**Stay Steadfast with Jesus**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**James 1:2-8**

**Sunday Morning**

**February 10, 2019**

**James 1:2-8**

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

**How do you respond when God doesn’t answer your prayers?**

Saints, does your faith waver if He doesn’t provide what you’ve requested in the time and manner you expected? Although it may seem that the problem of fluctuating faith is the result of unanswered prayer, it’s actually caused by a misunderstanding of what God is doing in your life.

**Isaiah 55:8-9**

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

**Psalm 86:11**

“Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.”

**Psalm 119:30**

“I have chosen the faithful way; I have placed Your ordinances before me.”

**Proverbs 6:23**

“For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life”

Saints, the book of James tackles the issue of doubting by first addressing God’s purpose for our trials. He says,

**James 1:2-3**

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

Saints, sometimes God doesn’t immediately give the relief we seek because He’s using that particular trial to produce something good in us.

Then He tells us what to do…

**James 1:4-8**

4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Saints, God wants us to come to Him with our requests, trusting that He hears us. However, if He doesn’t answer them immediately, it’s not because He doesn’t care.

His purposes are always accomplished according to His timing not ours. He may answer in a different manner or a later date than we expect. That’s why we must wait and trust Him even when we see no evidence of an answer.

James says, when we doubt the Lord, we are like

**James 1:6**

“But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind”

Saints, one minute we’re confidently trusting God, and the next moment we’re wondering if He answers prayer at all. Perhaps we’ll only believe Him if He gives us a little encouragement along the way.

Or sometimes we fuss and argue with the Lord, thinking this will motivate Him to answer sooner.

But all our doubts simply reveal that we are impatient, we don’t know God’s will, or we’re not yet ready to receive His answer.

Saints, whenever God delays in responding to our petitions, He’s teaching us to consistently trust and believe Him!

And not because we see the answer, but because He’s promised to hear and answer our prayers.

**1 Peter 3:12**

“For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."

**1 John 5:15**

“And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”

Saints, when doubts arise because God delays, it’s due to our lack of trust in Him not a lack of care or ability on the Lord’s part.

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

**What Causes our Faith to Waver?**

**1. We choose to rely on our feelings rather than on the Word of God**

If we shift our focus from the promises in His Word to our feelings, our faith will become unstable. But when our faith is grounded in the Word, we never have to question what God says because we stand on truth.

**Psalm 119:28**

“My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word.”

Saints, Paul said it best:

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

**2. We yield to reason rather than believing God**

Human reasoning and faith are not always compatible. We may have all kinds of good reasons for making a particular request to God, but He sees more of the situation than we do. If the Lord delays in answering, He has a divine reason that is good, legitimate, and helpful

**Psalm 42:5-6**

5 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and 6 my God. My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you…

**3. We fail to see God at work in our Circumstances**

Saints, ff the Lord doesn’t change our circumstances, it’s because He’s using them to bring us to maturity. His primary purpose is not to give us everything we desire but to shape us into the image of His Son, and He knows the perfect way to accomplish this.

Knowing His good purpose frees us from worry and doubt and allows us to relax and wait patiently for the Lord to accomplish what He desires in our lives.

**Romans 8:28**

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

**4. We listen to the Negative Counsel of other People**

Saints, sometimes those around us may discourage us from persevering in prayer since it appears useless from their perspective. They reason that since God hasn’t answered, there is something wrong with our request, and we should stop praying about it. *That’s why it’s wise to keep some of our prayer requests between just us and the Lord*

**Colossians 2:8**

“See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.”

**5. We focus on the circumstances rather than God**

Saints, Jesus’ desire and objective is to increase our love, devotion, and commitment to Him, yet often all we want is for Him to fix our situation. Listen Saints, If He doesn’t intervene according to our time schedule, it’s because He’s working in us to build and strengthen our loving relationship with Him.

**Jeremiah 29:11**

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

**6. We are ignorant of God’s ways**

Saints, when we understand more about God’s ways as revealed in His Word, we will become more patient when His answers are delayed, knowing that He gives us what is best at just the right time. But if we are ignorant of His ways, we’ll react with anger, blame, and accusations toward God.

**Isaiah 46:9-10**

9 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

**7. We carry Guilt over Present or Past Sins**

Saints, instead of looking forward and trusting God, we look back at our sins, forgetting that He has forgiven them. Then we doubt that He will ever answer our prayers since we are undeserving.

**Romans 8:1**

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

**How do we correct our wavering faith?**

Saints, we begin by asking ourselves”

**Where are these doubts coming from?**

If we are currently living in sin, we can expect confusion and doubt to arise.

**Romans 8:7-8**

7 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

**Did God promise to meet your needs?**

Yes, He did:

**Philippians 4:19**

“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

However, we must learn to distinguish between our needs and our wants, some of which may be in conflict with His Word.

**Did God not promise to be with you all the time?**

**Hebrews 13:5**

“I will never leave you nor forsake you”

Saints, His presence with us is a fact that does not depend upon our feelings.

**Have you come to a fork in the road in your life?**

Our faith will waver if we are not living in God’s Word. The Bible is our spiritual compass to guide us, and it will never lead us the wrong way.

**Psalm 119:105**

“Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.”

**Did God not give you the greatest gift of all—the indwelling Holy Spirit?**

He is our guide, helper, and source of strength, who empowers us and gives us a sense of security.

**John 14:26**

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you”

**In Closing:**

**1. What causes your faith to waiver? 2. Is it feelings? 3. Circumstances?**

**4. Uncertainty regarding God’s will?**

**5. What means has God provided to strengthen your faith in Him?**

**6. Are you availing yourself of these means?**

**7. How have you seen God answer your prayers in an unexpected way or on a later date than you wanted?**

**8. What has this taught you about God’s ways that will encourage you to trust Him the next time your faith begins to wobble?**

**Let's Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace." '**