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Spiritual Disciplines: Faith

Teacher: Pastor Joshua Kirstine

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**HANDOUT NOTES**

* **Introduction**

**1 Timothy 4:7** (NASB) … discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness

* **What Is Faith?**

**Hebrews 11:1**Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

* **Faith is the conviction of things not seen**

**Hebrews 11:3**By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

**Romans 1:20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

* **Faith is NOT blind**
* **Faith is NOT a feeling**
* **Faith is the assurance of things hoped for**

**Hebrews 11:1**Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for ...

**Psalm 34:8** (NASB) O taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

Faith is being sure of God's promises—that they are worth putting all of our hope in.

**Herman Bavinck**: “It is above all by faith in Christ that believers are enabled – in spite of all the riddles that perplex them – to cling to the conviction that the God who rules the world is the same loving and compassionate Father who in Christ forgave them all their sins, accepted them as his children, and will bequeath to them eternal blessedness.”

**1689 Baptist Confession of Faith**: “The principle acts of saving faith have immediate relation to Christ, accepting, receiving, and resting upon him alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.”

**Q86. What must we do to be saved?** When we are enabled by the power and will of God, we joyfully and willingly turn from sin and trust in Christ Jesus alone. This is saving faith.

**Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith ...

* **Three Elements of Faith: Knowledge, Belief, and Trust**
* **Knowledge**

Knowledge means you have to know about the object of your faith.

**R. C. Sproul**: “Faith without “content” is no true faith at all. Before I can believe “in” I must believe “that.”

**Romans 10:14** ... how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? ...

**Romans 10:17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

* **Belief**

Belief means you have to believe what you now know.

**Matthew 15:8** “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me”

**2 Thessalonians 2:13** … God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

**John Calvin**: “It now remains to pour into the heart itself what the mind has absorbed. For the Word of God is not received by faith if it flits about in the top of the brain, but when it takes root in the depth of the heart that it may be an invincible defense to withstand and drive off all the stratagems of temptation.”

* **Trust**

Trust means you truly and fully surrender yourself to the one you now believe in.

**James Montgomery Boice:** “Real yielding of oneself to Christ goes beyond knowledge, however full and accurate that knowledge may be, and even beyond agreeing with or being personally moved by the Gospel.”

**James 2:19** You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!

Trust is committing our lives to Jesus. It is passing over the line of belonging to ourselves to belonging to Jesus. It is dying to ourselves and living in Christ. This truly is our conversion.

Conversion is a Holy Spirit-empowered response to the gospel call, by which a person willingly and sincerely repents of sin and places his/her complete trust in Jesus Christ for salvation.

**John 3:16** …whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

The Greek phrase is better translated "believe into him."

* **The Absence of Faith Is Sin**

The all-pervasive fault in every sin is its character of unbelief.

**Romans 14:23** ... For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

**Hebrews 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please God ...

* **How Does Someone Have Faith?**

**Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.

**Philippians 2:13** for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Faith is a gift of God.

**Philippians 1:29** For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake

**2 Peter 1:1** (NIV) Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours

**Hebrews 12:2**(NKJV) the author and finisher of our faith ...

**1689 Baptist Confession of Faith**: “This faith, although it be in different stages, and may (at times) be weak or strong … it gets the victory, growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith.”

* **Superficial Faith Versus Living Faith**

**Matthew 7:21** “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

**James 2:18** But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

**Matthew 7:16-20** “You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.”

**James 2:20** Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?

* **What Does the Spiritual Discipline of Faith Mean for Our Life?**
* **Our faith means salvation**

**Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God

Why are you a Christian? Because of God’s amazing gift of grace.

How are you a Christian? Through “faith” in Christ alone.

**Saving Faith:** Rather than trusting one’s own assumed worth, works, or ability, a person repents and believes that Jesus is God, trusts in Jesus’ sinless life of perfect obedience, Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross in his/her place, and Jesus’ rising from the dead to claim salvation and victory for him/her. Saving faith is produced in the elect by God and is always accompanied by progressive sanctification and ongoing repentance from sin.

* **Our faith means devotion to God and righteous living**

**Romans 8:7-8** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

**Romans 6:17-18** ... who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

**Ephesians 4:22-24** … put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

* **Our faith means boldness and confidence**

**Ephesians 3:11-12** … in Christ Jesus our Lord … we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

**Psalm 23:4** Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

**Matthew 10:28** “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”

**Acts 7:54-60**

**Philippians 3:8** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

* **Our faith means perseverance to the end**

**Philippians 1:6** ... he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

**The Perseverance of the Saints**:God keeps His saved people forever. The elect are saved and eternally secure by God’s power and promise. Because of grace, God works so those whom He has chosen and given eternal salvation, by the power and work of the Holy Spirit, are enabled to persevere in faith forever. A person shows that he/she was truly saved by God by persevering in faith in Christ until the end.

**John 6:39** (NKJV) “This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at that last day.”

**Ephesians 1:13-14** In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory.**

* **How Do We Practice the Spiritual Discipline of Faith?**

**2 Corinthians 5:7** for we walk by faith, not by sight.

**2 Corinthians 5:1-8**

* **By feasting on God’s word**
* **By relying on each other**
* **By walking with God**

**Proverbs 3:5-8** Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.