**Our Faith is in Christ Alone**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Hebrews 11:1-6**

**Sunday Morning**

**October 4, 2020**

**Hebrews 11:1-6**

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. 5 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

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

**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.

**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.

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. That’s quite the opposite!

**1 Peter 5:5-8**

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Saints, God’ is 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.

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. We are too impatient.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-5**

4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;

**Psalm 27:14**

“Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!”

Saints, whenever God delays in responding to our petitions, He’s teaching us to consistently trust and believe Him, not because we see the answer, but because He’s promised to hear and answer our prayers. 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.

**Matthew 21:21**

And Jesus answered them, “Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ it will happen.

**What causes our Faith to Waver?**

Saints, 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.

**Ephesians 3:14-19**

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height-- 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Saints, but when our faith is grounded in the Word, we never have to question what God says because we stand on truth. 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.

**We fail to see God at work in our circumstances**

If 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.

**We listen to the negative counsel of other people**

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.

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

His 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. 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.

**We are ignorant of God’s ways**

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.

**We carry guilt over Present or Past Sins**

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.

**How do we correct our Wavering Faith?**

We begin by asking ourselves the following questions:

**Where are these doubts coming from?**

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

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

Yes, He did. 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”

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.

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

Saints, the Holy Spirit is our guide, helper, and source of strength, who empowers us and gives us a sense of security.

**1. What causes your faith to waiver? Is it feelings? Circumstances? Uncertainty regarding God’s will?**

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

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

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

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

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**The Little Video >**

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**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." '**