

**Christian Living Series 2, sermon # 119**  
**The Fruits of God's Holy Spirit**

**Faith #28**

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Edited Sermon Transcript

Greetings, brethren. This, now, is tape number twenty-eight of the series on faith, specifically, or tape number two on the generalized usage of the word *pistis*—p-i-s-t-i-s. If you will recall, we covered the definitive usage of that—*the* Faith—in a number of tapes earlier. This, now, is tape number two in the general usage of that Greek word.

Last time, on tape number one, we discussed the matter of what faith is. That's a logical beginning, because without an understanding of what that faith is, of course, we cannot analyze it in all the other sub-components from that point on.

But, then, not only did we analyze specifically what faith is, we wanted to know what the objective of faith is. Since faith is a confidence in something, and a posture of confidence or assurance, there must be an objective to that, as if one walks from point A to point B. The objective, then, is point B. The beginning may be point A, but the objective is to get to point B.

So, in any mental exercise, as a walk of confidence, we are not only going from one point—leaving from one point—we are attempting, or hoping, to arrive at point B. Point B in this particular regard is, of course, Christ and God—faith in God; faith and confidence in the Supreme Beings of this universe. Now, we could take time to analyze why that is necessary, but that will probably be explained and brought to the surface in some of the more significant questions later on. So we are not going to take the time, at the present time, that is, to analyze how that is achieved, and why we have to transfer from point A to point B. We'll do that later on.

At this particular point, now, I want to cover the third sub-topic that I have in the outline that I have made up concerning this generalized usage of the word *faith*—or, that is, the Greek word *pistis*. This third point is: "Faith is singular, but being singular, it also is mutual." I want you to note something that is a very, very interesting expression here in Romans 1 and verse 12. Romans 1 and verse 12: "That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the *mutual* faith both of you and me." Faith does have a mutuality with regard to human beings.

Now God, of course, does not manifest faith. Faith is in God, not something that God manifests. When something is achieved—when you arrive at point B, as I was expressing earlier—you have achieved your objective. God is the epitome of that. Therefore, God does not have to manifest faith. Why would He manifest faith in something that He is? So, you see, faith is a course of action, so far as you and I are concerned. God is faithful, yes. That's a different story altogether, and we'll explain that a little later on. Faith is an action—it is something that you and I must achieve, it is an orientation of life. Whereas, *faithfulness* is a determination—it's a determinant—and it is a posture, a position, that is absolute (or is a progressive consideration so far as human beings are concerned, and we are going to explain that in the last word that will be used in this series on faith).

But the point to understand here is that there is a mutuality of faith. Faith is singular. That is, my faith—and not as this world seems to conceive of the idea—is no different than your faith, because faith is a singular commodity. Faith is a confidence or trust in something, but it is not only that, it also manifests itself doctrinally. So, it is a way of life that never varies—it is singular in all of its respects.

So, when somebody says, "Well, that's your faith. My faith is not the same as that one," then he obviously is not talking about faith in God. He is not talking about that one spiritual ingredient that is absolute. There is no variableness in it. It is a mutual consideration for everyone involved. Faith *is* an absolute, and you cannot vary or change it.

So, in this case, the Apostle Paul is explaining here that there is definitely a mutuality of faith. "That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." So, in other words, whoever this "you" is—in the case of the secondary party that Paul is referring to—he had exactly the same

faith. It's a singularity. You know, it isn't the idea that the other party had a different faith altogether, and they just agreed to disagree. Not at all. There is no such thing, whatsoever. So, the point of this is that faith is singular, and it is mutual in all cases in those who really believe—who have been called, and to whom that faith, that spiritual ingredient, has been given.

Now, let's notice it here also in Ephesians 4 and noting verse 5. Ephesians 4 and verse 5: "One Lord, one faith . . ." There is not a multiplicity of faiths, there is one faith. It is a mutual consideration, and that one faith will manifest itself in exactly the same way, regardless of human beings, for that faith is a *spiritual* ingredient, and spiritual things never change. They do not manifest themselves differently in the lives of different human beings. That faith, if it is in you, will be doing exactly the same thing that it is doing in me, because it proceeds from the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God is not divided, it is not confused, and it is not bewildered. It is exactly the same, and it manifests itself in exactly the same way.

Now, moving on to point number four: "What is foundational to that kind of faith?" Some very interesting concepts here also. Let's turn to 1 Corinthians the fifteenth chapter. 1 Corinthians the fifteenth chapter and let's note verses 14 and 17. So, we are just going to read verses fourteen through seventeen. 1 Corinthians 15 and beginning in verse 14: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Now, what he is saying here is that if the object of that faith is not an absolute, then confidence and trust in that which is not an absolute is useless—it's in vain, it has no purpose, it has no real force or fiber in our lives, it has no meaning—because what we can do is vary it, we can warp it and twist it, we can pervert it, we can do anything, in accord with our own personal rationalization, rather than forcing our rationalizations—our thinking—to conform to the one course that leads us to the absolute.

What really happens when people lack faith is that they are putting emphasis upon the direction they give to themselves, and not the objective to which they are looking. You see, when we have real faith, the objective never varies—it's absolute—and our course to get there sometimes crisscrosses or weaves back and forth, you know, we never stay exactly on course, not as human beings, because we have too many problems, we have too much humanity, you know, and sometimes we weave back and forth. But if we, in all this weaving—the expression of our own difficulties, the humanity with which we

were created—keep it under control, and we keep our view on the unalterable, unchangeable course, even though we weave back and forth across the straightest line between where we are and where we hope to go, we will ultimately arrive at that objective. But when we *change* the objective, we move the objective, which is absolute, unalterable faith, and we begin to tamper with it, and we move it, you know, on a thirty-degree arc, then we can't even stay on course. What we are doing is justifying the avenue we are taking, rather than the absoluteness of the objective. Now, God will not accept that, because God is absolute, and faith is absolute and the Way is absolute. The deviation always occurs with regard to men—always. So, what we have to recognize and face within our own lives is the variable nature with which we were born—the manner in which we will justify ourselves; the unique problems that we encounter as we attempt to achieve this ultimate objective.

So, foundational to faith is this: ". . . if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Why would that be true? Because Christ died to set us upon that perfect course. He died because we all had wildly aberrated from that Way of Life—every one of us. We have just gone in varying, devious ways. Christ died to give us pivotal orientation and an absolute objective. So, faith, now, looks to the death of Jesus Christ, and the fact that He is now alive, and the fact that He is now living within you as the unalterable Being that cannot change. There is not even a shadow, not even a hint, of change in Him.

So, if Christ is risen, which we know He is, and we have faith in Him—faith because it is Christ living within us—then we can walk that straight and narrow, as long as we allow that Way to dominate and to control us.

Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

Now, what this means is that if we must have faith in that, and we must really believe it—I mean we really believe it, and to really believe it means that we not only trust the fact that He died for our sins and paid for them, and that He is living within us, but that we are also going to be resurrected in His likeness. You see, you can't separate it out. Faith encompasses all of that. So, the faith that I'm

talking about, as I will explain to you later, looks backward and forward both, and it is a singular faith.

"For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised." If Christ has never been resurrected, then there is no resurrection. It will never happen, and the humanists are right. But we already know because it's a historically proven fact that Christ was resurrected.

"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." It is all an exercise in futility if Christ is not raised. So, foundational to faith—and I mean foundational to faith, whether it is looking backward, or forward, or present—is the fact that Christ died. That's the premise of our faith. Maybe we have never stopped to think of that; maybe we have never stopped to realize that, I don't know. But if Christ had not died, there would never have been any forgiveness; there would never have been any orientation in our lives; there would never have been any future hope, we would have died in our sins, that's it.

So, faith encompasses all the activity of Christ. It is a belief that Jesus Christ was sent by God, that He lived and walked on this earth, that He lived perfectly, that He died for cause, or for a reason, and that He now is resurrected, has ascended to God, the Father, and was sent back in the power of the Spirit and is now living within us. By the Spirit, Christ lives within us, even as the Apostle Paul said to the Galatians: "Nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth within me."

So, He lives within all of those who are called by the power of His Holy Spirit. Foundational to that is the belief that Christ died and was resurrected, and that we ourselves, then, will be resurrected. If we really have faith—if we really believe—the living element of that is a belief in the resurrection, and that is pivotal.

Now, point number five: "Faith of itself is esteemed valueless without the character of God." You know, a lot of people talk about faith. They have faith for this, they have faith for that, or they have faith for something else. That faith is probably a mere trust in the self—their own capabilities, their own powers, whatever they may be talking about—but the real faith of God involves character. It's the character of God.

I want us to notice, now, 1 Corinthians 13 and verse 2. We are going to read a few texts here—two or three. 1 Corinthians 13 and verse 2. It says:

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.

Now, we can have, whatever that human element is, real confidence and trust. We can have all faith; we can stand tall in conviction and purpose, yet, if we do not manifest the kind of character that is pleasing and acceptable to God—benevolent, kind, loving, compassionate, merciful and considerate—if we do not possess these, faith won't mean anything. Well, in reality, you can't really have the faith that God is talking about unless you *do* have these traits and these characteristics, because they are indigenously part and parcel—you can't separate them out. If you have real faith in God, then you believe in that Word, because Christ *is* that Word and Christ *is* the living manifestation of that Word in our lives. So we are trusting that Word—we believe it with full confidence, assurance.

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries . . ." And here is where so many people fail. They are constantly looking to something that is tangible. If they can see great powers, if they can see great manifestations of personal capabilities, if they can see manifestations of those things before which they stand in awe, then they will manifest, or let's say, express, some form of confidence or assurance. But to look to somebody that really lives a moral life doesn't generate any confidence, whatsoever. Why? Because spiritual things are not seen. It takes a spiritual mind to see them.

Now, a truly spiritual individual can see them. When he sees somebody like that—and this somebody may never open his mouth; you may not even see him that frequently, and so on; he is not a wallflower, necessarily, but he is not the center of attention, and so you see him out here, but all you do is see him—a spiritual individual looks at him and says, "The man lives a marvelously controlled life." But, you know, that is not what people are looking for.

If somebody else comes along with a great amount of charisma, and he's got a big mouth, and he becomes the center of attention—he is an excellent joke teller, and he can do all these marvelous things; and he has great skills and talents, and

so on—then all people bow and scrape before him. They see that because it's tangible, it's physical. But somebody that merely lives an exemplary life, a quality life—he never hurts anyone, he never verbally abuses anyone, but he is always out there doing, and not for those who can extol him, or repay him, he's out there doing for somebody that can't repay him, but he is always doing, he is always working—nobody ever sees him. Nobody ever makes any comment about him, yet *there* is the example—the epitome—of faithfulness in that life itself. Now, that's what he is saying here.

Paul said under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: "And though I have the gift of prophecy . . ." Now, you know, and I know this, and it sometimes distresses me very, very greatly: that if I were able to start from Genesis and go through the book of Revelation with regard to prophecy, and tell you the thread of every event that is to occur in these last days—I might stand there and wax incredibly eloquent about all the great and the awesome things that are going to happen, and put texts together for hours and come up with the whole fabric of the circumstances in these last days—I know that there are thousands who would absolutely bow and scrape before that. I know that.

Yet, if you just try to live an exemplary life—a quality life—where you have kindness, where you are compassionate toward others, where you are not trying to dominate them, where you are not trying to control their very lives, where you are allowing them to express themselves (to live their own purposes), then you can get accused, left and right.

"[A]nd understand all mysteries"—and there are millions of them, brethren. And here I could just unravel mystery after mystery and just say, "Well, let me tell you the story." Would you get caught by it? Now, I know that immediately most of us would say, "No, no," because it wouldn't be very palatable to do that right now, but I want you to seriously analyze your thinking, right now. If somebody came along and was able to express all of these things on prophecy, and mysteries, and had tremendous grasp of all of the events that have occurred, where things are going, where we are going to stand in relationship to those—in other words, the ability to see the future, to analyze it, and to put everything in perspective—I doubt that you could resist some form of (what shall we say?) servitude, or being in some way mesmerized, or that you might have a feeling of some form of awe. Yet, you know Christ never lived that kind of life, at all. Christ, until almost the

very last days of His life, never delved into prophecy. He lived His life—He was kind, benevolent, understanding, and compassionate. He was the epitome of faith, and never, until right at the last, so that they could not hook their confidence upon the fact that He had great prophetic skill, that He had the knowledge and the understanding of things past, and things in the future, could anyone called initially, in any way, devote himself to Christ because of His great prophetic capability. That would not have been a possibility. If you will remember how many times He avoided even getting involved in that kind of thing. He wouldn't do it—He did not do it.

So Paul is saying, "[T]hough I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge . . ." Oh my, how people stand in awe of wisdom and knowledge. It's called Gnosticism, or the Greek word is *gnosis*, meaning knowledge. And people stand in awe of it. If I could stand here and rehearse to you, and relate facts and figures by the millions, and just let them pour off of my lips and the end of my tongue, many people would stand in awe of it. But if I try to live the Truth of God, nobody sees it.

"[A]nd all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains . . ." Now, I'll guarantee you that the city of Eugene, as well as Los Angeles, New York, and any other place, if I were capable of removing St. Helens right now, they'd come to. But if I just live the Truth of God—I mean really live that which is of greater price, by far, than all the great scientific achievements of all time—nobody would pay any attention. Why? Because that is spiritual, and they don't see it—it's not meaningful to them. And that is exactly, brethren, what is happening to a lot of people, and why too many of them turn away from God's Truth. It is because they can't see spiritual things, they are looking to physical things, and they allow physical things to warp, to pervert and to corrupt them.

So He said, "[A]nd though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Then it means, conversely, that if we have real compassion, real mercy—the depth of the love and affection of God for humankind—we are manifesting the Spirit. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son . . ." Do we grasp that, brethren? If we have that kind of love, we are so far out in front of the man who can remove mountains, the man that can stand on TV and recite every known fact that exists, or the man that can absolutely tell you every event that is going to happen in the next hundred



years. The man who has compassion is ahead of him, and yet, nobody wants that, because it does not vaunt him—because there is no glory involved in that, because, in essence, it is the defamation of self. And no human being wants to do that.

So, "faith, of itself, is esteemed valueless without the character of God." You can have all the faith in the world—you can believe that you believe—and yet, that's nothing more than human assurance. Real faith has character—real character. 2 Peter 1 and verse 5. 2 Peter 1 and noting verse 5—one more text in this regard. 2 Peter 1 and verse 5 says: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue [add to your faith virtue]; and to virtue knowledge . . ." Now, what did he say? Starting off is faith, and once you have faith, *then* you can add knowledge, virtue, and so on. But you must add to this foundational principle: "The just shall live by faith." It's essential, because, as I expressed earlier, that which is foundational is faith. Faith in what? It looks to the past, it looks to the future, and it is relevant today. So it is foundational—it is pivotal—to that which must be done. But from there, you must add, then, the character of God.

Now, what is, then, the value of faith? Point number six: "The value of faith." In 1 Thessalonians 5 and verse 8. 1 Thessalonians 5 and let's note verse 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." Now, what is the value of faith? It is the breastplate. "Let us put on the breastplate of faith and love." Where is man most vulnerable in military operations? Or, so far as that's concerned, even in life itself? Right where he is most massive—in his chest area. It's a broad target, and most killings involve the heart area—the chest area. God says that the value of faith is protecting the most vulnerable areas of your body—it is absolutely essential for your protection. Why is it necessary? We are talking about a war configuration. Remember that here in 1 Thessalonians 5, we are talking about a war:

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. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ . . .

Why? We are talking about instruments of protection in war, because we are fighting a war. And the fight is not a physical warfare that we are fighting with other human beings, it is a warfare in which we are most vulnerable in being hit by the darts of the enemy. Just compare this with Ephesians the sixth chapter and you will see what I mean.

So, if we are of the day, that is, if we are called—if we are the ones chosen of God to see the light of spiritual day—then let us be sober, that is, rational. Let us weigh carefully, let us use our minds objectively, putting on, for safety and for protection, the breastplate of faith and love. That means if you are going to safeguard yourself from the most vulnerable areas of attack by an enemy, you are going to have to have faith. So faith, then, is going to protect you from the darts of the enemy. It is going to protect you from the wild, aberrant behavior of those who hate the Way of God. If you will put that on, then faith will assure you of salvation.

So, what is the value of faith? It is salvation. Try going into a war without any protection, whatsoever, and see how long you are going to last. That isn't going to help you. But if you will put on that breastplate of faith, it will get you through—it will spare you from the onslaughts of the enemy.

And the enemy is not seen, really. Oh yes, we get the darts of human beings, and so on, but the real enemy is not a man, a family, or an individual. The real enemy is Satan, the Devil, who seizes human beings and who uses them at his will, unless we keep that breastplate on. And how many people have been taken by him at his will, as the Bible says? He just reaches out and grabs them whenever he pleases, because all he has to do is to create little images, you know. He is up there accusing the brethren before God, and he will come down here and accuse one before another. He does all kinds of things. And we think we are so right, and yet we do not realize that what we are doing is catering to Satan. He takes us at will, the Bible says, unless we have that breastplate of faith and love, and we shield and protect ourselves from those devious onslaughts.

Where in all the Bible can you find that if the Spirit is within you, it ridicules others?; that it jumps to conclusions?; that it rips others apart?; that it ostracizes others?; that it verbally abuses others? Can you find that? Is that a fruit of God's Holy Spirit? What is really the fruit of God's Holy Spirit? We need to go back and take a good look at it, frequently, in our lives.

Now I want us to notice in this context, Ephesians the sixth chapter and note verse 16. Ephesians 6 and verse 16: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." That's the value of it. Now, who are the wicked? You know, the big problem with man is that in self-evaluation, he is never the wicked. So, you couldn't ask man, himself, whether he is the wicked party, or not. Then how are you going to know? Has any man ever come along and said, "Yes, I gladly proclaim that I distrust God, that I don't believe in the Bible, and that I am a direct and personal enemy of anybody who will live God's Truth." Do you find anybody saying that? No, but he uses religion as a means of subterfuge, because if he comes in religious-sounding phraseology, people will lower their guard, and he can get through with his devious, subtle intents and purposes.

But God said, "You keep that shield up there. Keep it in place." If you don't keep the shield up there, you can't protect yourself. So He said, "You keep that shield there invariably, because you are fighting twenty-four hours a day, from the day you are called, until you die, or are born into the Family of God, one or the other." Which means that your shield of faith must be in place, absolutely, twenty-four hours a day, for the remainder of your lives. And don't you ever let it down. If you do, then you are open to a dart—a dart from the wicked.

It is the shield of *the* Faith. In this case, we are talking about the same word *pistis*—p-i-s-t-i-s—but this is the definitive one, which means "the doctrine." He said, "You keep that doctrine out in front of you, and that is your shield, and it is your safety and protection."

Hebrews 6 and verse 12. Hebrews 6 and noting verse 12: "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Now, you haven't gotten there yet, you have only received the promises. But how long do you have to keep that shield of faith up there? Until you receive them. Keep that shield of faith up there until you inherit the promises, and not just until you have inherited the promise itself, I mean until you inherit the *end result* of that promise, which is salvation itself.

So the value of faith is safety and protection—bringing you all the way to the day when you ultimately are going to realize the promise that God has given to you. 1 Peter 1 and verse 5. 1 Peter 1 and verse 5. It says: "Who are kept by the

power of God through faith . . ." What is it that shields us? We can talk about the power of God, but what is the power of God that shields us? Faith—faith in God.

Now, God has given us all kinds of promises. He said, "They are going to throw these darts all kinds of places, but," He said, "it isn't going to come nigh you if you do what you are supposed to do." So, you must do it—you must live up to it, you must make it an absolute, daily exercise in your lives, and you must hang on to it. You must be conscious of these things—you must be aware of what other human beings can do—and then hang on to that Truth, and don't ever let it drop.

1 Peter 1 and verse 9: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." What, then, is the end objective of faith? The salvation of your souls. Is it worth hanging on to that faith, then? Is that kind of faith an acceptable premise? It's the end of everything you have ever hoped for. It is the pathway to the realization of every promise that God has ever given. Faith *is* the Way—it is the Way, doctrinally; it is the carpet, the Way of Life, by which we are going to get there; it is the sum total of our responsibility. And when you have the true Faith of God, you have virtue, and you have the character of God.

Now, 1 John 5 and verse 4. 1 John 5, and noting verse 4: "For whatsoever is born of God [or in this case, begotten of God] overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." What this is saying is that when we have that faith that will bring about everlasting life, it will manifest itself in mastery—the overcoming of the world. If we are not really overcoming our natures, and if we are not overcoming this world, we don't have that faith. This world branches out into different things: the avenues of Satan, and the society itself, which was created by human beings. So, human beings are the fundamental cause, and then from there it goes back to the basic nature of defiant, rebellious angelic beings who had to be subjugated. And God took that nature and made man. And so that is why Satan can very easily appeal to man—because *there* is the manifestation of that defiant, rebellious nature that was made obvious in the insurrection and the rebellion against God long, long ago. Now, what he said here is, "[Whosoever is begotten] of God overcometh the world." He, now, that has the Spirit of God overcomes this manifested trait or characteristic of defiance and rebellion against God.

"[A]nd this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Our faith is the course of behavior. That's the one thing that is going to get us through, and if we don't have it, then, as the Apostle Paul said, our shield of defense is lowered—the enemy has all of the recourse in the world, now, to strike a lethal blow, and how often he does it because we won't keep that faith up, and the principal reason that we won't keep that faith up is that we begin to trust our own minds and our own concepts. How many times, brethren, have I had to say that? We start trusting our own minds and we do all kinds of devious things in our rationalizations, always, always with a religious end. If we thought they were going out carrying a red flag, and saying, "I've turned against God, and I want you to know that," they would never deceive anybody. They always go out with a religious flavor, and they always seem to have a justification for everything they are saying. But that doesn't make it right. Not at all.

Now, point number seven: Faith is the basic fruit required for salvation. You are just not going to have salvation unless you have that faith. People must understand what that faith is. If that faith is there, it will manifest itself. You can't see faith, but you can see its manifestations. The scripture says that it overcomes the world. Well, now, if it is going to overcome the world, which is tangible, you are going to see some form of action, then, aren't you? How does that faith manifest itself? You can't see faith itself, because it is a spiritual ingredient, but it does manifest itself in the lives of those whom it influences. How would you see it?

Well, first, before we get into some of those things, we need to understand another point: Faith is a basic fruit required for salvation. Here in Romans 1 and verse 17. Romans 1 and noting verse 17. It says: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The just shall live by faith. That's the only Way of Life. It's our protection against the darts of the enemy, and it is, above all, the protection against ourselves—our own minds—because Faith is revealed. *The Faith* is revealed. We have seen that very definitely. Once something is revealed, that means that we have been given an ingredient in our minds to comprehend and grasp something that we otherwise would never know, and the only way you are ever going to keep that something—that mysterious something—in your life, that allows you to see and to grasp something you have never known before, is faith. And you keep that faith alive. If you don't keep it alive, it is almost impossible—if not impossible—to

ever restore it. You can't do it. God calls us, He gives us a revelation, He gives us that fruit of the Spirit—the beginning of faith—and then He says it must grow. And that faith is predicated on the very revelation of God's Truth. It is called *the Faith*, as I have given to you so many, many times. And the just are going to live by that faith—that confidence.

Romans 4 and verse 13. Romans 4 and verse 13: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law"—that is, through the written Law. Nothing ever came through the tangible manifestations—not at all—"but through the righteousness of faith." There is an element of righteousness in faith, because righteousness is of God, which is the fulfilling of the Law, indeed. But righteousness and faith, both, are of the spiritual realm, and in this case, the Law meant the tangible codification. It didn't come through any tangible codification, nothing could. There is no way of it. That only generated animosity, because now we had a tangible Law that was brought into existence, and that Law, in all essence, is contrary to the nature of man. So, now we had the perfect setting for defiance and rebellion. Here was, now, a physical Law that said, "You shall do so-and-so," and then we find a nature that is diametrically opposite to that. So the perfect setting had been created for wrath, for anger, for contempt, for disgust and for all kinds of rationalizations. That's why God says that when the Law came in, anger came in. It precipitated the natural reaction of man.

So what had to happen? Was it the change of man, or was it the change of the Law that God was seeking? Which? Did He change the essence of the Law, or did He change the nature of man? You see, when we begin to look at it, we realize that God is not changing His Law at all. It never did change. He is changing the nature of man. Now, if you change the nature of man, then it is no longer in opposition to God's Law, nor to God, is it? Because the only other way would be the acceptance of God and the Law. So, the one means by which you can tell whether a man is converted or not—not the only means, now, but one of the ways by which you can tell—is when He no longer fights God's Law, because that means the nature is changing. And then it is a manifestation of the righteousness of faith, now trusting God—that He was right—trusting God in His manifestation, which is in the Law. Christ *was* the manifestation of the Body, and He is the express image of the Father, and God Himself *is* love, and what is love? The fulfilling of the Law. So, all we find is that God is expressed—as well as

Christ, who is His express image—in all of this Word. Now, when our natures change, we are no longer in opposition to that Book, and if we are no longer in opposition to it, then we are conforming to it. That is the only other way you can go. So, then, how does it manifest itself? From defiance and rebellion to acceptance and agreement, and that is what God is requiring.

Now, notice what He said here in Romans 4 and verse 13: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law [it never was], but through the righteousness of faith." That, now, is in the matter of trusting Christ, and when we trust Christ, what are we trusting? That it is His operation—that it is no longer what we are doing, but we trust that the change that is going on in our lives is the creation of Christ, and of God, the Father.

Now, what are they creating? Well, the Bible has already told us that there is not even a shadow of turning in them—that they are the same yesterday, today and forever, and Christ was the physical manifestation of the entirety of God's Word. Then, what you are going to see in a faithful, obedient servant of God is the complete walking in the footsteps of Christ, doing exactly the same thing—he will no longer be fighting the Law. Christ was the Word of God manifested in the flesh, and so will you be, by the power of Christ in you, and that comes through faith. You don't see it. You don't see the actual operation going on, but it is, if you are called and chosen of God. That is why it is a matter of faith, and those who have that faith know who they are. Somebody who says, "Well, I think I know," or, "I think this or that," is somewhere missing the boat. He doesn't know whether he was called or not—he doesn't know whether he has been changed, or not, and, in that case, he has lost his orientation, and I hope that he can regain it. But those who are called of God—who have that firm conviction and that resolve—*know* who they are, and they have that faith. Faith is the knowledge of something that is absolute. It is invariable—it will not alter, nor change. And they know, and they know that they know.

Now, how does it behave? In arrogance? No. In self-righteousness? No. In condemnation of others? No. They also—if they have that Spirit—know that other people cannot live it without the call of God, and they know that even with the call of God, there is an awful test of the human nature. And they have all the compassion in the world, because they know their own struggles.

Now, let's notice Romans 4 and verse 16: "Therefore, it is of faith . . ." You see, because the Law works wrath, and indeed, I explained that to you earlier. "For where no law is, there is no transgression." That's right. But where the Law is, there is transgression. And men transgress, and they don't like that knowledge. It brings about the worst in them. But if there is no Law, then there is no transgression, or we can turn it around and say, where there is no human being—that is, flesh—then there is no transgression, which means that if Christ is living within us, the nature, then, is subdued, and there is no wrath, either way you want to look at it. "Therefore, it is of faith . . ." Now, what he is saying is that it is no longer what we are doing, but we are doing it in faith.

"[T]hat it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed . . ." In other words, it was given to everyone—no human being could do it on his own. Can you imagine the arrogance that would be manifested in a single human being who thought that he could do it on his own, and made it? Why, you would never be able to tolerate him. And, yet, what he is saying is that nationality, racial differences, and so on, will make no difference. So, all are going to come through grace:

. . . to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all . . .

So, I don't care what the nationalities are; I don't care what the races are; I don't care about any of the physical divisions, it is going to require the same faith, and the same confidence, with respect to every mortal, human being, no question about it.

Now, Romans 14 and verse 23—our concluding text for today. Romans 14 and verse 23: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat . . ." Now, here he is giving an illustration—that is, a physical illustration. If he goes and eats something and he doubts—that is, his conscience is bothered—then it is a sin. But the same principle applies in everything else. If we are not acting upon faith in the thing that we are doing, it is just as much sin.

"[B]ecause he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever [now, he didn't limit it to eating, he said "whatsoever"] is not of faith is sin." That is awfully broad. It



means, then, that to circumvent sin, you had better have faith. And faith is what? It is the entirety of the Word of God, written into your lives and manifested in all of the fruits of God's Holy Spirit. Faith—real trust and real confidence—in what Christ has accomplished and done for us, that is what it is all about.

The basic requirement for salvation is faith. It is faith in what Christ has done; it is faith in what is going to happen in the future, because if we believe that Christ died for us, then we have to believe in a resurrection. Is that not what Paul expressed in 1 Corinthians 15? It is a trust and it is a confidence. So, that basic ingredient is faith. Don't let anybody ever kid you into believing that it is some kind of a weird warping of the mind. It has awesome manifestations. Real faith is not a mental orientation of the mind conceived by human beings. It is a mental orientation, but it is the empowerment of the Spirit of God in a total orientation that trusts the death of Christ, that trusts the future. It is the entirety of the intent and the purpose of God. That is essential for salvation.

Next time, brethren, we are going to pick up some more of those thoughts and concepts.