

NOT FAITH ALONE

Sunday Morning: December 16, 2001

Text: Hebrews 11:1-2 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2. For by it the elders obtained a good report."

Hebrews 11:6 "But without faith *it is impossible to please him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

I want to continue our thoughts on faith this morning. We have been studying the significance of faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Faith gives substance to things we hope for. We think about substance we think about something hard, something that we can hold on to. Substance is something that we can grasp and understand. Not only does faith give substance to things hoped for, it also gives evidence in your life. Not only your outward actions to other people, but it also gives evidence in your thought life. When things are not going as we would like them to go, there are times that we become unglued. Faith gives us the ability to have stability and that is the evidence of things not seen. God does not want us to be anxious for anything. Faith says trust Him, even though you can't see him. Faith puts substance to the Lord whom we can't see.

We do not want to see the Lord until it is time go home to be with him. If I were to see Jesus standing in this room, faith would be gone. If you see something you no longer hope for it. I do not want to see Jesus because I want to continue to please him.

In verse two it tells us that the elders obtained a good report by faith. What that means to me is that I can also obtain a good report by faith. I want the kind of report that will give me an entrance into the coming kingdom with full joy.

Let us continue our thoughts on faith. Faith does not work alone.

THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH

Hebrews 10:38 "Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

For us to live by faith we must be just. What does it mean to be just? You can't live in sin and live by faith. The two just do not go together. Being just means that you are being obedient. That is the bottom line on being just. When you are being just you are doing that which is your duty to do. Luke 17:10 "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." If you are just getting by in your Christian life by being just you are an unprofitable servant. The Lord want us to go beyond doing what is expected of us and live a life of faith.

EXAMINE AND PROVE

2 Corinthians 13:5 "Examine [present active] yourselves, **whether ye be in the faith; prove** [present active] your own selves. **Know** [επιγινωσκω, present active] ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be **reprobates** [αδοκιμος, disapproved]?"

The word *examine* is a present active verb. The present tense implies a continual examination. The active voice means that we are the ones that do the examination. Examinations are to be an on going thing. It is a daily thing. Are you putting substance to things that you are hoping for? Are you showing evidence that those things that we can not see are real. That is part of the examination.

When I spent some time in the summers at my grandmother's farm I like to play down at the creek and in the dirt under the water cistern in the back yard. In the evening when it was time to

take a bath, I would come in and there would be a time for examination. First of all, she would look for beads under my neck. The bead she was looking for was beads of dirt. I always had those. We also had an examination time for ticks. In Texas they had ticks, so we looked for ticks. The Lord wants us to check for ticks of faith. Not to get rid ourselves of faith but to make sure that faith is alive in our lives.

We need to prove ourselves as well. The word *prove* is also in the present tense. When I think about proving my faith I think of taking risks that would honor the Lord. When it comes to giving, there are times we might be tempted not to give and play it safe as far as having extra cash on hand. One way that we can prove our faith is to give God his portion even when it means that we will not be able to pay a bill that is due. Another way that we can prove our faith is rest in the circumstance and let God work out the difficulty or opportunity that has come our way. Not resting on human wisdom.

The word *know* is a significant word and it means *exact knowledge* or *knowledge upon knowledge*. You know what is on the inside of you. You know where you are living. The question is "do we have the mind of Christ." Is the hope alive? Is Colossians 1:27 ". . .Christ in you, the hope of glory:" working or do you need some one to travail in birth again as in Galatians 4:19 "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until **Christ be formed** in you." If we are reprobate we have departed from the faith and Christ does not dwell in our hearts. Ephesians 3:17 "That **Christ** may **dwell** in your hearts **by faith**; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love." If Christ indwelt us we would have the mind of Christ as in Philippians 2:5-8 "**Let this mind be in you**, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7. But made himself of **no reputation**, and took upon him the form of a **servant**, and was made in the likeness of men: 8. And being found in fashion as a man, he **humbled** himself, and became **obedient** unto death, even the death of the cross." "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith... except ye be reprobates?" 2 Corinthians 13:5. The word *reprobate* could be translated *disapproved*. Do you want God's blessed approval or do you want God's disapproval? It take faith.

FAITH WITHOUT LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:2 "And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

This verse tells us that faith dose not work by it self. Has anyone been out this past week moving mountains? We just don't have that kind of faith. We all need to love to make the faith that we do have to work. If we have the faith that moves mountains and do not have love, moving any mountain would be a waste of time and God's power. For faith to be blessed, love must be present. We see that in the next verse.

FAITH WORKS BY LOVE

Galatians 5:6 "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but **faith which worketh by love.**"

Love must be present if we want faith to work. For us to please God we need faith according to Hebrews 11:6. If all that we have is faith apart from love we can't please God.

When we talk about love today we talk about warm fuzzy feeling that we have toward each other. Love being associated with faith means there will be substance and evidence to our love for each other and not just swelling words of love without acts of love to go with the words.

SPIRITUAL ARMOR

1 Thessalonians 5:8 "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the **breastplate of faith and love**; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

Faith and love is part of the spiritual armor of a Christian. This armor is called the breastplate of righteousness in Ephesians 6:14 "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;" Further insight into the armor is found in Ephesians 6:16 "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Faith quenches fiery darts that could set us on fire that could cause death.

We need to protect our heart which is in the breast of the soldier. One fiery dart in the heart means certain death. When our heart has become dead, then the issues of life from our heart become dead works because of Proverbs 4:23 "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life."

THIS IS LOVE

2 John 1:6 "And this **is love**, that we **walk after** [according to] his **commandments**. This is **the commandment**, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."

What is the evidence of love? It is obedience. Who lives by faith? The just live by faith Hebrews 10:38 "Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Who are the just? They are the one who walk according to his commandments.

KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS

John 14:15 "If ye **love me**, keep my commandments."

The Lord was talking to his disciples, why did he say "If ye love me?" The simple reason is that you can be saved and not love the Lord. This verse implies that if you love the Lord you will be obedient and if you do not you won't. Teachers may scream "First class conditional." and say that all saved love the Lord and are obedient. If you are not obedient you were never saved. This logic is faulty because of the reality of disobedient Christians.

WORKS OF FAITH AND LOVE

James 2:14-17 "What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a **man say he hath faith**, and have not works? can faith save him? **15.** If a **brother** or sister be **naked**, and **destitute** of daily food, **16.** And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding **ye give them not those things which are needful** to the body; what *doth it* profit? **17.** Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

Here we have faith working by love by ministering to a brother. Who is a brother? A brother is one who is seeking to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. Not every saved person is a brother. The emphasis is on a brother, one who is of the household of faith. Those in the household of faith are those who are just and living by faith, therefore, pleasing God.

WHEN WE LOVE THE BRETHREN

1 John 3:14-15 "We know that we have passed from [the] **death** [thanatos] unto **life** [verse 15, agelasting life], **because we love the brethren**. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death. **15.** Whosoever **hateth** his **brother** is a **murderer**: and ye know that **no murderer** hath **eternal** [agelasting, kingdom age] **life** abiding in him."

This passage deals with demotion and promotion. The word *death* has the definite article before it and is a reference to being demoted or denied being promoted to a position of honor and glory. There is the definite article *the* before the word *life* and that is a reference to a life of honor and glory in the coming kingdom after being promoted. If we love the brethren, and we are seeking to enter into the kingdom of the heavens, then we will know that we have passed from

being demoted to be promoted in the coming kingdom. If we do not love our brother who is seeking an entrance into the coming kingdom of heaven, then we are considered a murderer and we know that no murderer will have a life of honor and glory in the coming kingdom.

Some people get mixed up on this verse thinking that a murderer can not be saved. Others try to enter into the idea of one who possesses salvation and those who are just professors of salvation.

EYE HATH NOT SEEN

1 Corinthians 2:9 "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared **for them that love him.**"

The blessings that the Lord has for those who love him can not be described. Eye hath not seen the blessings nor ear heard of the blessing, neither can our imagination help us to comprehend those blessings. We know that Paul went into paradise but was not allowed to talk or write about what he saw. Paul saw some things with his eye, but not the things which God hath prepared. They must have been hidden from him.

Faith gives substance to the things not seen or heard about and love makes the faith work.

CROWN OF LIFE

James 1:12 "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is **tried** [approved], he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath **promised to them that love him.**"

The word *temptation* also carries the meaning of trials and testings. The word *tried* is also translated *approved*. How do we stand approved? By examining ourselves if we be in the faith from 2 Corinthians 13:5. Another verse we have not included but need to see is 2 Timothy 2:15 "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth." The New American Standard Bible gives a better translation than the King James. To be approved is to escape being shamed at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Accurately handling the word of truth is essential if we expect to be approved. James adds the element of love. Love, again, encompasses obedience and faithfulness on our part.

What has been promised to those who endure? A crown of life has been promised. Kings and Lords wear crowns and Jesus Christ is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

RICH IN FAITH AND LOVE

James 2:5 "Hearken, my **beloved brethren**, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world **rich in faith**, and **heirs of the kingdom** which he hath **promised to them that love him?**"

This verse is addressed to *beloved brethren*. Beloved brethren are those seeking to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. It is the rich in faith that will inherit the kingdom of the heavens. It is not faith apart from love that will be heirs but those who are rich in faith and love him also.

FAITH AND LOVE REMEMBERED

1 Thessalonians 1:3 "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;"

The faith and love of those at Thessalonica were inspiring to Paul. He wanted to remember what they were doing when it comes to faith, love, and hope. They were enduring in their hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. They were not discouraged even though they suffered much persecution. The persecution that really hurts is the persecution that comes from within the church.

Remembering without ceasing really meant that he talked about this church with others.

FAITH GROWS AND LOVE ABOUNDS

2 Thessalonians 1:3 "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;"

He was thanking God for their growing faith and love. They went from little faith to exceeding faith. Their love for one another was abounding. This was making their faith work and they were pleasing God. These brethren cared about each other and Paul as well. They ministered to Paul's needs.

HEARD ABOUT YOUR FAITH AND LOVE

Ephesians 1:13-18 "In whom ye also *trusted*, after that **ye** [saints and faithful in Christ, v.1] **heard** the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also **after that ye believed**, ye were **sealed** with that holy Spirit of [the] **promise**,

The word *trusted* is in italics and that means it was added by the translators. This word that has been added refers to the word *trusted* in Ephesians 1:12 "That **we** (saints and faithful in Christ, v.1, which are Jews) should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." The word *trusted* should be translated *hope*.

This verse is not a verse that is dealing with the common salvation. This verse is dealing with the salvation in Christ that is to be associated with the promise. The promise according to 1 John 2:25 "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life." pertains to life for the coming millennial age. Another verse that deals with this salvation is found in 2 Timothy 2:9-10 "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but **the word of God** (the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven) is not bound. 10. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the **salvation** which is **in** Christ Jesus with eternal glory." There is a salvation in Christ that pertains to the kingdom of the heavens and there is a salvation outside of Christ that puts us into the body of Christ.

THE PROMISE

14. Which is the **earnest** of our **inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

I believe the purchased possession is the church or the elect. The redemption of the purchased possession is the catching away of the church. The redemption of the church is when you take those who have been in captivity home with you. A kinsman redeemer brings the one who has been redeemed home with him.

When you redeem your watch at the pawn shop what do you get to do with it? You get to take it home with you. The Lord has redeemed us and when he takes us home he will have his purchased possession with him. Until the time of our redemption he has sealed us, that is, he has made the down payment on the purchase possession to ensure us that he will come and get us at the proper time. The inheritance is something that I have not seen but by faith I have put substance to that inheritance by faith. The hope of the saints and faith is the inheritance given us in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our hope is, by faith, in that inheritance.

This inheritance is not salvation that we associate with being born into the family of God. Only those in the family can be redeemed and those in the family are the ones who will be heirs.

AFTER FAITH AND LOVE

15. Wherefore I also, **after I heard of your faith** in the Lord Jesus, and **love** unto all the **saints**,

There are two key thoughts that stirred Paul to prayer for those in Ephesus. It was faith and

love unto all the saints that stirred Paul to pray a particular prayer for them.

GIVING THANKS

16. Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

It seems that Paul was giving thanks that they were demonstrating faith and love. It is these two elements in a child of God that should bring unceasing thanks giving.

THE PRAYER

17. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, **may give** unto you the spirit of **wisdom** and **revelation** in the **knowledge** [ἐπιγνωσις, knowledge upon knowledge] of **him**:

When faith and love were operative in the saints, they were ready to receive additional enlightenment. They were ready to receive the spirit of wisdom and revelation. Wisdom has to do with understanding what you are reading or hearing. Paul desired that they would understand what they were reading. Paul desired that God to open his Word to them that they might have further light as to the hope of his calling.

When faith and love are being practiced, these are good indicators that they have been called unto the heavenly inheritance.

The word knowledge is more than just simply knowing something. It is a knowledge that goes deeper than surface knowledge. This knowledge comes when the Holy Spirit reveals truth concerning the hope of our inheritance.

We have studied the milk of the word and the meat of the word in the past. The knowledge upon knowledge in verse 17 is where a piece of butter fat from the milk sticks to another piece of butter fat and it takes the ministry of the Holy Spirit for this to happen. The churning of the milk of the word will produce butter. It is the butter or meat of the Word that we need to know how to please the Lord.

HOPE OF HIS CALLING

18. The **eyes** of your understanding [heart] being **enlightened**; that ye **may know** what is the **hope** of his **calling**, and what the riches of the glory of his **inheritance in the saints**,"

Paul wants them to understand what the hope of His calling is. What is the hope of His calling? 1 Thessalonians 2:12 "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath **called** you unto his **kingdom and glory**." Colossians has the same message basically speaking.

HEARD ABOUT YOUR FAITH AND LOVE

Colossians 1:2-5 "To the **saints** and **faithful brethren in Christ** which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I wanted to read verse two so that you would know that he is not addressing the lost nor just the saved. He is addressing the saved who are saints and faithful brethren. Saints are those who are separated from that which is unclean. Saints are those who are just. He is addressing the faithful brethren who are in Christ.

PRAYING

3. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **praying** always for you, As in Ephesians, Paul makes mention of his prayers for those in Colossi. He is praying always for them and we find out why in verse four.

SINCE WE HEARD

4. Since we heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus, and of the **love** *which ye have* to all the

saints (brethren),

When Paul heard that they were living by faith that works by love, he knew it was time to start praying for them. In verse five we will see the specific prayer that Paul was praying for them.

SUBSTANCE GIVEN TO THE HOPE

5. For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof **ye heard** before in **the word of the truth of the gospel**;"

Paul was praying for them concerning the hope which is laid up in heaven for them. That hope pertains to their inheritance. 1 Peter 1:3-5 "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (in Christ according to 2 Timothy 2:10) ready to be revealed in the last time." 2 Timothy 2:10 "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they **may** also **obtain** the **salvation** which is **in Christ** Jesus with eternal glory."

FOR THIS CAUSE

Colossians 1:9-13 "**For this cause** we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to **pray** for you, and to desire that ye might be **filled** with the **knowledge** [ἐπιγνωσις, knowledge upon knowledge] of his will in all **wisdom** and spiritual **understanding**;

What is his will? That we might rule and reign with him. That we might stand in his presence approved. We need wisdom and understanding in that the knowledge of his will. We need to be filled with that knowledge. We need to be filled with the butter of the Word. The word knowledge in this verse is knowledge upon knowledge which is butter fat attached to butter fat. We are encouraged to increase in that knowledge. Do you have some butter, keep adding butter fat to your pound of butter.

BE PLEASING AND FRUITFUL

10. That ye might **walk worthy** of the Lord unto all **pleasing**, being **fruitful** in every good work, and **increasing** in the **knowledge** [ἐπιγνωσις, knowledge upon knowledge] of God;

Being fruitful in every good work is producing the evidence of your faith. Increasing in the knowledge upon knowledge. In verse 9 we are to be filled with the knowledge upon knowledge then we are to increase in that knowledge. That means that knowledge will over flow from us who are filled the knowledge upon knowledge.

Faith cometh by hearing the message of the kingdom of Christ. Hearing the message of the kingdom of heaven causes our faith to grow and mature.

STRENGTHENED

11. **Strengthened** with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all **patience** and **longsuffering** with **joyfulness**;

If we are increasing in the knowledge upon knowledge we are going to be strengthened with all might according to his glorious power. When we have his strength, then we will endure and be able to wait a long time for the Lord to produce his will in our lives. This patience and longsuffering will be with joyfulness, even if we have to count it all joy.

This strength and power is mentioned in Ephesians 1:19 "And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power," Who is it that has this power? Those who are believing in the present tense are the ones who will experience this power. This power is available because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from

the dead to the right hand of the Father. Ephesians 1:20 "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*,"
If we avail ourselves of this power we are not going to quit.

12. Giving thanks unto **the Father**, which hath made us **meet** (to enable) to be partakers of the **inheritance** of the **saints** (and faithful brethren, v.2) in light:

Our heavenly inheritance is the context of Colossians 1 which is the hope of glory in the coming kingdom of heaven.

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

13. **Who** (the Father) hath delivered **us** (saints and faithful brethren, v.2) from the power of darkness, and hath translated **us** (saints and faithful brethren, v.2) into **the kingdom** of his dear Son:"

The Father has delivered us from the power of darkness through his Son when Jesus Christ cried "Abba, Father" in the garden of Gethsemane. Jesus Christ limited the power of Satan to cause us to quit and then be defeated and perish.

The word "us" tells us who have been translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love. This is how the Greek text reads. Skipping down to verse 22.

CONTINUE IN THE FAITH

Colossians 1:22-23 "In the body of his flesh **through** [the] **death** [thanatos, demotion], to present you **holy** (sanctified) and **unblameable** (justified) and **unreproveable** in his sight:

The personal pronoun 'his' is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord experienced *the death* and the word *death* does have the definite article before it. It is *through the thanatos death* that he is able to present us *holy, unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight*. To be holy is to be sanctified and to be unblameable is to be justified. Romans 8:33 "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth." I believe this death was in the garden of Gethsemane and not the death on the cross.

If we are to be presented to the Lord as saints that are unblameable and unreproveable in his sight we must fulfill verse 23.

CONTINUE IN THE FAITH

23. **If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled**, and **be not moved away** from the **hope** of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;"

The conditional phrase *If you continue* implies that we may not continue in the faith. Some may argue that this is a first class conditional phrase and want to translated the *if* to the word *since*. This would imply that all who are save will continue in the faith and that does not agree with other passages of scripture like 1 Timothy 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;" Departing from the faith means that you have not continued in the faith. Only those who have been in the faith can depart from the faith. Skipping ahead a little, Paul exhorted the disciples to continue in the faith, in Acts 14:22, because he knew that they could depart from the faith. When we depart from the faith we stop pleasing God. When you start living in sin you are no longer just and if you are no longer just you can't live by faith.

CHRIST IN YOU BY FAITH

Colossians 1:27 "To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this

mystery among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory:**"

What does it mean to Christ in me? It is to have the hope of the glory ever before us. We must put substance to the glory, that we have not seen, that will be shared in His coming kingdom and glory. To have Christ in us is to have the mind of Christ. The mind of Christ it found in John 4:34 "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

CHRIST IN YOU

Ephesians 3:17 "That **Christ** may dwell **in your hearts** by **faith**; that ye, being rooted and grounded in **love**,"

The church at Galatia had departed from the faith because Paul said in Galatians 4:19 "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you," The issue in Galatians is how do we please God. They were being taught that it is by the law. Paul was teaching them it is by faith that worketh by love. Galatians 5:6 "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but **faith which worketh by love.**"

This passage in Ephesians 3:17 clearly tells us that Christ dwells in our heart by faith that has been rooted and grounded in love.

The phrase *Christ in you* is an expression of the hope of the glory of God. This hope of glory is to be associated with the coming kingdom and glory.

CONTINUE IN THE FAITH

Acts 14:22 "**Confirming** the souls of the disciples, *and exhorting* them to **continue in the faith**, and that we must through much **tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.**"

My encouragement to each of us is to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith or not. Part of the self examination is to determine if we are disobedient in any way. If we are disobedient we are living in sin. If we are living in sin we are not just. If we are not just we can not live by faith. If we are just and living by faith, but we do not love the brethren, our faith is empty, void, and not profitable.

I would further encourage us to continue in the faith, pleasing God. If we are pleasing God we are going to have tribulation, but entrance into the coming kingdom will be worth all the trouble we might experience in this life.

Put substance to the things hoped for and evidence that the substance is real by continuing in the faith. Don't quit!