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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

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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 is 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!

