

Increase our Faith #addtoyourfaith #faithalone

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[0:00] Let's go to the Word of God to Hebrews 11. Talking about faith, the subject of faith, an essential subject, a critical subject, because we must have faith to be saved.

! Hebrews 11, of course, it tells of the heroes of the faith, the men and women of God who lived out their faith in witness and testimony.

And we can still see their witness and know of it today and know that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But we're going to pick it up from verse 6 there and some topical treatment of the subject of faith.

An essential topic, maybe it's something we know all about, we don't need to hear about it, but I think it wouldn't hurt to hear about it and to be refreshed in our faith. We must have faith to be saved. It says Hebrews 11, verse 6.

But without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

[1:08] First, let's establish what saving faith is. It's faith in Christ. We can have an airy-fairy kind of faith. There's lots of religions that have faith of sorts, faith in this or that.

But it's faith in Christ that we need, faith that saves. This is what saves. Because when we were witnessing yesterday, I met a man and he was a very religious man.

He prays five times a day. He says he repents five times a day. But he doesn't know the Saviour. He doesn't know the Saviour. It's a sad, sad situation.

We pray for that man that he might come to know the Saviour. Because really, Christ is the one and only Saviour. And so faith in Christ is what saves. This is what we must have.

And we are saved by grace through faith. As we read that familiar one, For by grace are you saved through faith. Ephesians 2, 8 through 9. By grace are you saved through faith.

[2:05] That not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. Notice it is faith that saves. It is not of works.

This is the contrast between really every cult or religion of man or philosophy of man and biblical Bible truth, Bible Christianity, Bible salvation.

It's not of works. Now some would say, they would say things like this. That it is faith plus, plus something that we do.

So some would say, it's faith plus our surrender. It's faith plus our obedience. It's faith plus our giving up certain things. It's faith plus our doing certain things.

Faith plus our discipleship. Faith plus our striving. Faith plus our having certain experiences.

Tongues, whatever it be. Faith plus baptism.

[3:10] Faith plus supernatural signs. Faith plus the sacraments. Faith plus having certain feelings. You've got to feel that you're saved. Faith plus what we do to reform ourselves.

We've got to change ourselves. Faith plus we have to stop sinning. Faith plus having evidence. Faith plus fruit that shows.

How do you judge how much fruit? Faith plus living a good life. Faith plus holding on. Faithful. Faith plus making him Lord of your life.

Isn't he already Lord? We can't make him Lord. But these are good intentions largely. But the problem is that it's faith plus.

Which can be a problem when we're depending on such things for our saving. Of course we know it tells us that it's after the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared.

[4:15] Not by works of righteousness that we have done. But according to his mercy he saved us. By the washing of regeneration. And renewing of

the Holy Ghost.

Faith plus becomes a bit of a hamster wheel. It becomes a bit of a hamster wheel because we have to perform. We have to do. We have to try.

Instead of trust. And without the plus element some would say well it's not real faith. You have to strive. You have to put your own energy and willpower.

Your own good effort. But what matters is what does the Bible actually say about faith. And the Bible clearly teaches us this truth.

That salvation is by faith in Christ plus nothing. Are you saved? When we get saved we repent. We repent of unbelief.

[5:16] We repent of our dead works. A mind shift happens. A shift happens. Our allegiance changes. What we trust in changes. We don't trust in ourselves anymore.

We trust in the Saviour. And we place our trust no longer in ourselves. But we place our trust entirely on Christ. That's faith in a nutshell.

Now some would say well that's easy believing. Believism. Well that's faith. That's faith. Some would call it easy believing as a term to mock it.

This concept. However we can actually see from the scriptures that yes it is simple. It is basic. It is easy. The truth is when we believe in Christ a change happens in what we depend on.

It's a letting go of self dependence. Of self reliance. Instead our reliance is upon him. It's a turning from our own self will and self trust.

[6:15] And the saving is his work. Not by works of righteousness that we do. As we see there verse 5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done.

Now that's not to say we oughtn't to work works of righteousness. That's not to say we oughtn't to add to our faith. And we're going to get to that. But we're talking about salvation. The one and only requirement is faith in Christ.

So faith is that starting point. That's salvation. That's when it happens. And when it happens it happens for time and for eternity. When we trust Christ for our salvation. He saves to the uttermost. He saves us in that instant of time. And for eternity. Eternity. And some would say how is that enough? How is that enough?

And you know these religious ones. Again referring to the door knocking. And some would say it just sounds too easy to believe in Jesus. That we don't have to do anything.

[7:14] It goes against our pridefulness as man doesn't it? The arrogance that we have. Well I've got to kind of prove it. I've got to show it. I've got to live it. I've got to do something to deserve it.

We can't do anything to deserve it. It's coming simply as a child. Some would scorn this and say how anti-intellectual. How simple. That's just too little.

Too basic. It's the scriptures. When the question was asked. Sirs what must I do to be saved? And they said believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And thou shalt be saved. And thy house. Some would say surely that's not enough. They would say well man must add something by his own efforts. His own intellect. His own religious trappings.

There must be some performance. There must be something. That hamster wheel. There must be something I've got to do. Of my own doing. Of my own good works. Some would think that man must bring his own reason.

[8:15] His own good works. To make it enough. But no. It's enough to believe. On the Lord Jesus Christ. To lay your trust on him. Man must make some effort of his own volition.

Of his own actions. Some would say. They would say well man doesn't deserve it. We must deserve it. We must earn it. By our own efforts. Our own surrender. Our self-sacrifice.

Our religious works. Some burdensome. Self-abasement. Some deprivation. Some would get whips. And literally flagellate themselves. And shed their own blood. And climb stony steps.

In some monastery. And live without bread. For days. To be able to prove. In some kind of monastery kind of setting. That they have hurt themselves enough.

To deserve salvation. Yeah. That they must earn it. By some self-sacrifice. Many think that way. But no. The answer is here.

[9:14] In these words. Believe. On the Lord Jesus Christ. And thou shalt be saved. Believe that Jesus died for your sin. Believe that Jesus paid for your sin. Believe that Jesus can be your saviour.

Some would say. Well faith without works is dead. They're quoting James here. But misunderstanding it. James is not saying. That faith. To be faith. Has to have works. He's saying. Some can have faith. Yet their faith is not productive. Sure enough. God wants our faith to be useful. James is not saying here though. That faith has to have works. For it to be faith. That's getting the cart before the horse. Someone can have faith. And yet their faith may not be profitable. In the sense of benefiting others. Or showing much if any fruit. Of the spirit. You can have faith without. Necessarily having the fruit. A man may have faith. And be saved. Yet have little or no fruit.

[10:12] Now that's not a good thing. Let me tell you. A fruitless faith. Will not save the careless Christian. From judgment. At the judgment seat of Christ. A fruitless faith.

Will mean a loss of rewards. And. A believer. Whoever. Who lacks fruit. Will face God's judgment. God's. Discipline.

Still saved. But. They'll lose out. In rewards. It's a kind of. Quandary. These two. Aspects of faith. Of works. Works. Are the evidence. Of a fruitful Christian life. But not a requirement. For salvation. Works. Are not a requirement. For our justification. Before God.

And this is getting that. Understanding. This faith plus. It's not at the salvation. Point. But the faith plus. Is the sanctification. We're going to get to that.

[11:09] So if someone has genuine faith. And does no works. They're still saved eternally. At salvation. When they trust Christ. To pay for their sin. He pays for their sin. They receive salvation.

As a gift. They're saved. Saved eternally. But their faith. May appear dead. And unproductive. Someone might get saved. And then have little. Or no fruit. Now that's a sad thing. When that happens. And of course. The theme of our. Recent conference. Is increase our faith. The quality of our faith. May be deficient.

It may be lacking. And that's a sad thing. Faith without works. Will result in a dead. Ineffective. Kind of testimony. But they still have. Eternal security.

Our justification. Is by faith. Faith alone. Aside from. Any works. It's very clear. For example. In this scripture. Romans 4 verse 5.

[12:04] It says. But to him that worketh not. But believeth on him. That justifieth the ungodly. His faith is counted. For righteousness. The very concept.

Of scriptural righteousness. Is that it is not of works. The righteousness is his. It's his. And the righteousness. Is imputed. It's given.

It's granted. As a gift. Undeserved. His righteousness. Is given. It's not by our works. Our faith in him. Is counted for righteousness.

So the basic. Theology of salvation. In the word of God. Gospel. In other words. Repent from unbelief. And believe. It's to trust the saviour. From. Your sin.

And to accept his gracious. Offer of salvation. And forgiveness. Again. Some would scorn. And say. Well. Faith in Christ. Of itself. Is not sufficient. Faith in Christ.

[13:01] Is not sufficient. I've got to deserve it. I've got to earn it. I've got to merit it. I've got to prove it. Some would scorn. Faith is not enough. Even a child. Could do that.

That's exactly the case. Isn't it? It's exactly the case. Even a child. In Sunday school. Can understand. Enough to be saved. There's no great intellectual.

Argument. Or reasoning. To take. Note of there. There's not any. Kind of. Nothing. That they can do. Can merit.

Salvation. And so. They would say. Well that's. Simplistic. That's a baby. Kind of faith. That's childlike. That's childlike. To be simply trusting.

Yes it is. Yes it is. Your little one. In their. In their childlike. Life. Can simply trust Christ.

[13:59] And be saved. It is possible. They don't have to go to some. Theological. Seminary. And go to some. Lengths of. Man-made learning.

It can be a simple trusting. And it is for every one of us. Isn't it? A holding of his hand. As a child holds a parent's hand. As.

A leaning on his bosom. Knowing that we're safe. A resting in his everlasting arms. Childlike faith. This is saving faith. Faith really is a letting go. Of trusting in our own. DIY. Isn't it? The DIY kind of religion.

It's saying. Actually I'm not going to do it myself. I'm going to. Trust his saving. And that's the wonder of it. That Calvary covers it all. Faith is a shifting of our love.

[14:56] Of our dependence. Our trust shifts. From our self. To him. We can't. Make it. We can't merit it. By our own effort. As much as we might.

Even commend someone. Who tries to do that. But it's not going to cut it. I know when we're witnessing. I like to illustrate it. How we all come short. Of the glory of God. And it's like this. It's unreachable. The glory of God. We can't. As stretch as you might. You're never going to reach it. Build a ladder of your own. Religious good works. It's never going to make it. Your ladder's never going to be high enough.

Because you're going to fall short. Of the glory of God. But in Christ. He comes down. And he reaches us. And we can hold his hand. And receive his saving. Receive the saviour. Our trust shifts. That our dependence shifts. That we stop trusting in ourself. And our own works. And we trust his payment. On our part. We see his wounding. Brings our healing.

[15:56] Our soul is healed. We see his forgiveness. His pardon. He's the defence attorney. And he's the judge who says. Receive my pardon. And we simply receive it.

As he grants it. Our part is not to deserve it. Because we don't. We're still guilty. But he pardons. Our part is simply to receive his pardon.

Some are there in the prison cell. Of their lost estate. And the jailer comes and says. The governor's issued a pardon. If you will but receive it.

And they don't believe it. They just stay in the prison cell. And end up on death row. And damned for eternity. Because they don't receive the pardon.

That is extended to them. Our part is simply to receive it. And so we receive pardon. We receive freedom. We receive forgiveness from sin's penalty.

[16:54] His death brings us life. And faith is the beginning. Of a whole new life. It's what grace has done. It's what grace has done. Isn't it? Grace.

He gives us salvation. As entirely a gift. Not of our own earning. A gift freely offered. And freely received. There's many scriptures that tell us of this truth.

Of the free gift. It's the gift of God. Not of works. It's the gift of God. Is eternal life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. The free gift. It's by grace.

By one man. Jesus Christ. And as our Lord spoke to the woman at the well. He says if you knew the gift of God. He's asked of you a drink. He says you would have asked of him.

And he'd have given you. Living water. Salvation. Jesus is the gift of God. It's Jesus. Faith in Jesus that matters. And makes everything happen.

[17:50] And so it's not of our own earning. A gift freely offered. Freely received. It's all thanks entirely. To the undeserved grace of God. And it's almost.

You've got it. It does your head in when you come. From a religious background. Where it's all about. Well it's about performing. It's about measuring up. It's about. Going to the sacraments. Or various religious rituals. And such things. But when we see the truth. That it's a gift. It. The blinkers come off. And we see. Wow. I don't deserve it.

But he offers it. I want it. I want Jesus. And here's the salvation of a wretched one. It's not faith plus. That saves us. Not at all. It's faith in Christ.

Alone. That saves the soul. Plus nothing. So having established that as the first point. Let me now say. There is more. Than faith. There is the reality.

[18:45] Of faith plus. Faith plus. Okay. Salvation. It's not faith plus. Salvation is faith alone. Right. Over here.

Is sanctification. That's faith plus. That's increase our faith. That's faith plus. Action. All right. So. I've established.

Salvation is faith alone. Now. The reality of faith plus. Once we are saved. Of course. God doesn't want our faith to be inactive. And weak. God wants for us.

That our faith will grow. He doesn't want us to have a faith. That others would think of as dead. As static. He wants our faith to be living. Vibrant. Alive. Effective.

God wants for us to add to. Our faith. And it's important that we strengthen our faith. This is an important truth. God doesn't want us to be a static. Christian. It's important that we strengthen our faith.

[19:43] That our faith grows. So we're going to talk a little on that theme. As in the theme of the recent conference. How can we increase our faith? How can we build our faith? Such that our faith is stronger.

It's more vibrant. It's more fruitful. Here's one way. Pray for increased faith. Of course. The conference theme. And the apostles said unto the Lord.

Increase our faith. Increase our faith. We can pray. We can have the hearts cry. The disciples had. Lord increase my faith. I want to have a greater faith.

I want to have a stronger faith. I want that kind of faith. And the Lord said. If you had faith. There's a grain of mustard seed. You might say unto this sycamine tree. Be thou plucked up by the root.

And thou planted in the sea. And it should obey you. He says. Just a little seed of faith. Can work mighty wonders. And the disciples prayed.

[20:40] Lord increase our faith. And we can too. Can't we? Can't we pray. Lord increase my faith. Increase our faith. Ask God to increase our faith. That we'll trust him more. That our faith will be stronger.

That it will be strengthened. That it would grow. And God is the source of all things. Including our faith. As he provides us answers for prayer. When we seek his face.

When we ask in faith. We see in Mark 9. 24. The man with the demoniac. And it says. The father of the child cried out. And said with tears.

Lord I believe. Help thou mine unbelief. That's a good prayer to pray. Isn't it? Lord I've got my doubts. I've got things I'm not sure about. There's things I'm really unclear about.

But I do believe. Help me when I don't believe. Help me when I lack faith. And it's a good prayer to pray. Isn't it? Lord I believe. Help me to believe more. Help me to believe more strongly.

[21:38] Faith is something we can cultivate. Our faith can grow stronger. Faith starts small. And that faith saves. Faith alone. Faith the size of a mustard seed.

Can move mountains. It can move the mountain of our sin. That Christ can pay for it in full. Faith. Faith. Yet we can pray for increased faith. That our faith would grow.

God wants us to grow in our faith. Sometimes we can get stagnant. We can get settled. And I know people have been telling me. The Lord's moving on them. Different things that they feel.

The Lord's calling them to. Maybe to take some leaps of faith. Some steps of faith. To do something radical. Something in the unknown. To step out in faith.

To believe God. To use them in greater ways. In more effective ways. And that's when the faith starts to. Kind of germinate.

[22:34] Doesn't it? We say. Can I believe God for something? Can I believe God for his calling? For whatever it be. Some new mission. God wants for us to grow in our faith.

And walk with him. So I'd appeal to you to think. How it is that we can add to our faith. Because one of the classic scriptures. We're just going to read it for now. Is in 2 Peter 1. Where it reads. Verse 1. Simon Peter. A servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ. To them. That have obtained like precious faith with us. Through the righteousness of God. And our saviour Jesus Christ. So he's talking to people who've got faith.

It's a like precious faith. He says. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you. Through the knowledge of God. And of Jesus our Lord. According as his divine power. Hath given unto us all things.

That pertain unto life and godliness. Through the knowledge of him. That have called us to glory and virtue. What does he say? He says. Whereby given unto us exceeding great. And precious promises.

[23:30] That by these we might be. Ye might be partakers of the divine nature. Having escaped the corruption. That is in the world through lust. It's talking about the divine nature. And notice this.

And beside this. He says. You that have got this precious faith. This like precious faith. He says. And beside this. Giving all diligence. Add to your faith. Virtue. And to virtue. Knowledge. And to knowledge. Temperance. And to temperance. Patience. And to patience. Godliness. And to godliness. Brotherly kindness. And to brotherly kindness. Charity. For if these things be in you and abound.

They make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful. In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Peter's saying. Add to your faith. He says. There's something. There's faith plus. That's a good thing to have. Don't you want that? To be a fruitful Christian. God wants that for us. For all of us. For our faith to abound. That it be fruitful. For our faith to flourish.

[24:29] To be vibrant and alive. And we're going to come back to this scripture a bit later. There's the truth of adding to your faith. That's the point. That faith. Faith alone saves you.

For time and for eternity. You're eternally saved. By faith in Christ as your saviour. Paying for your sin. Trusting that payment. Faith plus is when you let your faith increase.

It's when you add to your faith. It's when you say. I want to grow in my faith. I want to go stronger. I want to go far with my God. I want to go full on for God. Help God.

Let God use me in every way that he can. To not stand in his way. And so. Here's some truths about growing your faith. Firstly we pray for our faith to increase.

Then we see another one here. Is that faith comes by the word of God. It's by hearing the word of God. That's why it's good to get to church. That's why it's good to get to fellowship. Get to Bible study.

[25:26] Faith comes by hearing the word of God. That's why it's good to get a Bible. Get up yourself a study Bible. Get the word of God. Mind you be discerning about study Bibles.

But get yourself a Bible that you can dig deep into. And uncover the rich mind of truth that it is. Because it says faith cometh by hearing.

And hearing by the word of God. So the more that we hear it. The more our faith can be encouraged. Scripture is that key source of divine truth.

And in 2 Peter it talked about exceeding great. And precious promises didn't it? Think of the promises of God. And the promises you can lay hold of them. You can claim them.

You can confess them. And the first step to increasing faith. Is to immerse ourselves in God's word. Isn't it? By the word we learn more of our Lord. And his will for our lives. When we hear and meditate on these truths.

[26:21] Our faith grows. We learn sound doctrine. Faith cometh by hearing. Let's get those ears hearing it. Let's let those ears hear it. Whether it be as you might tune into preaching.

Or whether video or audio. Or in print. That you're tuning in. To hearing the word. And as we learn more of our Lord. Of his will.

We can grow. Our faith can increase. We can know that faith comes by hearing. So prioritize daily Bible reading too. Listen to teachings.

Worship. That reinforces the word. And reflect on God's promises. They're for you. Also learn to apply the scriptures to your daily life. Your current situation.

Our faith and trust grows as we read and hear the word of God. The word. Another key truth is faith increases through trials. Now we don't like this one.

[27:19] Do we? But faith increases through trials. Alright. That's one of the ways. That God uses. And trials are uncomfortable. But they're some of the greatest opportunities to grow our faith aren't they?

Think of the faithful believers in persecuted lands. You know one of the missionaries we talked about just earlier. And in other countries. It's happening now. There's some countries where it's perilous to be a believer.

And yet these are the ones you find their faith is so strong. Because they're faithful. They've learnt to go through much testing. And it could be for you, for me.

Those challenges. Do you think oh I'd rather that hadn't have happened. Actually it helps you to learn to trust him more. To trust him more fully. To see his power manifest in our lives.

For example we see in James 1. James writes. My brethren count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations. Or different kinds of trials.

[28:20] He says count it all joy when you have some tests. When you have some trials. Knowing this he says that the trying of your faith worketh patience. It's when we endure trials that God sustains us.

He strengthens our faith. And we can go through. When we face difficulties. Instead of asking why me. Ask what are you teaching me. Lord.

Through this trial. And when you think as you get older. You look back. And God's brought you through past trials hasn't he. You can look back in your life and think. Well there were some trials. But I'm still here. I've got through it. And you can be encouraged that you've got through. And you're going to get through the next one too. Because we can look back and see that God is faithful. And what he has done.

Can help fuel our faith. For the future challenges. Know that God is faithful today. Amen. Even in the difficult seasons. The difficult seasons of life.

[29:14] Choose to worship like Job did. What did he do? When everything went bad. First thing he did was to worship. This act of faith can help deepen our faith too. Our trust in God's plan.

Trust God in your trials. It's through the trials that your muscles of faith can be exercised. As you exercise your faith. More and more. Learn to trust him.

And every step of obedience is an opportunity for God to prove his faithfulness. For as the body without the spirit is dead. So faith without works is dead also.

God doesn't want you here. God doesn't want you that your faith is not working. God wants you over here. That your faith will be alive and productive.

That your faith will be fruitful. So live out your faith. When your faith tests. Don't be amongst those whose faith is dead. That's unproductive.

[30:11] Rather trust God to work in you. And think. How can I step out of the comfort zone? I know really a good way to increase your faith is to open your mouth about the saviour.

Alright. That's a good way to increase your faith. Alright. Go witnessing. Tell others of the saviour. I know as a young man. I was 15.

At year 12. Elizabeth High. And there was a Mormon there. And he was full on preparing for his mission field. For his two year stint. As a missionary.

And he had all the books here. And he says. Mormon says this. An enquirer says that. He had to learn it all by rote. All the answers. All the parroting. Of all the. He says.

She says. I say. And he was full on preparing to be a missionary. In another country. And I thought. What am I doing?

[31:12] Who am I? And another occasion was a Muslim classmate of mine too. And when I started to defend my faith. And talk of the saviour.

That's when my faith increased. Because I started to think. I've got to defend the faith. I've got to find reason. Of the hope that is in me. I've got to have an answer to these people.

That are lost. And confused. And astray from truth. And no salvation. And so. That was a real big turning point for me. As a young Christian.

When I started to witness. When I started to share my faith. And sometimes it's hard. Isn't it? That's when. The trial of your faith. Is that. Because you're going to get knocked.

And you're going to get. Argument. And controversy. And they're going to contradict you. You're going to have to dig deeper into the word. To find the answers. To respond. But take that step of faith.

[32:06] To go witnessing. It could be in your workplace. The social place. Your family. I know others have been telling me. They're mustering the courage. To speak to their father. That can be a hard thing to do.

Can't it? If you've got an unsaved parent. And you know. The love of Christ constrains you. You want to tell them. Of the saviour. You want to see them saved. You'd like to see them.

Over the other side. In glory. That they trusted Christ. Because at the moment. They haven't. And that's. That touches your heart strings. You think. I want to be sure. I want to tell them. I don't want to neglect. To tell them. And that takes faith. To do that. Doesn't it? So let's not be self-reliant. But depending on our Lord. And sometimes witnessing can be the. Where the rubber hits the road. When you actually got to. Well I'm going to step out of my comfort zone. And actually say. Do you know the saviour? I'd love to introduce you to Jesus Christ. [33:00] To know the way. Of salvation. To know. How to be saved. And through life too. When things don't go as planned. And we don't always understand.

When trials come. Yet we can trust. That God's ways are higher. God's ways are higher than our ways. And we can trust his timing. So we say. To pray. To get in the word. To not be afraid of trials. But to step through them. And also. Another way to increase your faith. Is surround yourself with faith filled believers. That's what we're doing right now. We're amongst others who. Who also believe. Who are also believers. Because the good thing about faith. Is faith is contagious. Isn't it? You might be feeling a bit downhearted. But maybe there's another believer. They can say. Hey. Here's a promise from the word. Can I pray for you? The situations. We've had some. Families have suffered bereavement amongst us. [33:56] There's hard times. There's sad times. There's people going through struggles. Trying to mount a petition. That it seems a mountain to climb. There's situations amongst us.

Of loved ones. That are going through struggles. There's the sick ones. Interstate. That people have got to go. And mind. And care for. There's all of life's worries. And concerns. The stresses. Of running an enterprise. A business. When. The infrastructure crashes down. Literally. And we all have these things. These moments of life. Where things don't always go. As we would plan them. But it's an opportunity. For your faith. It's an opportunity. For your faith. To extend. To increase. And faith is contagious. So. Surround yourself with others. That's why. It's good to fellowship. When we opt out of fellowship. We miss that. There's. There's opportunities. That. We have to impart. And to be imparted to. That we miss out. [34:52] When we're not here. And so. There's testimonies. There's encouragement. We can build up our own faith. And build up the faith of others. Of course. That familiar one says. To consider one another. Provoke unto love.

And to good works. There's that encouragement. Of encouraging one another. In the faith. And. Not missing that. So. Get together. When you can. Seek out fellowship. It's a good thing. For your faith. And that faith. Like a mustard seed. It's going to start small. But. It's got potential to grow. Into something mighty. Now. Just go. Going back. To a quick recount. Of 2 Peter 1. Again. Peter shows us. How to add to. Our faith. And here's some of the things. These are. Little. Little points. Little character qualities. We could think about. Faith alone saves you. But faith plus. Is hey. I want more. [35:48] I want to be more for Jesus. I want my faith to be added to. I want my faith to increase. I want my faith to grow. To blossom. To be fruitful. And here's some ways.

That your faith can. Be increasing. It's the sanctification part. It's your walk with Christ. And so. Peter's saying here. To give all diligence. He says. Add to your faith. And all of these things. Diligence. Virtue. Knowledge. Temperance. Patience. Godliness. Brotherly kindness. Charity. He says. If these things be in you. And abound. They shall make you. That you shall neither be barren. Nor unfruitful. In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. So. So what does. What does. This faith plus. Look like. Let's just go through. [36:42] Point by point here. Just. To cover this. Little passage here. What does. Faith plus. Look like. What does this faith look like. That's growing. That's increasing.

We see firstly. Giving all diligence. This word diligence. It means having an eagerness. Having a zeal. A sense of urgency. Of serious effort.

That we call to this. To actively pursue this. That we should have a diligence here. This is something that we should count. Very important. Not to be passive. But to. Be called to energy. To focus. To priority. Are we diligent? And what's the opposite of diligent? Diligent. Isn't it easy to be over here?

But we're called to diligence. We're called to diligence. Bible reading. Prayer. Worship. Are we diligent? Or are we over here? We're not really diligent at all.

[37:40] Why don't we. To be diligent. Like an athlete. That's training. For. Something very important. To be diligent. And of course. In the context here. To be diligent. In what? In the pursuit.

Of Christian character. So number one. Giving all diligence. And then it says. Add to your faith virtue. Add to your faith virtue.

It means excellence. Or courage. It's living out our faith. Where the rubber hits the road. It's living out godly values. Having courage. The boldness.

This virtue. That. An integrity. To our life. To stand up for what is right. And to not go along with the crowd.

To do what's right. That's virtue. And then we say. To virtue. It says. To add knowledge. And knowledge here. Is deeper than just an intellectual understanding.

[38:37] It's a deep personal knowledge. That's the sense of it. It's getting to know God personally. The knowledge. It's to know him. Him. To know his life eternal. It's to have that.

Growing in your understanding of his word. He wants you to grow in the knowledge. Not to be. Over here. But to have knowledge. Bible knowledge.

Scriptural knowledge. Spiritual knowledge. So get together and learn with others. Impart to others. If you can't get to the Bible study. Have a Bible study in your home. And impart to those.

That can. You can invite to your home. I'm not against that. Do something. To grow your knowledge. And to impart knowledge. To keep on growing.

And then it says. To knowledge. Add temperance. This is about self-control. It's getting mastery over our desires and impulses. It's saying. Actually.

[39:32] I'm going to think before I speak. I'm going to be careful. About managing my temper. When I humanly want to. Shout and scream. I'm going to resist that temptation.

I don't always do that. But I ought to. We're tempted by anger. By frustration. Because we feel what we've been done wrong. But God says. Be self-controlled.

Exercise self-control. It's the fruit of the spirit. Isn't it? Rather than trying to defend yourself. Or exploding. As humanly we can. We ought not to.

Rather have temperance. And then it says. Fifthly. To temperance add patience. It's about an endurance here. This is a long distance event. It's a marathon event. Isn't it? This patience.

It's about this endurance. It's about the long haul. It's in the face of trials. That you'll press on. In patience. In perseverance. Without giving up. It's about trusting God.

[40:26] Through the tough times. Through personal loss. Of suffering. Of challenges. Of being wronged. As our faith grows. We can face tough times. We can have patience.

We can hang on to God. Because he's the source of our endurance. And he's the one who's going to sustain us. And we can trust in the Lord. And his goodness. And then it says.

To add to patience. Add godliness. Think of how can I be more like Christ. Like my Lord. How can my life reflect his character.

In my attitude. My behaviour towards others. In my devotion towards him. Godliness. Is it showing in my attitudes. My behaviour.

My humility. Or lack thereof. Godliness. Am I living in a way that honours my Lord. Or brings shame. And then we see.

[41:22] To add to godliness. Brotherly kindness. The word here is Philadelphia. Or didn't we to be such a church. A Philadelphia church. A church of brotherly love.

The kind of affection and love. Where actually. We're like brothers and sisters. But not just brothers and sisters. But brothers and sisters who love each other. Amen.

We can be brothers and sisters that don't love each other. It's talking about brothers and sisters who love each other. Alright. That's what we want isn't it. To be such a church. To have such a care.

And affection. A practical love and care. For our fellow believers. And this could be as simple as reaching out. To people around us. To offer help. To be a listening ear.

To just take time. For genuine fellowship. And building up others in love. Brotherly love is a good thing. Isn't it? Brotherly kindness. And then lastly. To add to our faith.

[42:21] We are to add to our brotherly kindness. As charity. And here's the ultimate. Agape. It's the highest form of love. Self-sacrificial love. It's the love that seeks the good of others.

It's the love that loves the enemy. It's the love that loves those who are hard to love. It's the love that goes beyond emotion. Beyond our wanting to. A selfless unconditional action.

An example might be showing kindness to someone who's wrong does. Offering forgiveness. And Peter's list here is like a spiritual staircase.

Where each step builds on the previous one. Starting with faith. Culminating in love. And these virtues are increasing our faith, aren't they?

In the practicalities. That we can cultivate them. And that these qualities would be in you. And not only in you, but abound. That actually, we're not just going to have these qualities.

[43:20] But these qualities would abound. Abound. And so we would become fruitful. So friends, to summarise, to be clear. Faith saves. Faith plus nothing.

Salvation is faith in Christ alone. By his grace alone. Faith in Jesus as the one, our substitute. To pay for our sin. To believe in him is to be saved.

For time and for eternity. Faith plus nothing. That's salvation. Over here is sanctification. That's when we put our faith into our shoes.

And walk it out. We live it out. We walk by faith. It's faith plus. That we can add to our faith. We can increase our faith. We can be like the disciples and pray. Lord, increase our faith.

Increase our faith. We don't want to be static and stationary. We want our faith to grow. To bear fruit. How do we do that? Hear the word. Faith cometh by?

[44:16] Hearing. Hearing. Hearing the word of God. We've got exceeding great and precious promises. Hear the word. Don't shy away from trials. Recognise the Lord's in it as a way for you to grow.

Trials are good. Even the trial of being a testimony to someone who might be hostile back to you. A trial is a good thing because your faith is going to grow, brother, sister.

Fellowship. Surround yourself with faith-filled believers. Encourage one another. There's people here today. Their faith needs increasing. And you're the channel that's going to help them increase their faith.

As you encourage one another. Spur one another on. And make a determined intent to add to. Add to your faith. All of these things we've talked about here.

Add to your faith. Think about these virtues of these Christ-like qualities. Ask for the Holy Spirit's help to develop them in you. And not only that they be in you, but that they abound.

[45:13] So, friends, just to recap. Add to your faith with diligence. Take this seriously. Hey, this is something we should be diligent about. This is something that we should be...

Actually, this is really, really important. That we should be diligent about this. That we should add to our faith virtue. In other words, aim for integrity. We should add to our faith knowledge. Not just head knowledge, but heart knowledge.

To know the Saviour. To know Him. To have that personal relationship with Him. That temperance. That self-control. That you'll exercise it with those who press your buttons. That you'll have some patience, perseverance, steadfastness, endurance.

You'll go for the long haul looking unto Jesus in that gospel race that you're running. You'll add to your faith godliness. That you'll have some godliness, some Christ-likeness. You'll have brotherly kindness looking out for each other as the family of God.

As brothers and sisters. Brotherly love. And then the ultimate. It's the highest step, really, isn't it? Add to your faith love. Add to your faith love.

[46:15] Charity. Agape. Look at all these qualities. These areas of your life. They're godly qualities. And they're always, hey, I know I could use a bit more virtue. I could use a bit more knowledge.

A bit more temperance. A bit more patience. A bit more godliness. A bit more brotherly kindness. A bit more charity. Think about ways you can identify. These are things lacking in my life that I could do better in.

I could do more diligently to have such things, such qualities. And you can take those small intentional steps to increase your faith. To increase, to add to your faith.

Increase your faith. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you that salvation is a gift. We don't deserve it.

We can't merit it. It's entirely your saving power. As you paid everything. As Calvary covers it all at the cross.

[47:13] We know it's there that the finished work happened. That everything was done to save our soul. Lord, help us to receive it as a gift. That salvation. By faith.

Through grace. Lord. And help us, Lord, to grow. To have the faith that we add to. By your help. That we'll have that heart. To add those qualities of righteousness.

Of godliness. That we'll have those virtues that get tested. When we rub up against others. And are inclined to do the human thing.

Instead of the spiritual thing. Lord, help us to be such a people. And help. We pray if there's any here present. Lord, yet to trust you. That they would have that simple childlike faith.

To say, Jesus, I need you. I'm a sinner. Save me. Forgive me. Lord, I trust you. To pay for my sin. I repent from my unbelief.

[48:10] From my lost ways. Lord, I turn in faith to you. To trust you entirely. To be the saviour of my soul. And Lord, not trusting any effort. Or part of my own.

But entirely what you have done. I trust you now. Pray that each one might have that heart's trust. And then walking on in that faith. That we'll live it out, Lord. That the just shall live by faith.

That we'll have a faith that keeps on growing. And Lord, help us not to settle for a faith that's dead and unproductive. And maybe stagnant. But help us, Lord, to have diligence to add to our faith in all of these ways.

All for your glory and praise. We ask, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.