

“WILL THE SON OF MAN FIND FAITH?”
Hebrews 11:1-6, Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 18:1-8
April 5 & 6, 2025

A famous pastor tells of the need for faith. He says, “One time I was battling a cold and couldn’t shake it. I called my doctor, told him my symptoms, and he told me I didn’t need to come in. He was going to call in a prescription for me. He told me what medicine he was prescribing and how he wanted me to take it.

“Now, a number of things went into motion. First of all, I had to believe that I was talking to the person I thought I was talking to, because I couldn’t see him. It was just a conversation over the phone, so I had to listen to his voice. I listened to his voice and he told me how to fix my problem. Now, I could’ve lain in bed and meditated. I could have believed him, but stayed in my bed thinking about how good it was that I had a doctor who understood my problem and provided me with a solution. I could have lain there thinking how great it was that I had a solution, but all that lying around and thinking about the good words that the good doctor shared with me wouldn’t make me better. It may have given me warm fuzzies because he talked to me, but I’d still be sick as a dog.

“Guess what I had to do. I had to get up, get in my car, drive to Walgreens, and say to the pharmacist, ‘Do you have a prescription with my name on it?’ There’s a lot of medicine in there, but I needed something with my name on it. I needed something that wasn’t generic but personal to me. The doctor told me it was there, and because I believed his word I acted on it and went to Walgreens.

“Taking this illustration further, I could have just received the medicine and looked at it. I could have gazed at it and made sure that it looked medicinally acceptable to me. But, I’d still be sick as a dog. The doctor’s instructions were not for me just to drive to Walgreens and get

emotionally fixated on the look of the medicine. He told me to take it. By following his instructions to the T, my faith was matching up with my works and I began to feel much better.

“A lot of us are spiritually sick and every week we come to hear what [our heavenly] Doctor’s got to say. Some of us stop there and just think about how good it was to talk to [our Master Physician]. Some of us leave church feeling good about how great the prescription sounds, but still sick as a spiritual dog because we don’t take it and ingest it by acting on it. Therefore, we’re not transformed”¹ by it and we’re not brought to spiritual health through it. We have to put our faith into action and follow God’s instructions in order for us to find the health and strength we need spiritually in order to continue as His servants.

But what is faith all about? Hebrews 11:1 tells us that the definition of faith is “*the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*” In other words, faith is putting action on our hopes with the confidence that what we hope for is going to happen. It is being confident that the doctor knows his medicines and has prescribed the right drug for us to take to get better. It is being so confident that the doctor is right, that we step up out of our homes to go get the medicine and take it so that we can experience the change it makes as we get well.

Faith and action are always connected to the result that occurs. Like mixing concrete with water results in a rock solid platform to build upon, we have to mix our faith with action in order to get a solid result. Concrete by itself will never set up hard enough to build anything upon. Bags of concrete can just sit around, but they’re never going to produce cement. It’s got to have the other ingredients in it to solidify. Water, sand, gravel and mixing creates the cement strong enough to build upon.

Chapter 11 of the Book of Hebrews gives us many examples of those who put their faith

¹ (Tony Evans, *Tony Evans’ Book of Illustrations*, [Chicago, IL: Moody Publications, 2009] pg. 96-97, # 274)

and trust in God to guide them, and they were counted as righteous as they stepped out to do what God had called them to do. They are listed among the faithful because they acted upon what God had told them, and they did their best to live for Him, and they succeeded. And we hear the report in verse 6, *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him”* (11:6). We have to believe that God is for us so that we can be for Him.

Jesus takes this concept further as He spoke to His disciples just after leaving the Temple in Jerusalem. He shared some prophecy about what will happen at the End Times to encourage His followers, so that they were not taken off guard when it all happens. And then Jesus began to tell them about what is expected of us as we prepare for His return. He wants us to be prepared, having all that we need to be ready so that we’re not left behind. And then He gives us the Parable of the Talents, which was our first Gospel lesson for today.

In that parable, Jesus explains that He expects us to use the resources we have to bring about a great result for the Kingdom of God. Jesus calls us to be faithful and put the resources to work so that they might reproduce their assets to continue to do the work we’ve been called to do. Three men had been entrusted with the treasure of their Master, each one given according to their abilities. For reference, the value of a talent is roughly equivalent to \$400,000 or more today.

The first one was given five talents of money, and faithfully, he went out, put it to work and gained another five talents to present to the Master upon His return. Likewise, the second was given what he could handle, two talents, and he also faithfully put that money to work in order to produce two more talents.

However, the third man, having been worthy of only one talent, decided that he did not

want to jeopardize the possible loss of the talent of money, so he “*dug a hole in the ground and buried his master’s money*” (Matt. 25:18). In his laziness and faithlessness, this man just hid away what was given to him, so that it neither gained nor lost anything. He just sat on it and never used it for the work of the Master.

So when the Master returned, each servant was called to account for what they had done with their portion of the Master’s estate. The first two were praised for their faithfulness in investing and growing and using their portions in order to increase the Master’s money and build the kingdom even stronger. Because of their faithfulness, because they used wisely what was given to them to manage, they were entrusted with higher responsibility to oversee much more in the Master’s household. And they were told, “*Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your Master’s happiness*” (Matt. 25:21, & 23)!

However the third man had to account for his unfaithful use of what he had been entrusted with, and was told, “*You wicked, lazy servant*” (25:26)! Because he had no faith, because he had fear instead, he defaulted in any use of the money, and it was taken from him. And Jesus makes a difficult statement, “*For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*” (25:29-30).

In this parable, Jesus expects us to be using the resources we have been entrusted with in a wise manner to build the Master’s Kingdom, to bring more people into faithful living as we put those resources to work. But if we just sit on what we have, without faithfully using it, it will be taken from us, and we will be found as worthless servants, no longer worthy or acceptable in the

Master's house. Again, *“without faith, it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him”* (Heb. 11:6).

But as hard as this parable is for us to hear, and understand, and follow, Jesus goes on to tell another parable to encourage us **not to give up**, but to keep on seeking the Kingdom of God so that we might live as His faithful servants, even in the midst of hardship, persecution, disappointment, injustice and grief. So He tells the Parable of the Persistent Widow. Listen to the Hard Saying of Jesus for us today. This is Luke 18:1-8. (READ Luke 18:1-8)

In the face of insurmountable odds, how do we respond? When nothing positive seems to be happening in our journey of faith, what do we do? Do we seek the Lord's help, or do we give up on His awesome power and muddle through on our own power? Do we seek the One who has all authority and majesty, or do we rely upon the weakness of human strength and wisdom? Do we diligently strive for God's answers to our problems, or do we just give up after a prayer or two, thinking God doesn't care, or that God doesn't even exist? Jesus calls us to have faith, and to put that faith into action day after day and be assured that God's not going to leave us hanging all by ourselves without any help or guidance.

We are to multiply our prayers. Not because God does not hear our first prayer, or that He needs to be reminded over and over again that we're trying to serve Him. We are to remain faithful, trusting that God has His time and His plan for all that we're going through, to bring about His greatest glory through that situation. Let me give you an example of what I mean.

“Nineteenth-century preacher and author A. B. Simpson gives a wonderful example of the power of accumulative prayer. In the city of Rangoon, Burma, resided the largest and finest bell in the East. It was the pride of the great Buddhist Temple, Shwee-da-gone. During one war

the bell sank in a river. Over the years, various engineers tried but failed to raise it. At last, a clever priest asked permission to try, but only if the bell was given to his temple.

“The priest had his assistants gather an immense number of bamboo rods. One by one the rods were fastened to the bell at the bottom of the river. After thousands of them had been fastened, the bell began to move. When the last bamboo rod was attached, the buoyancy of the accumulated rods lifted the bronze bell from the mire of the river bottom to the stream's surface.

“A. B. Simpson writes: ‘Faith can lift the heaviest of burdens and [level] the highest of mountains. Every whisper of believing prayer is like one of the little bamboo rods. For a time they seem to be in vain, but there comes a last breath of believing supplication, and lo, the walls of Jericho fall, the mountain becomes a plain, and the host of Amalek is defeated.’”²

Faithful living, faithful praying, makes a difference in our lives if we never give up. The widow in Jesus’ parable didn’t give up her pursuit of justice and eventually turned the heart of the “*judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought*” (Luke 18:2). It was her persistence that brought about a positive result to her case.

So we are also to be faithful in our living, and in our praying, so that our persistence can also bring about God’s desired results in our lives and in the lives of those around us. For God sees our situations, He knows our hardships, our persecutions, our disappointments and our fears, and He is ready to give us the guidance and prescriptions we need in order to not only endure them, but to thrive and overcome them.

God wants us to be successful. But when we have a spiritual enemy that desires nothing less than our destruction, we have to rely upon more than just our own strength and wisdom to find the abundant lives that God has for us. We have to be faithful in relying upon His Holy

² (PreachingToday.com, *More Perfect Illustrations*, [Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2003] pg. 95)

Spirit to move in ways that bring about success for us. We also have to be faithful with all that we have in order to accomplish His mission of bringing all people back to Him for Salvation.

The Hard Saying of Jesus then is, “*when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?*” (Luke 18:8). Will He be able to find those who are diligently working for Him, keeping His commands, obeying His guidance, and fulfilling His wishes in order to build His Kingdom here on the earth? Will we be counted among the faithful in the way that we live, the way that we speak, the way that we work, the way that we treat one another, the way that we pray, the way that we use our resources, and the way that we lead?

“The diary of George Mueller, Christian social reformer from the Victorian era, chronicles his devotion in prayer: ‘In November 1844, I began to pray for the conversion of five individuals. I prayed every day without a single intermission, whether sick or in health, on the land, on the sea, and whatever the pressure of my engagements might be. Eighteen months elapsed before the first of the five was converted. I thanked God and prayed on for the others. Five years elapsed, and then the second was converted. I thanked God for the second, and prayed on for the other three. Day by day, I continued to pray for them, and six years passed before the third was converted. I thanked God for the three, and went on praying for the other two. These two remained unconverted.’ Thirty-six years later he wrote that the other two, sons of one of Mueller's friends, were still not converted. He wrote: ‘But I hope in God, I pray on, and look for the answer. They are not converted **yet**, but they will be.’

“In 1897, **fifty-two years after** he began to pray, these two men were finally converted, after he had died. Mueller understood what Jesus meant when he told his disciples ‘that they should always pray and not give up.’”³ Now, THAT’S FAITH!

³ (PreachingToday.com, *Perfect Illustrations*, [Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2002] pg. 208)

But you know what? That's the kind of faith Jesus invites each one of us to have! As we add one pray upon another, as we faithfully serve Jesus in our world today, as we constantly use the resources we've been entrusted with, and as we see the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, God hears our prayers, sees our actions, knows our motives, and notices our faith, and He tells us, *"Well done thou good and faithful servant! You have been faithful in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your Master's happiness"* (Matt. 25:21 & 23)!

It may not be grand in the eyes of the world. It might not be rational to those around you. It might seem absolutely foolish to many. But as we faithfully serve the Lord in all we do and say, God knows and heaven rejoices!

But the question comes to us once again; *"When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth"* (Luke 18:8)? Will it be us who spend time on our knees praying for those who still have not yet heard about Jesus? Will it be us who labor in prayer for the faithfulness of the servants of the Lord Jesus? Will it be us who plant new churches, or bring healing to the sick, or who devote ourselves to the betterment of our society in Christ, or rescue the perishing? Will we be the faithful that Jesus finds when He returns? I pray that it may be so.

Father, You have called each one of us to be Your servants to do Your work here on the earth. You have given us the resources we need to make that happen, and have provided Your Holy Spirit to guide and instruct us in the way we should go to fulfill that work. Give us the hearts to remain faithful in all we do and say. No matter what we must face in our lives, no matter who we must stand up against for Your glory, grant that our faith is not diminished, but rather multiplied abundantly as we cling to Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Increase our faith, Lord, so that we might be found worthy in Your sight. This we pray in Jesus' Name. AMEN