith.

The next preposition is *eis* used with the accusative, which is used to indicate the **goal!** **One goes from the source of faith with the goal of going toward faith.** But *eis* has several implied concepts found in it. First there is the concept of **direction**. One is coming out of something and heading in a certain direction. Second, it has the concept of **goal**, as noted, where someone is coming out of or from something, but heading toward a certain goal. Third, *eis* also has the idea of **motion** found in it, in that, it is moving in a certain direction toward a goal. And four, it has the idea of **penetration**, into, where it **actually arrives at its goal.**

So what it's telling us is that the believer in Christ is going to be going from one concept of faith in their life, and from that concept centered around faith, they are to be going toward another concept centered around faith, *from faith to faith*, or, *out of faith unto faith*. Or, for the purpose of our study, **we go from one faith idea to the next faith idea.**

These faith concepts, that we are continually going toward as our goals in life, become faith objectives. And because it is faith that works in accordance with God's grace, then these faith objectives are also grace objectives. And as the believer in Christ goes from faith to faith, from one grace objective to the next grace objective, his/her life now becomes characterized by faith.

And, as we have also seen, as the believer lives in the sphere of faith, **they will be living in the sphere of the power of the Holy Spirit.** So what that means, is that as the believer in Christ's life is characterized by going from one faith objective to the next faith objective, they will be maximizing the amount of time that they are filled with the Holy Spirit in their life!

It's a win win situation. As the believer goes from one grace blessing to another; they will be filled with the Holy Spirit much more often in their lives; they will have purpose, goal and direction in life, instead of just wandering around aimlessly and wasting their lives; and their mental attitudes will be characterized by optimism, enthusiasm and hope!

But to do that they have to start living by faith. And the first point of faith that they start from is their faith in Christ as their Savior. God gave them, (and others), the faith to believe on Christ, and he will give them the faith for the rest of their journey. And he does this through the teaching of His Word. But they need to make the decision to live by faith, and then they need to make the decision to embark on their first faith venture, to the second, and so on, until they go to be with the Lord.

J. The powers of the coming age.

*“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have **tasted** of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, **and the powers** of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”*

One of the privileges that the Royal Family of God will be exercising throughout eternity, in addition to ruling with Christ under God, is having access to the unlimited power of God. It's not that **we** have this power, the power belongs to God. But we will have access to that power, through God granting us our requests throughout eternity.

Many Christians incorrectly think that to “fall away”, *parapipto*, means to lose their salvation. But *parapipto* was a nautical term and what it actually meant was to drift off course. At one time these believers were attending a local church, taking in Bible Doctrine and living life in the filling of the Holy Spirit. But because they caved in to the social and economic pressure of the religionists, they drifted off course from grace by going back to the temple, thus crucifying the Lord afresh. And as long as they were doing that they couldn't be spiritually renewed.

They had a taste of the powers to come in eternity future that God has for the entire Royal Family of God. They had seen the power of God operating in their lives as he answered their prayers. They had seen his power operate in the sphere of their faith. But they turned away from that to go back to religiosity in the temple. When one turns from the faith dynamic, they always turn to religion or some other activity of the flesh nature.

K. The Word of God develops faith.

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17 αρα η πιστις εξ ακοης η δε ακοη δια ρηματος θεου

It is through the communication of the Word of God, and the doctrines that it teaches, that the believer in Christ can develop their faith. Faith, that is, biblical faith, is not indigenous to people. To have it, we must receive it, and we receive it through the source of God which he gives to us through his Word.

So faith, that is, *the faith*, originates from the source of hearing the teaching of the Word of God. It comes to us through the instrumental agency, *dia*, of the doctrinal communication of God's Word. Which also means that if there is no doctrinal teaching, or no accurate teaching of the Word, then the believer in Christ will not be able to develop their faith.

The subject matter in view in the passage is believing on Jesus Christ as your Savior. *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Romans 10:9 And then calling on the Lord to be saved, as a manifestation of that faith. *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:13**

Paul, then, goes on to explain where this faith to believe on Christ comes from, or what its source is. It comes from the Word of God itself. More specifically through the doctrines pertaining to the person and work of Jesus Christ, *dia rhematos theou*, or the Gospel. Thus establishing the pattern of how faith is developed in the soul of the believer; it comes through the teaching of the Word of God.

L. Asking, Seeking and Knocking. A.S.K.

*“**Ask**, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Matthew 7:7,8*

We certainly would not want to have a study on having Faith Ideas; **ideas** inspired by faith, **decisions** made by faith, being **empowered** through the exercise of faith, the **activity** of faith, and faith **success** without incorporating the need for the believer to be **asking, seeking and knocking!**

When we take the three concepts of asking, seeking and knocking together we end up with the one idea of **persistence!** If we have a faith idea, then we are going to have to be persistent toward seeing it become reality. We will have to keep on asking, keep on seeking and keep on knocking. We will need to keep on praying to God; keep on exploring new avenues and keep on looking for opportunities.

The word for ask is the second person plural, present active imperative of the verb *aiteo* and was the petition of an inferior party to his superior for him to grant something, such as the subject of a kingdom going before his king to grant a request. For Christians, it is the believer in Christ going before God the Father in prayer with a request.

The first thing that we see is that it is in the second person plural telling us that this applies to all believers in Christ. All believers in Christ are to be placing their requests to the Father in prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, for their many needs and bonafide desires.

The next thing that we see is that it is in the active voice showing that the believer in Christ is volitionally responsible to do so. No one else can do this for them, for as believer priests they are individually and personally responsible for their own lives and their priesthood function, which includes the matter of prayer to God.

The next thing that we see is that this matter of asking God is in the imperative mood, the mood of command, which tells us that the Lord is commanding all believers to be placing their requests before God the Father. And the last thing is that it is in the present tense, which tells us that this is to be an ongoing function in our lives. Not once or twice then quit, but to keep on asking.

So what this tells us is that, if there is something in life that we want to do, or something we want, (not a lust), or something we need, or something that we should be doing, **or if we have a faith idea**, then we're commanded by the Lord to go to the Father and keep on asking him for it. Not once or twice and give up, but to **keep on asking him for it!**

We have the use of the iterative present, which means that something is done continually at intervals. Which means that if we keep on asking God in intervals, and keep on doing that, then it will become a practice for us and that's where we want to get at in our prayer life.

The use of the imperative mood here not only denotes a command, but it also tells us that we have been brought under authority. Christ may have set us free, but we are still mandated to obey. The Lord had instructed the disciples, which applies to us also, that we can ask anything of the Father in his name and the Father will grant it. Now maybe believers will do this of their own free will and maybe they won't. But if a command is introduced, then that means we are ordered to be asking God. And by obeying the command we end up doing what we should have been doing all along and all is fine.

1. “Ask, and it shall be given you;” αιτειτε και δοθησεται υμιν

Now he commands, “Keep on asking”, and then he goes on to tell what will happen when we do! “And it will be given to you”! And he uses the future passive indicative of the verb *didomi* to give, which carries the idea of a king granting a favor.

Being found in the future tense it tells us that the receiving of the request will occur at some time in the future, which introduces the idea of the time factor. The believer should not get discouraged when he doesn't get the answer to his prayers right away. He needs to see that there will always be a time factor involved. It may be a short time, and it may be a long time, but always the receiving of the thing asked from God will occur at some time in the future.

The next thing that we notice is that the future tense is used with the indicative mood which brings out the idea of certainty. Telling us that if we keep on asking the Father, then we can count on him granting our request. And with the gnomic use of the future tense, action that can be expected to happen under usual conditions, we have it that we can expect God will grant it under normal conditions. An example of an abnormal condition was when Ruchbah was requesting something from the Lord in Jeremiah 45, but was told by God that he was about to destroy the nation, so don't expect great things.

And with the use of the passive voice, the **voice of grace**, it shows that we receive the action of the verb and that it is God the Father who is doing it. The believer cannot supply it for himself; he cannot do it for himself; all he can do is receive it from the hand of God, but he is responsible for praying for it. And with the use of the imperative mood in *asking*, we see that we are compelled in love by the authority of Christ to be asking God for things, so we can be blessed.

2. “Given to you”, is the dative plural of *you*, which, in the plural, denotes all believers in Christ, and it is the dative of advantage, which means that it is to our advantage to be receiving things from God. Christ commands us to continually be asking the Father for things because he wants us to be blessed!

Christians need to develop the practice of living in the spiritual life dynamic that God has provided to all of us. But how do we do that? **How do we get out of our bad patterns of living and into the good pattern of living in the spiritual life dynamic?** Which is what the idea of godliness is all about.

The grammar of the Greek tells us how this is done. We have to begin somewhere and start doing what God wants us to do, so there is introduced the imperative mood, the mood of command. **If we're not doing the right thing**, then you will find the aorist imperative used to command us to start an action that we are not presently doing, “**start doing this or that**”. **If we're doing the wrong things** in our lives, then you will find the present imperative used with the negative particle, *me*, which is a command to “**stop doing this or that**”. And **if we're already doing the right thing**, then you will find the present imperative used which means, “**to keep on doing it**”.

Now that we've begun to do what God wants us to do, then we need to start doing it more and more. **So we go from not doing something at all, to the place where we're doing it more and more. And from there we want to get to the place where it becomes a present active participle, that is, we are now doing it all the time as a way of life.**

And this takes us to the practice of *asking, seeking* and *knocking*. God wants us to keep on asking, to keep on seeking and to keep on knocking. Not just once in awhile, but all the time as a way of life. And if we do, **then we will continually be receiving, finding and having doors opened for us.**

3. “Seek” – ζητετε – present active imperative – *zeteo*

Zeteo goes way beyond just having a desire for something, or merely wishing about things. It involves the mind, heart and will all motivating the body to a course of action. If someone was seeking a large pocket of gold nuggets on some creek up in the mountains that he had heard about, he wouldn't be sitting on the couch wishing he had it; **he would be up there looking for it! That's seeking.**

Thinking about it isn't seeking! Talking about it isn't seeking! Seeking entails action! Seeking is not passivity! Seeking means that you're to get out and go after it! Which means that you've got to want it bad enough to go after it!

The active voice tells us that we're volitionally responsible to keep on seeking our faith ideas, no one else can do it for us. The imperative mood tells us that we're commanded to keep on seeking after our faith ideas. And the present tense tells us that we're not to give up, but to be continually seeking after our faith ideas in life. And all this speaks of the idea of persistence!

And one also wants to remember, that, as the believer is continually seeking after the fulfillment of his faith ideas in life, that means that he will constantly need the empowerment of God to do so, then he will be continually living by faith and constantly filled with the Holy Spirit!

4. “And you will find” - και ευρησατε – future active indicative – *heurisko*

Again the gnomic future of *heurisko* is used to tell us that finding what we're seeking for can normally be expected to occur under usual conditions, but also with the idea of absolute certainty. As seeking is an act of faith, so is finding is the result of that act of faith.

And we want to notice and emphasize the use of the active voice in this where the subject produces the action of the verb, which in this case, is both seeking and finding. As the believer in Christ obeys the Lord and is actively seeking his/her faith ideas, then they will be finding them. **It's our faith activity of seeking that causes us to be finding the things that we are looking for.**

And by the use of the imperative mood of command we see that the Lord's heart expressed in all this because he wants us to find them. He wants us to have faith goals, be actively seeking after them, and we will find them! So he commands us to keep on asking, to keep on seeking and to keep on knocking.

But we also want to note, that **if we are not seeking, then we won't be finding anything!** The farmer wants an abundant harvest of his crops. So he seeks out the right seed, the best fertilizer, the optimum time to plant, the best hired help that he can find, he works long and hard hours, then one day he walks out the door to see a field full of his crops!

And once again, the future indicative not only emphasizes the absolute certainty of this, but it also brings out the idea of the time factor. Whatever it is that we are seeking will be found, it will be discovered, but **at some time in the future!** Too many Christians get discouraged in all this when they don't have their faith ideas or dreams realized right away. Remember, it was many, many years before Abraham got the son he wanted so much.

So this introduces the idea of patience, or patiently waiting. One of the concepts found in the faith rest life is waiting patiently for the Lord to come through. It may seem like forever for us, but he always comes through with his provisions and blessings. So what we have to do is encourage our faith by looking into the Word of God.

5. “Knock” - κρουετε – present active imperative – *krouo*

In the present active imperative we again have the command *to keep on knocking*, which not only shows persistence in the believer's faith and action, but aggressiveness as well. This type of faith is not the type where one passively sits around waiting for things to come to you, but the kind of faith where one is aggressively going out seeking for God to bless you.

It is well known that the birds of the air belong to God and he uses them to scatter seed to the four corners of the world. Yet the **farmer** does not passively sit around and wait for God to use his birds to plant the desired seed in his field! It's just the opposite. He is actively at work, in faith, from sunup to sundown working his field and planting his seed in the faith-hope that he is going to have a good harvest. His job is to plant the seed, but God is the one who gives the harvest.

The hard working **salesman** knows that to make money, so he can feed his family, he needs to sell his product. But to sell his product he has to see people! Which means that he has to get up, leave his home, and go out and knock on doors, whether residential or business. And if he doesn't get any results on the first door, then he keeps knocking on doors until he does!

Too many believers misapply the concept of faith using it only in a passive sense, where it should be applied in an active sense in many instances. There is a place for passive faith in our Christian walk, but what this passage is calling for, with the active voice where the subject produces the action of the verb and the imperative mood, is an **active, aggressive faith** where the believer keeps on asking, keeps on seeking and keeps on knocking!

6. “And the door will be opened to you” - και ανοιγησεται υμιν – future passive indicative – *anoigo*

Literally, “*And it shall be opened to you*”, or, “*A door will be opened to you*”. Opening a door can be used literally, where a real door is opened, or it can be used figuratively for the opening of **a door of opportunity**. And this is what we have here used in the future passive indicative which stresses the absolute certainty of it.

We want to notice that asking is an act of faith, seeking is an act of faith, and knocking is an act of faith. And each one of them have their results: receiving, finding and doors being opened. **But take note; receiving , finding and having doors opened only comes to those who obey and act in faith!**

The passive voice is used here to show that someone else, (God), is the one who opens the door. It is Jesus Christ who opens the doors that he wants us to go through and closes the doors that he doesn't. “*I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*” Revelation 3:8

The translators have put it as, “*a door will be opened to you*”, when the original has it as, “*it will be opened to you*”. Either way, the idea is the same, for one would be knocking on a door. One thing that stands out is the lack of the definite article, the. **A** door will be opened, which tells us that one never knows what is going to happen, which way the turn of events will go. One may be going out in life seeking various opportunities having a certain thing in mind. Yet all the doors he knocks on, (and remember you have to keep knocking), have no opening for that which he had in mind. Yet he keeps on knocking in faith for he knows that something will turn up. And then a door is opened! Not the one, perhaps, that he had in mind, but something altogether different. So what does he do? If a door has been opened for him, and God is the one who opened it, he goes through!

7. “For every one that asketh receiveth” - και και ε αιτων λαμβανει – present active participle – *aiteo*, present active indicative – *lambano*

We now have a change in grammar. The first time he uses the imperative mood commanding them to keep on *asking* and the future tense to tell them that, if they do, then they will *receive*. Now he's using the present active participle of *asking* to show that by continually obeying his command to *ask* this will become a practice for them, and with the present tense of receiving he's telling them that *continually receiving* things from the Father will be an on-going reality for them in life.

Continued obedience to Christ's command to keep on asking the Father for your faith goals and ideas will result in a habitual practice, which in turn, will result in the believer in Christ continually reaping God's grace blessings. God honors faith because it is in keeping with his grace. As the believer in Christ is filled with the Holy Spirit, and consequently is inspired with faith ideas, which become faith goals, and as he asks the Father to make them happen, then he will be receiving them!

8. “And he that seeketh findeth” - και ο ζητων ευρισκει - present active participle – *zeteo*, present active indicative – *heurisko*

We have the exact grammatical construction with this command as we do with the other one. The first time he uses the imperative mood commanding them to keep on *seeking* and the future tense to tell them that, if they do, then they will *be finding*. Now he's using the present active participle of *seeking* to show that by continually obeying his command to *seek* this will become a practice for them, and with the present tense of *finding* he's telling them that *finding* the things that they are *seeking as a way of life* will be a continual reality in their lives.

Pas, all, is found at the beginning of the passage to tell us that this is open to all believers, but the answer, **the benefits, come only to those who do it!** Thinking about asking, seeking and knocking is not the same as doing it! Neither is talking about it. **It is the one who is asking that will be receiving!** **It is the one who is seeking that will be finding!** **It is the one who is knocking that a door will be opened to him and only to him!**

9. “And to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” - και τω κρουοντι ανοιγησεται - present active participle – *krouo*, future passive indicative – *anoigo*

The use of the future indicative here is to be taken in the sense of absolute certainty. It is an absolute certainty that doors will be opened by God, (they don't open themselves), **but they will only be opened to the one, (present participle), who is knocking on them!**

We also want to note the **progression of the ideas** in this passage. **It goes from asking, to seeking, to knocking**. And it all **begins with a faith idea**. The believer in Christ has **an idea** inspired by faith. He **believes** that this idea can come to pass, that it will be. In faith, he then takes it to the Father and **asks** him to make it happen. Now, in faith, he goes out **seeking** the fulfillment of this idea wherever the Holy Spirit may lead him. And in faith he goes out **knocking** on doors for the opportunity. Each concept more bolder and aggressive than the one before it.

For example, a believer might come up with the idea of getting a degree in this field or that. He believes God can make it happen, so he goes to the Father and asks him to do it. He gains entrance into college, passes all the required courses, and then one day he has his degree. But now what? He now asks the Father to get him a job, he then goes out seeking employment, knocking on door after door seeking some door of employment to open up for him.

M. The a fortiori argument.

“Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” Mt. 7:9-11

If a human father, who is evil, knows how to give good gifts to his son, how much more will our heavenly Father, who is perfectly righteous, give us good gifts! If sinful man reaches this level of behavior, then how much more above that is our loving, righteous Father!

This same *a fortiori* argument is found in Romans 8:32, “*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*” If God gave us his Son to pay the penalty for our sins, that why wouldn't he give us all things? If he has already done the most for us at our worse, then why wouldn't he bless us and our faith ideas as his children?

And even this *a fortiori* argument is designed by God to give us faith. The faith we need to come to him with our prayer requests, and the faith needed to act on our faith ideas! What it does is reveal the intentions and love that the Father has toward us to give us confidence before him.

What this passage in Matthew teaches in the matter of our faith and prayers is **persistence**. Faith? Yes. Patience? Yes. And most definitely persistence. Persistence in continually going back to God in **prayer**, until he grants our requests. Continually **seeking** that which we're looking for: job, housing, education, answers to our lives, etc.. And continually **knocking** on the doors of opportunity, until God finally opens up one for us.

What we must guard against is sitting around on our laurels in pessimism, hopelessness, unbelief, or an incorrect application of faith, but to take this matter of faith aggressively, not only before God, but on out into life expecting God to come through for us. We've seen the passive side of faith and the active; **here the active side of faith is aggressive!**

If we've come up with some faith ideas, ideas inspired by faith, and they are not lust ideas, then we need to start making faith decisions toward their realization, place them before the Father, and start moving in the direction of their fulfillment. And that means we are going to have to start asking God, seeking after them and knocking on doors of opportunity.

It may very well be that America is going to be hit with some real economic problems, many areas of the country are already suffering. And we may wonder how are we going to handle it, or get through it? So what are we going to do? Sit around feeling sorry for ourselves, or worrying about things? Or, are we going to take our faith and our relationship with God as our Father and by faith take action?

We've put our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior; we're now sons and daughters of the Most High God; we have the indwelling Holy Spirit; we have the peace of Christ; we have the Word of God and all its promises; we have the faith that he has given us; we have his promises...so, we're going to keep on asking him to supply the food, the money, the jobs, our needs in logistical grace. Our whole person is going to keep on seeking those things from the Lord. And we're going to keep on knocking on the doors of opportunity, any door, until he opens one up! Why? Because he promised that's why!

Pastor Mike

