

Faith

#0666

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—June 19, 1959

I want to study with you something that's more precious than gold, more valuable than all the precious stones in this world. What is it?

"That the trial of your..."

What?

"...faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" 1 Peter 1:7.

Is this something that can survive the world? Yes. There's no wealth of this world that we can store up and take with us to the next. When a millionaire dies, he doesn't take anything with him. The question is, how much did he leave? Well, he left everything. Didn't he? He left everything.

The only thing we can take with us to the next world, friends, is character. Is that right? That's right. Faith is more precious than gold. Do you have faith? It would be interesting if we had a little cross-section of each mind here tonight of the understanding of faith. I would like to study it with you a little tonight about what faith is. Let's take another text on this. What faith does and how important it is:

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" 1 John 5:4.

What does faith do? It overcomes the world. If we want to overcome the world, we need faith. If we don't overcome the world, what is it we lack? Faith. If we have faith, what will we do? Overcome the world, sure as can be. All right, now we have the value of faith and what faith does.

Here is a question Jesus asks:

"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:3.

What do you think? Will he? If you study the question, the inference is that He won't find much. That's the whole point of what He's talking about.

"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:3.

I was interested in finding an answer to that in this little book *Spiritual Gifts*. This little book was printed 95 years ago. It says:

“In the last days the earth will be almost destitute of true faith” *Spiritual Gifts, Volume 3, page 94.*

Well, that is what Jesus is saying here. As sad as that picture is, I’m glad the word “almost” is in there. Let’s leave it out and see what it says. “In the last days, the earth will be destitute of true faith.” What would that mean? None at all. But is that what it says? No. It will be what? *Almost* destitute. Then will there be some? Yes, but it will be concentrated in a very few people. Those who have it, will have plenty of it. You get a picture of them in Revelation 14:12. Say it with me:

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

Faith? Yes, the faith of Jesus. Will He find faith on the earth? Yes. He’ll find people who have the same faith He had—a few. You see, when Jesus was talking over here in Luke 18, it was all part of the same story over in Luke 17. The chapter divisions are just put in there by man for convenience. Notice back in the 17th chapter and the 26th verse:

“And as it was in the days of...”

Who?

“...Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man”
Luke 17:26.

Back there, when Noah entered the Ark the flood came and did what? Destroyed them all. And then, He mentions the days of whom, verse 28? Lot. Why, you remember that the righteous were so few in Sodom that Abraham pleaded with God until he got God to spare the city for how many? Ten people. The angels couldn’t find that many righteous people in the great city of Sodom. There wasn’t much faith left, was there? Notice Jesus says:

“Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed” Luke 17:30.

Will the whole world be converted? No. Will most of the world come along and believe God? No, they won’t. In the last days, the earth will be *almost* destitute of true faith.

Do you think we are anywhere near the last days? Where do you think we are? In them? Yes. Well then, if we are in the last days, the earth is almost destitute of what? Faith.

Do you notice that there is a word there in front of “faith”? “True” faith. Of course, the only faith there is, is true faith, but that word suggests that there is a pseudo-faith, a false faith, a counterfeit faith—something that passes for faith; something that people think is faith that isn’t faith at all.

What is faith anyway? This article is so rare that God takes the things that men know about, like gold, and says faith is more precious. This faith gives us the victory that overcomes the world. This faith that Jesus is looking for when He comes and says that He will find very little of it. What is it anyway? How is it revealed? How could you know whether you have it or not?

Well, I’ll tell you, dear friends, we can see already from what we have read in Luke 17 and 18 that it does not believe what the world believes. Back there, in the days of Noah, did the world believe that a flood was coming? No. Did it come? Yes. Now, I want to ask you something, when the rain was falling, and the boat was rising, did all the world believe a flood was coming? Yes. Well, they all got faith then at once, didn’t they? No!

That is my point, friends—they didn’t get faith. Faith is not believing in a flood when it’s raining. That’s not faith. That’s not faith. Many people suppose they have faith when all they have is good eyesight. That’s all.

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things...”

What are the next two words?

“...*not seen* as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house” Hebrews 11:7.

What did Noah do? He built an ark. Why did he build an ark? He had faith. God told him a flood was coming. He believed it. And that act of believing God in things not seen as yet, was an act of what? Faith.

Do you have that kind of faith? Or does God have to prove something to you before you believe it? Right there is the question, my friends. Does God have to make it look reasonable to you before you accept it? How many people I see waiting to obey God on some point until they see the sense in it until they see the reason for it. And you would be surprised how many people there are just waiting around to help you see that something God said is really not reasonable and that you shouldn’t do it until it appeals to your reason.

But was there a reason for building the ark as far as human reason is concerned? There never was until the door was shut and Noah was in there, and the rain started to fall. But then it was too late to do anything about it. Do you know why, friends? Because the whole thing hung on the point of faith.

Take the experience of Lot and Sodom that Jesus was talking about there in Luke 17. You remember that the angels came down and told Lot that God was going to do what? Destroy the city. “If you have anybody here that you love, go and tell them, and get them out of here.”

So, he went around in the night, waking up his loved ones. What did they say? Why, they laughed at him. They mocked him. They said, “He just had a breakdown up here or something.” The stars were shining brightly. Everything looked lovely and peaceful. In that beautiful valley with its tropical vegetation, everything had the atmosphere and appearance that it would continue on indefinitely. And so, they depended upon, what? Their human reason, their human ideas. The message of God was set aside.

But when the fire started to fall, do you suppose they had faith? No. They didn’t have faith. They had what? They had sight, but did it do them any good? No, no.

When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth? Oh friends, when He appears in the East, there on the glorious cloud surrounded with ten thousand of His angels, will the world recognize Him then? Yes. And will that be faith, won’t it?

Oh no! It won’t be faith. They’ll be crying to what? The rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne. Why? Because they have never had faith. Or, if they had it, they lost it.

I want to read you something that is impressing my mind.

“The prevailing spirit of our time is that of infidelity...”

Do you know what infidelity is? Unbelief. An infidel is a man who doesn’t believe. Isn’t that right? And...

“...the prevailing spirit of our time is that of infidelity and apostasy—a spirit of pretended illumination because of a knowledge of the truth, but in reality of the blindest presumption. There is a spirit of opposition to the plain word of God and to the testimony of His Spirit. There is a spirit of idolatrous exaltation of mere human reason above the revealed wisdom of God” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 79.*

There you have it—God says something, but ah, human beings reason with us about it. “Oh well, that couldn’t happen that way.” “That’s not so important.” “No, you don’t have to do that. You don’t have to be that peculiar. Oh no, no, no. There are plenty of good people who see it differently.”

The human mind loves to be convinced that what it wants to do is all right. And so, human reason goes up, and the Word of God goes down. That is what? That’s presumption, friends. That’s the spirit of our age. Oh, I wish it was only out in the world, don’t you? What a pity when it invades the church and gets right in the homes and hearts of the professed people of God!

You know, years ago when modern higher criticism was beginning to shoot its arrows at the Bible, and the wise men in the universities of this world began to pick the Bible to pieces; they found a number of things in the Bible they could find no proof for historically. They began to dissect them and hold them up as evidence that the Bible wasn't inspired, that the Bible was just a collection of folklore, myths, and legends, and so forth.

Let me give you a few examples. The Old Testament speaks of a warlike nation called the Hittites. You've read about them. Well, the scholars smiled indulgently at that. They said, "Well, the truth is there never was a nation called the Hittites. That's just some Jewish legend. There never were any people called the Hittites. There is no record of them anywhere." And so, for years the wise men said that there were no Hittites. But when the archaeologists got to digging around in the Middle East, well, by and by, they began to dig up evidence from the very earth itself of the existence of this very nation of the Hittites.

Today it's fashionable to believe that the Hittites were there. So now all those people now believe the Bible, don't they? No. They don't believe the Bible. They believe what they see—what they dig out of the earth.

You've read in the book of Daniel about a king called Nebuchadnezzar. The wise men said, "Yes, of course, there was a king called Nebuchadnezzar."

The Bible also tells in the book of Daniel about a man called Belshazzar that was king of Babylon. Have you read about him? Yes, you remember that He was on the throne the last night of Babylon. The Bible tells all about it.

The critics said, "Oh my! Daniel wasn't written at that time at all. Part of the proof is that whoever wrote this story has put in the name of a man called Belshazzar, and there never was a king by that name." For years the critics held that up as evidence that part of the Bible was a mistake.

What do you suppose the people who had faith said? They said, "We believe the Bible. We believe there was a king in Babylon by the name of Belshazzar." After a while, friends, over there, dug up some clay tablets in the valley of the Euphrates. In them was a prayer by the king of Babylon for his son Belshazzar. Oh, that proves the Bible is true, and now I can believe it? Is that faith? No. That is not faith, my friends. That is demonstration. Do you see the difference? The man who had faith believed it when God said so. The man who didn't have faith had to believe it when the tablet was there in front of his eyes with the name Belshazzar on it. But that wasn't faith. Oh, no! It wasn't faith at all.

Let me take some other examples.

I pick up a book called *Ministry of Healing*. This book is fifty years old. I want to read a few things from this book, and I want you to know that most of the proof that is accepted today as evidence that what I am reading is so has come since that book was written, and a large share of it in just the last few years. Take this one on page 327:

“Tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison”
Ministry of Healing, page 327.

That word “malignant” is very interesting. Do you know that when that page was penned, cancer of the lung was almost unheard of? Did you know that today they are taking out thousands of parts of lungs and sometimes whole lungs because of cancer brought on by the use of tobacco?

You are reading about it in the public press of today, aren't you? The great magazines like Reader's Digest and News Week and others have big articles on the evidence that is piling up and piling up, and piling up that tobacco is just what this says—a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison. And today, doctor Ochsner, one of the greatest surgeons of the South, says that any man who is a heavy smoker will die of lung cancer unless something else kills him first. That's right. And he is operating on hundreds and hundreds of them. Oh well, this proves that what we read in *Ministry of Healing* is right, doesn't it? We believe it now, don't we? Well now, friends, if we have faith, we believe it before anybody gets any cancer from it.

Do you see the difference between faith and the opposite of faith? You know, even the Devil at the final judgment is going to be brought face to face with such an array of facts that he is going to have to admit that he is wrong and God is right, and he is going to bow down before the universe and admit all that. Will that mean that he has suddenly gotten faith? No.

What is faith anyway? Faith is believing God when the only reason you believe Him is because you believe God. It is believing God like a little child believes its father and mother. When the mother says, “Darling, that is A,” what does the little child say? “A.” When mother says, “Book,” what does the little child say? “Book.” That is the way we all learned to talk, isn't it? We had faith. And except ye be converted and become as little children you will not enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

In this same book, I read something very interesting about cancer:

“People are continually eating flesh that is filled with tuberculous and cancerous germs. Tuberculosis, cancer, and other fatal diseases are thus communicated” *Ministry of Healing*, page 313.

Cancer from flesh-eating? Cancer from germs? This book was written over 50 years ago. Some 30 years ago, when I was a student at Loma Linda, the only people who believed that cancer was a germ disease were those that believed the Spirit of God inspired this book. I wish I had kept some of the articles of that time. Of course, they can be found in the libraries of today. There were magazine articles and scientific dissertations warning the public about cancer, telling what was known by science about cancer. And I remember this statement they said about cancer, “We do not know what causes cancer, but we know it isn't caused by germs.”

That was the science of 30 years ago. But there were some people who had a simple enough faith and said, “We believe that. We believe that this is Jesus

talking to us. We believe that one of the ways people get cancer is eating meat that is filled with cancerous germs.”

Well, now today, friends, there are many scientists who are convinced that one of the causes of cancer is a virus similar to the virus that causes polio—infantile paralysis. They have already proved that certain forms of cancer in the chicken are caused in that way. They reason that if those viruses can cause cancer in chicken, they probably can cause cancer in human beings too. I expect they are reasoning pretty clearly on that point.

There are some, of course, that drag their feet just as there are some dragging their feet on the idea that tobacco is causing lung cancer. The research men who are paid by the tobacco companies of America haven’t admitted that tobacco causes lung cancer yet. I hope we will not wait on anything that God has said for men to find the evidence and then admit it. If we do, we lack faith.

Here is another interesting statement.

“If milk is used, it should be thoroughly sterilized; with this precaution, there is less danger of contracting disease from its use” *Ibid.*, page 302.

I am not very old, but I can remember that when people did that, they did it just because this book said so. But today, there are thousands, and I suppose millions, who are educated to the point that raw milk is dangerous. Why? Because of undulant fever.

Someone says, “We’ll fix that.” That brings me to another point. When men get to reasoning about what God has said, and they find out how they can do what they want and still meet the problem as they see it, they always overlook something. Human reason has its way of solving the undulant fever problem without doing what this says. They are overlooking some things. And maybe tomorrow or next week or next month, science will come along with some more evidence to prove this means just what it says. But the people who have faith won’t believe it anymore after that than they do right now.

All right, take another statement on the same page, in the same paragraph. Speaking of butter, it says:

“As a rule, it is better to dispense with it all together” *Ibid.*

I remember when I was a boy and a young man that many people looked upon those who didn’t eat butter as fanatics. All the evidence that was needed for some people to prove that a person was a fanatic was if they didn’t eat butter. When science came along and proved about vitamins and that butter was very rich in vitamin A, why then, surely something was wrong with the people who took it literally and did what it said.

But today, friends, you can read in the medical journals and the public press all kinds of articles telling people to cut down on, what? Butter and animal fat of all

kinds, cream and eggs and meat. Why? Because of the fat question. Not just because you can get overweight, oh no. But because of the piling up in the bloodstream of, what? Cholesterol causing those deposits in the blood vessels that cause hardening of the arteries and high blood pressure and coronaries, and contribute in a large way to the leading cause of death in America today, which is heart failure. Am I correct? You are all familiar with that.

So today, the man who says, “No, thank you. I don’t care for any butter. I will take a few olives or a little olive oil. Or perhaps some other kind of oil with unsaturated fatty acids.” He’s up to date. He’s scientific.

“When properly prepared, olives, like nuts, supply the place of butter and flesh meats. The oil, as eaten in the olive, is far preferable to animal oil or fat” *Ibid.*, page 298.

We know more of the reasons for that now than we did fifty years ago when it was written. But it isn’t any truer. I want to tell you something else, friends, there are some more reasons that they haven’t found out yet. You say, “What are they?” I don’t know. Man never gets to the end of God’s wisdom. That is the thing I want you to see. Man never gets to the end of God’s wisdom, and the fellow who is always trailing human science and human reason is way behind the man who is up there with God, listening to what God says, and doing everything God says. That man is ahead of tomorrow’s scientific discoveries, isn’t he?

All right, here’s another one, page 300 of the same book. Now, my subject tonight is not diet. My subject is not this book, *Ministry of Healing*. My subject is, what? Faith.

Really, what I’m after as I study with you, friends, is not to get you to believe these things I’m going over now. I know you believe them. Oh, my heart is longing that we would believe some other things that are contrary to human reason and that are contrary to our own inclinations! You and me right here tonight, do you think we will be tested on anything? Yes. But I don’t think that it will be on these things that I just read to you about. The evidence on those is so glaring that a man would have to be blind in both eyes miss it today. Wouldn’t he? Here is another one of that same kind:

“For use in bread making, the super fine white flour is not the best. Its use is neither healthful nor economical. Fine-flour bread is lacking in nutritive elements to be found in bread made from the whole wheat” *Ibid.*, page 300.

About two years after this book was published a scientist came along and discovered something he called vitamins. Pretty soon, they discovered another vitamin, and pretty soon another. When I was going to school out at Loma Linda, you could count the then known vitamins on the fingers of one hand, but you couldn’t now. You would have to use your fingers and toes and start over again. What does it mean? Oh, it means men are finding out some of the reasons why whole wheat flour is better than white.

But watch human reason, friends. With all those discoveries and all that research, are the masses eating whole wheat bread? Are they? Do you think very many of these doctors and scientists themselves are eating it? Why, it is like tobacco and lung cancer. Did you know that some of the very men who are bringing out the greatest evidence that tobacco causes lung cancer are sitting there puffing cigarettes while they have their committees sending out the figures to all the nations on the relationship between tobacco and lung cancer?

What is the matter? It takes more than mere evidence to get people to do something. What's needed is faith. Faith isn't just seeing some fact. Faith is believing God and wanting to please Him.

I come back to this whole wheat and white flour. Finally, the scientists got together and said, "The people are eating this white flour bread, and it is causing pellagra, and it is causing this and that, and people are not getting the elements. But they won't eat the whole wheat. Let's put back some of the things that have been taken out." So they put some minerals back. They put some vitamins back. And that fixed it all up. Today we don't have to worry about it. All we have to do is get enriched bread, and we can still eat the white stuff and yet be properly nourished.

Or can we? I was reading something very interesting on that from a nutritional authority. He said, "After we put back everything we know and feed it to the rats, they don't seem to do as well as the ones that live on whole wheat flour."

I wonder why that is? Could it be that God knew what He was about when He made wheat? And would faith believe it in the first place before the scientist ever took it apart and tried to put it back together again? Do you see how simple faith is, friends? It is very simple—just like a little child, just to believe God.

Oh, I pray, friends, that in some of the matters we may not see, we'll have faith. I want to ask you, do any of these things I have gone over (the Hittites, or Belshazzar, or tobacco and lung cancer, or cancerous germs, or any of these other things) do any of those test your faith today? Do any of them show or prove your faith today? No, they don't. If you have faith, it will be demonstrated in some other areas where human reason may not show so clearly that what God says is so.

Just as there is skepticism in the world regarding the Bible, and it's fashionable to doubt and to reason things out, so I'm sorry to say that there is a skepticism that's popular among some who profess to be waiting for the coming of the Son of man about things God has revealed to us through the wonderful channel of the Spirit of Prophecy in education, in the treatment of the sick, in dress, in association, courtship, marriage, music, literature, and many other areas. I say that there is a skepticism that's popular that masks itself in this way—some clear statement is read from the messages of Jesus, and then human reason takes over. Human reason begins to say, "Oh well, it must not mean exactly that. Surely it couldn't mean that."

With that beginning, where is the end? There is no end, my friends. That is the point. There is no end. That is not the road to faith. That is the road to doubt.

“There is a spirit of idolatrous exaltation of mere human reason above the revealed wisdom of God.” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 79.*

I remember talking to a young man on a certain subject. It was the question of association. A certain question came up. I said, “I have a reference here that answers that question. Would you do what it said if you saw it?”

He answered, “Let me see what it says.”

What did he lack? He lacked faith. Now, if I had gotten the reference out and convinced him that was good sense, then would he have had faith, wouldn’t? No. That wouldn’t have been faith. He would just be convinced that it was good sense.

If a bottle you are about to take has a skull and crossbones on the back, but you haven’t seen it, and I can persuade you to turn it around, and you do see it, then do you have faith in me when I tell you not to take it? No. You don’t have faith in me. You have good sense enough not to open that bottle with the skull and crossbones on it and swallow what’s in it. That isn’t faith. That’s a little bit of good sense, that’s all.

I want to tell you, my dear friends, young and old, this. Whenever God or God’s servants have to convince you that something God says is reasonable and that it is going to hurt you if you don’t follow it, you don’t have faith. When you have to wait until you can see the sense in something, you don’t have faith.

God warns us of the peril of worldly education, and we say, “Well now, wait a minute. There are a lot of people who get worldly education, and it doesn’t seem to cause them to lose all their Christian experience. After all...” So, we begin to reason, and we find some way out, some way around.

Will God let us do it? Oh yes, my friends, God will do what men won’t do. Men sometimes try to get us in a corner and crowd us to the wall, and make us admit something. God won’t do that. God says:

“These things hast thou done, and I kept silence” Psalms 50:21.

My dear friend, because you are getting away with something, don’t think that proves God is asleep or that God didn’t mean what He said. God will let you go on. It may be for years, before tobacco gives you lung cancer or before the high use of animal fat gives you high blood pressure. Oh yes, it may take a long time. And there are many other things you may do in reading, in education, in association, and in all that enters into life, and apparently have a Christian experience.

But like those hidden viruses that are working away in the lungs of a man that is using tobacco day by day, so there is something working in your soul, my friends, if you do not believe God. And sooner or later, perhaps when it is too late, you will come face to face with the evidence that proves human reason was wrong and divine revelation was correct.

Oh, is there anyone who has faith in God? When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? “Ah but,” somebody says, “It doesn’t hurt my conscience. I can do this, and it doesn’t hurt me. I can follow this course, and it doesn’t hurt my conscience at all.” Oh, that’s the test of faith—what hurts your conscience? Is that it?

Let us turn to a very simple text dealing with a tremendous truth. If you forget everything else we study tonight, be sure to remember this:

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” Romans 10:17.

If you have not heard the Word of God, do you think you will have very much faith? I’m afraid not, friends. And even if you hear it and don’t listen to it, I don’t think you will have very much.

Faith comes by, what? Hearing. Hearing what? The radio and listening to the television, reading the newspaper and the popular magazines—will that develop faith in your mind and heart? I am not discussing this moment whether it is right or wrong to listen to those things. In all of them, there is a hodgepodge of good and bad, true and false, fact and fiction. That isn’t my point. I’m asking you, how does faith come? It comes by what? Hearing the Word of God. Do you know why? Because faith is believing God.

Paul says:

“How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” Romans 10:14.

How can we have faith in something we have never read, my friends? We are told that many are going directly contrary to the light which God has so graciously given, why? Because they do not read the books.

I propose two things. I propose that you and I, as never before, enter into the study of what God has given through His Word and through the *Testimonies*. And then, that we settle in our hearts in advance that we are going to believe it as soon as we read it without waiting for any other proof. What do you say? That’s faith. When you can kneel down before you ever open the Bible and say like Samuel, “Speak Lord for Thy servant heareth,” that’s faith. When you can say before you read a chapter, “Lord, tell me anything You want to in this chapter, and I will believe it and do it,” that’s faith. We can take any of these inspired volumes that God has given in these latter days and say, “Lord, I take this for myself instead of trying to find someone who will show me how to argue out of it, I’m simply going to pray for the grace to do the thing You say without even looking for a reason why I don’t have to do it.” That’s faith.

And when the Son of man cometh, will He find faith on the earth? Not very much. In the last days, the earth will be, what? Almost destitute of true faith. But will there be some? Oh yes, friends. There will be some people who will be all faith. What faith there is in the world will be greatly concentrated. There will be a few as in

Noah's day, as in Lot's day. There will be a few who will believe anything God says. There will be a few who will believe everything He says. And the world will look upon them as crazy like they did Noah and Lot. But when the flood comes, they will be riding in the Ark. When the fire descends, they will be with God. That's what Jesus is looking for. That's what Jesus is looking for.

May we bow our heads?

Dear Savior, we thank Thee that You died so we may have this gift of faith. Help us as we look to Calvary tonight that our hearts may be stirred with a great love for the One who gave everything for us, and that faith may awaken in our hearts that Somebody Who loves us this much is worth trusting and worth depending on. And wherein we have let human reason steal away the sweet assurance of faith, we are sorry Lord, and we repent of it and give it up tonight.

As Thy little children, we just stand here before the cross and look up to that Savior and say, "Lord, we love You, and we know You love us. We believe what You say is true, and we are going to accept it and walk in it." We thank Thee in Jesus' name, amen.

[Pastor Bill Boykin sings, and then Elder Frazee gives the final appeal.]

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