

"Walking By Faith"

Walking by faith is one of the wonderful opportunities of life, but many misunderstand what faith is. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're exploring what it means to walk by faith!

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. 1 Timothy 2:3 to 4 says, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." God gave us the Scriptures to give us the knowledge that we needed to live godly lives and to be saved. We must never dismiss or neglect our study of the Scriptures. Thanks for taking time to study with us. And we're happy that you study with us today. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

The Scriptures intertwine faith with knowledge. The design and order that we can observe in this world, in the universe, and in our own bodies help's us to believe in an all-powerful and supremely wise designer. That designer could only be God, our Creator. While we have never seen God Himself, He left a lot of evidence pointing to His eternal power and divine nature. What we know leads us to believe in Him, and believing in Him and the truth allows us to speak and to know what He had said. And to have greater knowledge.

Now walking by faith isn't a leap in the dark. We believe what we believe because there's evidence. Some evidence is empirical, some is historical, and some is from ourselves. Romans 10:17 says, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." John explained why he wrote the fourth gospel account in John 20:30 to 31, "Therefore many other signs (that is miracles) Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." The Lord wants us to believe and to be saved.

Now we offer this study, Walking By Faith, free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. Now for our viewers outside the United States, we have programs and free materials on our website, www.searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

Well we'll now worship in song, read from 2 Corinthians 5:6 to 10, and consider what it means to walk by faith.

Our scripture reading today comes from the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians chapter 5 verses 6 to 10. And there he talks about life with and walking by faith.

Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight— we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

That's the words that Paul wanted the Corinthians to know. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're so thankful that we can walk by faith and be able to live with You when the time comes for us to leave this body. Help us Heavenly Father to love You to serve You and to not only just believe but to walk by our faith. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Faith in God is not merely a belief; it's a way of thinking and a way of life. The Scriptures help us understand the kind of faith that God wants from His followers. It's an active, working faith not a dead one. One of my professors, Hugo McCord, described faith in Scripture as a "package word," that included many elements beyond mere belief. Paul said in Romans 1 and verse 5 that, "we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake."

Luke described how the church was growing in Acts 6 and verse 7: "The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith." They didn't just believe what was taught they obeyed it and they lived it out in their lives. James 2:14 asks, "What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?" The answer he gives to that question is no.

He later says in verses 17 to 20, "Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. But someone may well say, 'You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.' You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?" Faith that doesn't act is dead and useless. And our faith is demonstrated by living what we believe. We must walk the walk, not merely say we believe. Are you a practicing Christian?

The Scriptures must define our faith and hope. When we believe we seek to please the Lord and by His grace we live with Him eternally once this life is over. 2 Corinthians 5:1 to 3 says, "For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked." We want to enjoy the inheritance that He's preparing for us in heaven.

And so our faith encourages us to live with courage and to look to the future. 2 Corinthians 5:6 to 8 says, "Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight— we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord." Now while we have never seen the Lord or our Father in heaven, we know that He has promised that we can be Him once this life is over. And that changes how we think and how we conduct our lives.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:9 to 10, "Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." We want to please God, because we know a day of judgment is coming, and how we behave will determine our destiny.

Our faith, our faith, is not a leap in the dark. What we know by faith comes from the promises that God kept, from answers to our prayers, from His providence, and from the truthfulness of His word. God doesn't lie, and He's not afraid to challenge us to do His will. John 7:14 to 17 says: But when it was now the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and (He) began to teach. The Jews then were astonished, saying, "(well) How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" So Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself." Now we can know whether God's word is true by following it. The more we study and practice it, the more it proves itself.

In his final letter to Timothy, Paul was suffering and didn't know how long he would live. He wrote about why He served God in 2 Timothy 1:12 to 13. He said: "For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. (so) Retain the standard of sound words (healthy words) which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." Though he suffered greatly, God had proven Himself to Paul. Can you say, "I know whom I have believed"? Now life isn't always easy, but God remains close to us even when things are challenging and tough.

Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." God sees and knows everything that happens. Now not everything is good, but God can use even the worst things to bring about good. Psalm 46:1 to 3 says that, "God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; Though its waters roar and foam, Though the mountains quake at its swelling pride."

In spite of the persecution Christians faced in the first century, Paul declared in Romans 8:35 to 39: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; (and) we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more (more) than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The book of Hebrews discusses the need for Christians to remain faithful to God, even when life is uncertain and difficult. When faith in God proves reliable, it teaches us to trust the things that God says. Hebrews 11:1 to 3 says, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. (and) By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible." Faith in what we can see gives us the understanding to trust in the things that we cannot see.

Hebrews 11:6 says clearly, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." The design of creation, the fulfilled prophecies, the historical evidence concerning Christ. Hebrews 11 provides numerous examples of how faith leads people to obey. They had a living faith.

Hebrews 11:8 to 10 says: "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God." Hebrews 11:17 says, "By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son."

Hebrews 11:24 to 26 says, "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward." Hebrews 11:30 to 31 says, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace."

Doing what is right presents, yes, its own challenges, and a sinful world will always try our faith. We can, however, see how our struggles can help us grow spiritually James 1:2 to 4 reminds us, "Consider

it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." The tests of our faith make us stronger and more mature. We can count them a joy.

Jesus is coming again one day, and we can rejoice over our salvation on the last day. Keeping faith now matters. 1 Peter 1:6 to 9 says: "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, (that) you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls."

Faith is indeed "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." By our faith and love devoted in obedience to the Lord, we'll one day enjoy all the things that God has promised and all the things that we've hoped for. 1 John 3:1 to 3 says, "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called (the) children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. And we know that when He appears, that we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure." Faith, hope, and love moves us to prepare for the day when we meet Jesus.

John said to faithful Christians in 1 John 5:19 to 20, "We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." Faith comes from hearing the word of God, and the more we study the deeper our faith will become. The deeper our faith becomes the more we want to serve the living God and to persuade others to believe and obey the Lord too. Do you believe and practice your faith? Are you walking with the Lord?

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that You have revealed Yourself. That we can be saved and that we can truth. Help us to walk by faith and to practice our faith with love for You and for ours. And help us to reach out and win those who need to know you. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Faith is indeed a walk, a way of life, not merely an opinion or an ideology. When we receive the gospel message, we take our stand upon it and hold firmly to it. 1 Corinthians 15:1 to 2 reminds us that our faith is a received message. He said "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain." To receive a message is to welcome and embrace it as true and life-changing.

To walk by faith means that I must deny myself, take up my cross daily, and follow the Lord Jesus. To believe in Jesus means I not only believe in Him as the Lord and Christ but I also believe that what He teaches is true and right. Believing Jesus means listening closely to Him without reading my opinions into what He says. True faith, true faith hears and obeys. Now when faith has questions, faith goes to the source of all the truth, the Scriptures, for answers. God doesn't need an editor to rewrite the gospel or anything else that He teaches.

We want the authentic gospel that is found in Scripture. To receive and stand in the gospel means accepting the truth on God's terms. It takes faith, love, repentance or life change, confessing Christ,

and being baptized into Christ to accept and respond to the gospel. When we respond to the gospel, we're saved by it. In baptism we're crucified, buried, and raised with Christ so that we can be freed from sin and walk in newness of life (Romans 6:3 to 7). Baptism in water is for the forgiveness or remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Now this is Scripture, not human tradition.

We hope that our study, "Walking by Faith," has caused you to want to serve God in your life. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now for all our viewers outside the United States, we have free programs and biblical materials on our website, www.searchtv.org. SEARCH is also on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and like the programs. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

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