

The Dynamic Power of Growing Faith

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[0 : 00] A message on the theme of faith. Faith is a vital Bible word. It occurs over 250 times, but only twice in the New Testament, the actual word faith.

! What does the Bible teach us about faith? We're going to look at faith as it is described in 2 Thessalonians, in the work of God, in the lives of some of God's people in the church of Thessalonica.

So we're going to pick it up, 2 Thessalonians chapter 1, and see what it says about these folks' faith, the Thessalonians. 2 Thessalonians chapter 1, verse 1.

Paul and Silvanus and Timotheus unto the church of the Thessalonians, in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 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.

[1 : 09] So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure.

Notice firstly, of their faith. It tells us of their faith, verse 3, that your faith groweth exceedingly. It says that their faith was growing, increasing, abounding.

And the word faith, when you think of the word faith, it means to trust. It means a confidence and an assurance that we have in God. And faith is linked with love here.

Faith and charity, or love, are connected there. It talks about love for God and his people. The Thessalonians had a faith that was growing. Notice that there, it says your faith groweth exceedingly. Wouldn't that be good to have a faith that grows?

I know in our recent conference that we were privileged to host, the theme was, increase our faith. Luke 17, 5, the apostles asked the Lord, increase our faith.

[2 : 08] We want that kind of faith, don't we? A faith that grows, that increases. It says that the Thessalonians' faith was one that was growing. It was growing exceedingly. Think of this term, this word faith.

And if we can unpack that a little bit, what does faith mean? It means a trust. To trust God, doesn't it? And the trust of our faith, biblical faith, is squarely centered in Christ.

Our faith is in Christ. In 1 Timothy 4, verse 10, it reads, of this truth of faith's trust. It reads, For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

Think for a time of faith's trust. As God's people today, we have a faith that's trusting Christ, don't we? A faith that saves.

The faith that we have is totally on the saviour. The Lord saves us by faith. We're saved by faith. Our trust is Christ. And that's what really sets Bible-believing Christians apart from every other religion, that the faith's trust that we have is a trust that's in our saviour.

[3 : 28] It's saving faith. And Christ brings for us that complete assurance of forgiveness, of salvation. We don't face the peril that awaits the unsaved. Our faith is a trust in our Lord and it's saving faith.

That's our resolve. When you think about it, we're all dependent on our Lord, aren't we? Even atheists depend on God. They don't realise it, but we're all completely dependent on God.

If God withheld his life-giving power from us for even a moment, then we would perish. So atheists ought to thank God. I pray for my name which is atheists.

Atheists ought to thank God that they've got life, that they've got breath in their lungs. The Bible says trust in the Lord. It says trust in the Lord 19 times. So it's an oft-repeated phrase.

Do we really and truly trust in the Lord? That must be our faith's trust, mustn't it? To trust in the Lord. On what do we place our trust? Someone placed their trust, their belief in evolution or some philosophy of worldly means.

[4 : 32] But our faith is in Christ. Our trust is in Christ. And sometimes we can place too much of our trust in ourselves, even. We can trust ourselves.

And we can trust in our own abilities and our own capabilities. But really, when it comes down to it, we've got to hang on to the Lord, don't we? We need his strength to help us manage life.

When we don't know how to cope, our faith's trust must be Christ. Have you ever trusted someone and your trust has been broken? That can be devastating, can't it?

Have you ever been let down by another person? Now, the Bible talks about that, doesn't it? It talks about how we can trust in a man and we can get really let down. It says in Psalm 118, it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.

It's better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. So you could kind of put that in today's context. It's better to trust in the Lord than to trust in the government, isn't it?

[5 : 40] It's better to trust in the Lord than to put your confidence in anyone, really. Trust in the Lord. This is what we need, isn't it? And really, I heard it put really that we can't even trust our own flesh.

I can't trust myself. I've got to put my trust in the Lord. So it's not a trust in ourself, it's a trust in the Lord. It's not a trust in anyone else, it's a trust in the Lord. And the good news is that you can trust in the Lord to take care of you.

We see that, for example, it tells us how confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth and a foot out of joint.

You ever sprained your foot or had a broken tooth? That's an unfaithful man in a time of trouble.

When you think, oh, who can I call on? Who can I count on? And the unfaithful man will not be around in the time of trouble.

When you've got a need, the unfaithful man is not going to be there. Have you ever put confidence in someone and they let you down badly? I can remember prepaying some lumber for a job and then the man disappeared.

[6 : 48] His phone just stopped working for some reason after I paid him. So the Bible says that that's a pain, isn't it? Like having a toothache, an unfaithful man.

Thank God we can place our faith and trust in Christ and he's not going to be unfaithful, is he? You can put your faith and trust in Christ and he's not going to be an unfaithful man.

He's one who's going to be worthy of your trust. And as for the Thessalonians, in verse 3 it says that their faith was one that grew exceedingly. Have we got that kind of a faith that's going to keep on growing?

A faith that's increasing, not static or stale. And we know through life sometimes our faith can be weak and we can stumble.

But God can help us get that faith stronger again. That it can be a faith like the Thessalonians had that was increasing. It was an increasing kind of faith. Are we stagnant and stunted in our spiritual growth?

[7 : 51] We don't have to stay there. We can have a faith that is fruitful and productive. And that's the picture of these Thessalonians. That their confidence was in the Lord.

Maybe when we take stock of life and our living, our circumstance, could it be that we maybe need to increase our faith and trust in him?

To maybe take more steps of faith. To take risks. To make a sacrifice. And to know that you can trust the Lord to take care of you. You can trust in him to protect you.

You can trust in the Lord to guide you, to help you with your life. You can trust in the Lord to provide, to strengthen, to equip you, to use you.

And he's worthy of your trust. So if you're going to trust someone, make sure that it's the Lord. You trust the Lord. You trust the Father, that he will hold your hand.

[8 : 51] How we need to be a church that trusts in the Lord. Not to trust in technology. Not to trust in man's endeavours or man's methods.

But to trust in our Lord. To trust in him. And when we are missing that trust, to get stirred, to get convicted, to be broken, to be challenged, to get back to an increasing faith.

A faith that will grow and grow exceedingly like the Thessalonians. And sometimes we can get too tradition bound or too set in our own conformity to however we've been used to doing something.

Sometimes God needs to break us out of that. And to help us to take steps of faith. And to do new things for God. So we see faith's trust. We see that our trust must be in Christ.

And secondly we see with the Thessalonians that they had also faith's test. Because our faith is going to be tested. We know through life it's not always easy following our Lord and walking in his ways.

[10:06] It's easy for our flesh to hinder our walk. It's easy for life's troubles to get us down. And we see that faith is linked with love.

As we talked about. And also faith is linked with perseverance. It talked about that in verse 4 there. That it says for your patience and faith.

Or in other words your perseverance and faith. 1 Thessalonians 1 verse 4. It talks about your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure.

So the Thessalonians they knew what that was like. They knew faith's test. And it's the same for you and me. That as we walk the Christian walk. As we live the Christian life. That our faith is going to be tested.

As we have life's experiences. As loved ones get unwell. As we get unwell. Life's curveballs just test us out don't they? And we wonder what's happening when things aren't how we'd like them to be.

[11:08] But it's helping us to grow. It's helping us to grow in grace. And to exercise grace too. And here is true power. As I was reflecting to someone lately.

That sometimes you get situations where the human reaction would be to react. And to not be gracious.

But faith helps us to grow in grace. Faith helps us to exercise grace. And there's true power there. There's a resilience there. When we get those troubles of life.

And circumstances happen. And our faith gets tested such that. Hey I'm not going to act like I ought to act. As our Lord would act. But I want to act like the flesh would act.

And we've got to fight that all the time. I have to fight that. Paul commends the Thessalonians for this increasing of faith. That their faith was exceeding.

[12:04] It was abounding. It was a dynamic resilient faith. And he talks about persecutions and tribulations there. In verse 4. It talks about how they had endured.

And brother, sister. Through life. We're going to have. Our faith is going to be tested. Our faith is going to be tested. And faith shows through when it undergoes the test. We see this one here.

As Peter writes. 1 Peter 1. He talks about the trial of your faith. Being much more precious than of gold. That perish. That though it be tried with fire. Might be found unto praise and honour.

And glory. At the appearing. Of Jesus Christ. Think of it. Brother, sister. Those earthly tests and trials. That testing. It's going to be.

In a way. Part of. The glory of God. Isn't it? That. Those times of testing. And heartache. And loss. And grief.

[13:01] And trouble times. In glory. It's going to be. Praise. And honour. And glory. It's going to be. All to his. Praise.

That gold medal. Quality faith. It's that. Testing time. That you're going through. Brother, sister. It's solid gold faith. That's being produced. So. Expect some hard times.

I know. I was talking with. Some people lately. And. Saying how. Preparing for the ministry. That. There's going to be. Hard. Things happen.

There's going to be. Tough things happen. And. They were saying. Well. If that's the case. I don't want to be in the ministry. You know. I mean. Honestly. We're all in the ministry. We are all in the ministry.

But. Don't let the tough things. Put you off serving God. Don't let the tough things of life. Weaken your faith. Let them strengthen your faith. True faith.

[13:59] True faith. Is tough faith. True faith. Is a faith that will stand. True faith. Is a faith that will fight. That will handle the battle. That will overcome.

We see that. In 1 John 5. 4. It tells us. That this is the victory. That overcometh the world. Even our faith. Now. If we gave up. With every little challenge. Every little test.

Every little setback. Then we wouldn't. Really do anything. We would just. Stay in the comfort zone. And not step out. Wouldn't we? But this is the victory. That overcometh the world.

Even our faith. So to get a victory. You've got to have a fight. To get a victory. You've got to have a battle. Joseph knew all about. Faith's testing. As we know. In Genesis 45.

He had 20 years. Of betrayal. And slavery. And then Joseph. Reveals himself. To his brothers. He says. I'm Joseph. Here he is. Once a slave. Now he's the prime minister.

[14:54] Of Egypt. The most powerful nation. On earth. And his brothers. There are trembling. Fearing his. Revenge. And he showed such grace. And forgiveness.

Even though. He had been betrayed. He saw God's hand. And his suffering. That was training him. And we could think. Of many cases like that. There was a preacher. That visited a lady. In hospital. Who'd been having many trials. And it seemed like everything. Was going wrong. In her life. Anything that could go wrong. Had gone wrong. She'd been injured. In her job. Her house. Had been broken into. She had a major car accident. She was bruised. All over. And the minister. Came and sat. By the hospital. Bedside. And shared this scripture. Psalm 34. 19. Many. Are the afflictions. Of the righteous. But the Lord. Delivereth him. Out of them all. And this lady. She broke down in tears. This word from God.

[15:48] Truly ministered to her. As the tears streamed down her cheek. She thought to herself. How many. Sincere. Dedicated believers. Are going through many trials. Thinking that God.

Has forsaken them. Or perhaps. Blaming themselves. For their problems. Many are the afflictions. Of the righteous. You know. Brother. Sister. If you're getting some affliction. You might be in the. It might be just the right place for you. But you're in the centre. Of God's will. As it tells us here. It doesn't say many are the afflictions. Of the sinner. It says many are the afflictions.

Of the righteous. So. Trouble and afflictions. Is part and parcel. Of the normal Christian life. We don't have to be defeated. By them though. And so the life of faith. In a way. It's overcoming troubles. Isn't it? It's that victory. That overcomes. That victory. That Jesus gives. Our faith. And faith brings victory. True faith.

[16:43] Will brave the storms. And God will help us. To plough on. To plough ahead. To be steadfast. Faith is tested.

We need to get that. That truth. That faith is tested. And tested faith. Produces fruit. As. Peter talks about. It's going to be found. Unto praise.

And honour. And glory. In eternity. Faith is tested. And every time. We face a test. The challenges of life. God's helping our faith. To grow. He's helping our faith.

To be more resilient. To get stronger. As we face those. Troubles. And hardships. At times. And really. A trial can be like. A heavy barbell. And we get stronger.

So that every time. We lift it. We get that bit stronger. It works the same. Doesn't it? As our faith gets tested. As we exercise. The faith muscle. It's going to get stronger.

[17:38] As we exercise it. And in the end. Trials can help us. And others will be blessed too. They'll see. That your faith. Has gone through.

And you passed the test. When we face those different trials of life. And you know. We could all think about. Family members. Of our own. Of ones going through trouble. And testing. Sickness. Ailments. Afflictions. As the testing of our faith. Is going to help us be. More persevering. It's going to help us to be a testimony. So be prepared brother sister.

For your faith. To be tested. Like the Thessalonians. Perhaps it will be a test. Attacks from family or friends. Maybe trials about finances. Worries about your health.

Gossip from hateful people. Slander. Whatever the test. His promise is. That he will be with you. We see that in Acts 23. How.

[18:32] As Paul. Was in this. Confinement. In the context. It talks about. How. They. They put him in jail. Because they're about to. To.

To tear into pieces. It's the. Kind of sense of it. In the context. In Acts 23. That he was in great danger. There was such. Opposition. To Paul. And here he was.

In the prison cell. In the dungeon. Of the castle. And it tells. How the Lord stood by him. And said. Be of good cheer. Paul. For as they must testify. Of me in Jerusalem.

So must they bear witness. Also at Rome. Whatever the test. God's promise. Is to be with you. To be with you. We talked a bit about that. That truth this morning.

Of God's presence. He's with us. In the fire. In the valley of the shadow of death. He says. I'm with you. Amen. That night. The Lord stood by him. And if you're in a difficulty.

[19:26] Brother. Sister. Know that the Lord stands by you. Whatever that trouble. And you will come forth as gold. Like Job did. To trust God. To use difficulties. Don't let difficulties deter your faith.

Let them strengthen your faith. Let them increase your resolve. Your resilience. How is a diamond formed? This magnificent stone. It begins as just some lump of coal. And it's through constant pressure and heat.

Over long periods of time. That that black lump. Is transformed into a beautiful precious treasure. It's the same with our faith. Isn't it? That our faith can grow. As we mature in Christ.

There's a transformation through hardship. Through disappointment. As we face up to difficulties. As we get through. God says. I am with you.

And he says. Be of good cheer. There's a comfort there. In every child. God draws us. To himself. He makes us closer to himself. Someone has said.

[20 : 30] Your current miseries. May be your future ministries. That's a good one. Isn't it? Your current miseries. May be your future ministries.

So. Whatever you're going through now. Actually might. Be equipping you. Preparing you. For other. People that need. To hear from you. They could. Because you've been there. And done that. When they're in that.

Who better to comfort. Those that are experiencing. The death of a loved one. Addiction. Or some struggle. With this or that. Than a fellow believer. Who's endured the same trials.

And found hope. In the Lord. So faith's test will shine. See faith's trust. Is Christ. Faith's test. Is that. Shining through. A solid gold. Think of it.

We've really got nothing. To complain about. In this fair land. As I've been reading. Of some. For example. In the nation of Sudan. Imagine your son.

[21 : 25] Being captured by the militia. And sold as a slave. To a rich man. Who will force him. To convert to Islam. Or die. Or your daughter. Being given as a concubine.

To a government official. It's possible. For you to buy your children back. For five cows. But the militia. Has stolen your cows. That's the reality.

For Christians. In southern Sudan. Today. We've got nothing. To complain about. Really have we. And another case here. Of a. A Christian. In China. A 22 year old evangelist.

Was at a meeting. Of one of the. Chinese house churches. Which was a. Like a non-government. Sanction time. And he was seized. By the government.

By the agents. Of. China's KGB. And. Mr. Lai. Was beaten. And others. Severely beaten. And then the security officers.

[22 : 22] Handed the truncheons. You know. The sticks. That they're beating them with. To the congregation. And ordered the congregation. To beat the preachers. Otherwise. They're going to get beaten themselves.

And this man. Mr. Lai. Was so badly injured. That they had to. Take him away. From the place. Before. He. Died. Because he was so severely.

Injured. And it's a reality. Brothers and sisters. That. Our brethren. In other lands. They're being persecuted. Imprisoned. Beaten. Sold into slavery.

Butchered. There's a. There's gross things happening. Faith's test. We ain't seen nothing. Brothers and sister. Faith's test. Here in Australia. We've got such indifference.

And apathy. When there's opportunity. To fellowship. We don't take it. People so weak. And uncaring. About faith. And truth. Think of it. Faith's. Trust.

[23 : 16] Have you got that trust. That's Christ. That's saving faith. Have you got faith's test. That that's a faith. That's going to keep on keeping on. No matter what. And then we see. Thirdly. With the Thessalonians.

Faith's rest. We see that. There's a rest. To faith. In verse 7. We read. It tells us that. Paul writes. To you. Who are troubled.

Rest with us. When the Lord Jesus. Shall be revealed. From heaven. With his mighty angels. So when you're troubled. He says rest. Rest with us.

There's a. There's a truth. Where faith. Gives us rest. In a time of turmoil. And trouble. There's a wonderful peace. And rest. That we can know. A faith in Christ.

Knowing that he's coming again. He's going to be revealed. For the meantime. There's a comfort. There's a quiet assurance. And what's more. The Bible talks about. Arresting. From our works.

[24 : 10] Hebrews 4. 3. Talks about. How. You that have believed. You enter. Into rest. There's a rest here. It talks about. Really the. The finished work. Of Christ.

That everything. To save you. Has been done. Faith's rest. Is really. It's ceasing. Our own. Efforts. To achieve salvation. Really.

There's no efforts. That we can make. To achieve salvation. It's actually. Trusting. That Christ. Has completed. The work. That on the cross. 2000 years ago.

Everything was achieved. For you. In Christ. At the cross. Everything was completed. The work. Of the cross. And now we can answer. Into spiritual rest.

For we that believe. We can know. Christ has done everything. To save me. You that have believed. You enter. Into rest. And we can enter. Into a spiritual rest. Now. And look forward.

[25 : 03] To an eternal rest. In heaven. It talks about here. Hebrews 4 verse 9. There remaineth. Therefore. A rest. To the people of God. Think of it. Brother. Sister. And this is not to.

Take away from. Our need to work. Which I'll talk about. But the sense of. Our saving. Is not by. Our striving. Or our working. Or our doing. It's not by.

Our own self. Effort. For righteousness. We can know. A rest today. By faith. A rest from guilt. From sin. A rest from. The futile pursuit.

Of our own self. Righteousness. Of trying to earn. God's favour. Through our own works. This is a rest. For those who have believed. And we can enter. Into that rest.

I don't know. If any of you like. To lay your head down. On the pillow. After a hard day. And what a. What a comfort it is. And you know. You start snoring.

[25 : 58] And you have that rest. It's something. That's a very. Blessed experience. Isn't it? To have rest. To have a fulsome rest. And there's a.

In a spiritual sense too. There's a wonderful truth. That we can rest. In the sense that. All our anxiety. All of our fear. All of our self-reliance. All of our worries.

And fretting. And wondering. About our salvation. Have we. Somehow lost it. Or somehow. Not gained it. Because we've not done enough.

That. There's none of that for us. That trust Christ. That our rest is complete. It's actually a rest. That's. Well. I can lay my head down. On the pillow. Spiritually speaking.

And know. He's watching over me. I'm his. I'm in his care. I'm in his possession. I'm his son. His daughter. By faith. I can have a rest. From my self-reliance.

[26 : 52] I'm not relying on myself. I'm not relying on any effort. Of my own doing. But I can rest. In being in Christ. To find the rest. That is faith. The rest.

That is his will. The rest. Of his provision. Of his. Care. Of his salvation. Another scripture here. Paul says.

We pray always for you. That our God. Will count you. Worthy of this calling. And fulfill all the good pleasure. Of his goodness. And the work of faith. With power. So. We're talking about rest.

But there is a sense. Where there's a work too. So they. They're not. Contrary. Faith's rest. Is not a passive resting. Of doing nothing. But nor is it a human striving.

Of self-effort. The work that we do. Is because we love our Lord. Not because we're trying to earn his favor. There is a yoke. A work for us.

[27 : 46] All to do. It's a serving. Of our Lord. That comes from a glorious rest. Our Lord talks about. A yoke. In Matthew 11.

That familiar one. He says. Come unto me. All ye that labour. And are heavy laden. And I will give you. Rest. He says. Take my yoke upon you. And learn of me. For I am meek and lowly in heart. And you shall find.

Rest. Unto your souls. For my yoke is easy. And my burden. Is light. So. He's talking about working. Like wearing a yoke. Is as oxen would plough. And be joined together.

With this wooden frame. And they would plough together. And the field would be ploughed. And there would be work. Would be done. So there is a context of work there.

But he says. When you put my yoke on you. You're going to find rest. He says. When you put my yoke. When you serve me. He says. There's a rest that you can know. In that work. It's not a working.

[28 : 40] That's by your own striving. And self effort. Or somehow. Gaining. Some salvation credit. It's. Because you love him. That. You can learn of him.

You can. Find his heart. Brother. Sister. Think of these things. This. This evening. Of. The wonderful trust. That we can have. The wonderful faith. That we can have. And.

To know that. There's a work of faith. In the sense that. Because. We're saved. We want to serve. We want. To do something. For our Lord. The work of faith.

Is. Really. It's a resting in him. It's a trusting in him. A relying upon him. And that we be such a church. That we'll be. God glorifying.

Christ honoring. Believer building. We'll be a church. That. That cares about people. Going through trials. And test things. And. We'll be there for each other. Hebrews 4.

[29 : 38] 3. As we referred to. It says. We which have believed. Do enter into rest. Think of it. Brother. Sister. Friends here tonight. Faith gives us a peaceful heart.

Doesn't it? When we know the Savior. When we've trusted Christ. We have peace. Peace that passes all understanding. Faith's work. Brings a rest.

From our striving. From our effort. From our. Endeavours of. Of self. Self effort. It's.

A trusting. It's. It's a knowing his peace. Isn't it? And what a blessing. It is to think. The blessing that we have. To rest. To lean on his strength.

To. To know that. We're resting in his promises. George Mueller. Was a man. He. Was. Known for his prayer. Of his trust in Christ.

[30 : 35] And he says that. He learned the secret. Of walking by the spirit. Of learning to meditate. On the precious truths. Of the word of God. Until our heart is happy. In God.

Resting in his promises. There's. There's a rest. There's a comfort. From the scriptures too. So when we're feeling restless. When we're feeling. Like. We're stressed. Go to the word of God.

And. And. Feed your soul. From the promises of God. Hudson Taylor learned that too. About the promises of God. There's one time Hudson Taylor. He was a.

A well-known missionary. Laboring in. In some. Very challenging. Fields. And Hudson Taylor received. Word one day. Of some rioting. And some trouble going on.

In one of the mission stations. And. After he'd heard the news. One of the evangelists. Overheard. Hudson Taylor. Whistling his favorite hymn. Jesus.

[31 : 29] I am resting. Resting. In the joy. Of that thou art. Hudson Taylor. He just got this horrible news. Of some crisis. Hudson Taylor.

Knew the truth. Of resting. Resting. In the joy. Of Jesus. He'd learnt that for him. Only one life was possible. Of resting.

Of rejoicing in the Lord. Under all circumstances. While he dealt with. Difficulties. Inward. And outward. Great. And small. The. The truth of.

This. Occasion here. Is that. He knew. The secret. Of peace. Of rest. And. Brother. Sister. We can live in fear.

There's lots of fearful news. A lot of the news stories. I know. Even. That the average Joe. Is saying. The world's in this crisis. They can see that. And.

[32 : 25] When we can. Absorb some of those news stories too. We can. Be a bit fearful. But. Brother. Sister. We've got an assurance. Of salvation. We've got a present possession.

Eternal life. We have it. And. It says that. Faith is the life. It says. The just shall live by faith. Romans 1. 17. Faith is our life.

Our life is lived by faith. And faith is active. But it's also at rest. So. There's a sense where. He calls us. Take my yoke upon you. But he says.

You shall find rest. The work that. Jesus gives to us. To do. It's not going to wear us out. And wear us down. It's going to lift us up. We're going to get a restfulness.

As we rest in the finish work. Of our Lord. That Jesus has done all. That needs to be done. For our salvation. And we'll get a hold of those. Exceeding great.

[33 : 21] And precious promises. They're going to. Help us be more restful. They're going to give us that. Resting. As we rest in his promises. As we rest in the keeping power of God. As we rest in that sure and simple.

Knowledge of faith. That we'll receive the promise of God. We rest in that contentment. That we're in Christ. He says. Given unto us. Are these exceeding great.

And precious promises. So there's a. A rest. In faith. Here's another. Of those promises. It tells us. Isaiah 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace.

His mind is stayed on thee. Because he. Trusteth in thee. Here's the mind that is restful. Isn't it? The perfect peace. You know.

If we've got mental health problems. And I think. I have mental health problems. It's common to all of us. That we can have peace. In our mind. The mind can be stayed.

[34 : 19] Resting. Our mind can rest. On Christ. Our mind can rest. On Christ. Our mind can be stayed. This word stayed. It speaks of a full trust. A reliance. That we're supported.

We're anchored. There's a peace that comes to our mind. There's no work that saves us. Other than his work. And there's a resting. The Bible talks about. Underneath are the everlasting arms. You can know. Brother. Sister. Whatever crisis might be happening. Or will happen. Monday morning. Or before that. God forbid. But. But we can be resting.

And it says. We're resting on the everlasting arms. Know that his arms are everlasting. Everlasting. And do you think. God's arms are going to drop you. Like you drop some baby. But if you're careless.

He's not going to drop you. I like to. To put it. You know. Like it says. No man's going to snatch you. Out of my hand. He says. No one's going to snatch you. Out of my father's hand. He's not butterfingers.

[35 : 14] You know. When we played. Cricket. In the. School. And I used to be. Butterfingers. Trying to catch. Trying to catch the ball. Butterfingers. They'd yell that out.

At someone who drops the ball. Wouldn't they? God's no butterfingers. Amen. He's going to hold you with his hand. He's going to hold you on. Underneath the everlasting arms. That's the God that we know. And you can have that assurance.

You can have that rest. The rest of faith. Resting on the everlasting arms. There's a resting. Knowing God's peace today. There's a contentment. And.

That faith. Helps us to. Grab hold of the promises like this one. When. We're not feeling restless.

When we're feeling full of care. And anxious. And worried.

What are we to do? Cast. Most of you care on him. No. Cast all. The whole lot. All of you care upon him. For he careth for you.

[36 : 09] There's a spiritual rest in Christ. It's faith's rest. Really. He is our Sabbath. He. He is the Sabbath. And we can trust his finished work.

That. There's a wonderful. All. Ceasing from our own labor. He's the Lord of the Sabbath. It doesn't mean we're idle or lazy. But there's a sense where we're resting. In Christ.

He's the. The real fulfillment of the Sabbath. In the sense that. He's finished the work. Of the cross for us. So brother. Sister. This evening.

Think. How you can rest. How can I rest more. On his promises. Promises like this one. He brought me up also. Out of a horrible pit. Out of the miry clay. And set my feet.

Upon a rock. And established my goings. I look back at where I was. And it was a horrible pit. A horrible pit. Amen. You might say. I can identify with that. The old me.

[37 : 04] The old place I was. Where I was outside of Christ. It was a horrible pit. And it says. He set my feet. On the rock. He's taken me out of the miry clay. That stinky. Sinking sand.

And he's put me. On the rock. He set my feet. Upon a rock. And that's a promise you can claim. By faith. Isn't it? And the other one there. Rest in the Lord. And wait patiently for him.

Sometimes we've just got to rest in the Lord. When we know. What's going on? Just rest in the Lord. Just be patient. Wait patiently for him. Maybe it is. I just want it to happen now.

Whatever this problem is. I want to get it sorted. I don't want this to go on and on. This is dragging on too long. And Psalm 37 says. Brother. Sister. Rest. In the Lord.

Wait patiently for him. Trust God's timing. Sometimes our timing. Our timing isn't the right timing.

We've got to trust God's plan. Don't we? So think of it.

[37 : 59] As we look at the Thessalonians. They had faith's trust. They had faith. And it wasn't just some airy fairy kind of faith. It was a faith in the finished work. It was a faith in the sure promises of God.

It was a faith. Saving faith in the Saviour. Faith's trust. We see secondly faith's test. It's the present. Isn't it? It's life. Faith is a test.

Life is a test. But our faith is going to come through. We're going to get stronger. We're going to have a more solid. A pure. Solid gold faith. As a result of faith's test.

And then we see faith's rest. That joyful peace that we can know. If we can put our rest in Christ. If we can lean upon him. If we can stay our mind upon him. There's a perfect peace that comes.

As we trust in his promises. As we realise them. As we confess them. As we realise what he's done for us. There's a rest. And it's a day by day rest isn't it?

[38 : 55] To rest in the Lord. To wait patiently for him. To know that he's working through whatever life's throwing our way. God is looking for men and women of faith.

And you don't have to be some superstar Christian. It's simple faith. To rather just be men and women. He'll simply stand.

Just simply stand. Keep on standing. He doesn't expect more from us than what we can give or be. It talks about having done all.

Stand. Just to stand and keep on standing. When others might be falling. And we know the stories of preachers falling. There's men of God that seem to have fallen.

And they've not kept standing. It's a sad reflection isn't it? And men and women of God here tonight. If you can just be a simple Christian. You can keep standing.

[39 : 54] And that's all that we need to do isn't it? Just to stand. To trust God. To have faith. To be standing fast. To believe God.

And to seek his face. It's interesting in Acts 4. What stood out to the people. As they saw the boldness of Peter and John.

They perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men. They marveled. And they took knowledge of them. That they had been with Jesus. Sometimes I think we aren't unlearned and ignorant enough.

That all of our learning and knowledge. And our worldly wisdom. Gets in the way. Of actually being bold for our Lord.

We've just got to be simple men. Peter and John. These are just simple men. Peter a fisherman. He would have been probably mocked and scorned. What do you know?

[40 : 54] You're just a fisherman. I think the problem is sometimes we aren't humble enough. We're relying on ourselves too much. We're too prideful.

We haven't been with Jesus. That's the problem, isn't it? That's what set the man apart here. The boldness of Peter and John. If we miss that. Being with Jesus. We miss everything, don't we? And we can have all the best Bible training. And the best theology. And the best experience of learning about God. And full credit to that.

But we can have all kinds of knowledge and learning. And yet to miss that being with Jesus. That would be such a loss, wouldn't it? And it was their faith, wasn't it?

That they'd been with Jesus. It was their faith that was standing. It was their faith in all the circumstance. Their faith despite all the opposition. Their faith despite all the persecution.

[41 : 51] They knew faith's trust was Christ. They'd been with Jesus. They knew faith's test. That they're going to keep on keeping on. Despite all the opposition and difficulty.

And they knew faith's rest. They'd been with Jesus. They were unlearned and ignorant men. They didn't let pride or learning get in the way. Yeah. They were just the average person.

An average Christian. And what mattered was that they had been with Jesus. Friends, if we can just be with Jesus. That's what matters, isn't it?

Let us pray. Our Lord, we thank you that faith is such a wonderful thing. Lord, that we can trust. We can trust you.

We know in our world, many break trust and let us down. People we trusted. Lord, but we know that you will not disappoint.

[42 : 49] That our trust in you is not going to be disappointed. We pray, Lord, that we'll have that trust. Pray, Lord, we'll have that resilient faith that will go through the test.

If there's any here today, and I'm sure we can all have moments of such a time. Of trial, of suffering. Of loss, of struggle. Whether it be anxiety or fear.

Or discouragement. Setbacks. Our own willfulness. Our own proneness to backsliding, Lord. Our own frailty and failing.

Lord, help us to see that our faith can endure. We can have a patient, a persevering faith. And pass faith's test. And Lord, help us also to know this truth of faith's rest.

That our faith is not a faith that needs to be supplemented by our works to save us. Lord, we know that everything to save us was done at the cross.

[43 : 59] Lord, we have that rest that we simply have to put our trust in you. Lord, that it's not any striving of our own that's going to gain any heaven.

It's simply that trust, Lord. And help us to have that rest that even when we feel inadequate, even though we might feel unlearned and ignorant, and so unworthy of any grace, Lord, that we can be with you.

As we are here tonight, we're with you. You're with us. And Lord, we pray. Pray if there's any here present or watching that have yet to trust you, they will see their great need of a saviour.

They will see their trust must not be in any philosophy or religion or invention or doings of man, but it must be entirely in you.

That entire trust must be entirely in what you have done to save them. And Lord, that we can say, Jesus, save me. And you will.

[45 : 03] Lord, we pray, help us to have that resilience that is not deterred. When life's miseries come our way, they might be turned into ministries one day.

Lord, we thank you. Give us grace. Help us, Lord, to keep on pressing on and not to be discouraged, but rather to encourage ourselves in the Lord. And Lord, help us to rest, just to have that restfulness, to know our peace doesn't come by our own making.

Our rest doesn't come by our own striving. Our rest comes as we simply trust you, that we be with you, Lord Jesus.

Help us to have communion time with you every day, to have time in your word to strengthen our faith such that it will be as the Thessalonians' faith.

It was one that was increasing exceedingly. Lord, we pray that we'll have such a wonderful growing of faith, a flourishing of faith, that it will be a fruitful faith.

[46 : 14] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.