

Faith - What It's All About

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[0 : 00] So, speaking about marriage, I want to tell you about Frank and Betsy.! I've changed the names to protect the...!

He's one of those guys that if he's in the middle of a project, don't talk to me, don't interrupt me, don't disturb me. When I'm finished, then I'll give you my attention, but when I'm right in the middle of it, don't...

And in the past, Betsy had done that. And she, over the years, kind of learned her lesson that Frank gets a little testy, a little upset. So, she figured out, finally, and so she quit doing it, and she quit interrupting him when he was in the middle of a project.

Well, one day, Frank was out in the garage, and he was in the middle of a project, but she needed to tell him something. So, she went out into the garage, and she stood by silently, waiting for a signal from Frank that it was okay for her to speak.

When that time finally arrived, she said, well, Frank, the house is on fire. Those kind of moments that we have in life where it's okay to panic, where it's okay to maybe kind of lose your mind a little bit, and kind of go crazy, and get excited, and anxious, and all of the...

[1 : 53] That's what today's passage is all about. The unexpected turn of events. So, on your notes here, faith, what it's all about.

Unexpected tests, whether negative or positive, provide great opportunities to discover if you're living what you're learning. And the disciples didn't know it, but today was test day for them.

Today's passage is pop quiz day, if you will. And we're going to see how they came out of this. Now, to kind of demonstrate where Luke is going, remember, Luke is not writing in chronological order.

The gospel writers are not writing a biography or a history in the sense of it being in chronological order. But Luke has a purpose here, and his purpose is to talk to us about faith, and how faith is what this is all about.

And so, just to kind of catch you up, if you haven't been here, or maybe you've been here, but you need a little bit of a review, let's talk about what we've seen concerning faith so far.

[3 : 01] Right after Jesus began his public ministry, he went to his hometown of Lazarus, or not Lazarus, Nazareth. It didn't begin with the same letter, it just rhymed, whatever.

Okay, Luke chapter 4, and he found in his hometown, even though they were amazed at him and his teaching, he found an amazing lack of faith there that was quite disturbing.

Go on into chapter 5, we see another extension of faith, this time the amazing faith, demonstrated by the four friends of a paralyzed man who, if you remember, went through the roof, literally destroyed a man's roof, to get this paralyzed friend in front of Jesus, so that he could be healed.

And that was a demonstration of great faith. A centurion, beginning of chapter 7, that possessed a faith that even Jesus was amazed at.

The text says that he was amazed at his faith, and it was a faith that he had not seen in Israel, among the Jews. And here's this Gentile guy, really kind of an enemy, a soldier from the conquering state of Rome, and he is expressing this incredible measure of faith that his servant would be healed by Jesus.

[4 : 28] Later on in chapter 7, a former prostitute, or whatever adjective you want to use to describe this woman, who lavishly displayed a grateful faith.

It was an expression of faith not seen yet before. Her gratefulness, her gratitude toward Jesus expressed in such a way that she would weep on Jesus' feet, it would get his feet wet, she would take the perfume and anoint his feet, and use her hair to wash his feet, an incredible expression of faith.

And then earlier in chapter 8, all that we've talked about for the last two weeks is this parable of the soils, and trying to understand what it's about.

That maybe, perhaps, it's not about who's saved and who isn't, but it's about bearing fruit, not just a small amount, but much fruit, that that's what Jesus was looking for, and that's what he was describing in this parable, who is bearing fruit and who is not.

And so the parable describes the kind of faith that produces fruit, fruit that is ripe, fruit that is productive, produces something good.

[5 : 45] And so that brings us now to this very short story. We're only looking at a few verses, although we're going to kind of go back and forth between Luke and Mark, just to kind of fill in some of the blanks that Luke leaves out.

And in this passage, it says, beginning in verse 22, one day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples. He was in Capernaum, and he was actually one of the, Mark's gospel, or Matthew's gospel, I think, tells us that Jesus was actually teaching from a boat.

So he tells the parable of the soils, teaching from a boat, again, using that as a way to amplify his voice. And he said to them, hey, let's go across. So after all of his teaching is finished, he gets into the boat, and he says, let's go across to the other side of the lake.

So they're on the Sea of Galilee or the Lake of Gennesaret, depending on which culture, that was the name that you found for that body of water. Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along. Now, this is from Mark chapter 4. They took him along just as he was in the boat. There were other boats also with him. And so we see that there's the only boat. So other followers got into other boats and went with Jesus onto the lake.

[6 : 58] Now, this is the last that we hear about these other boats. We don't know how they fared during the coming storm. You guys know a storm is coming, right? And we don't know how they fared or even if they were in the same part of the lake at the time the storm hit.

So they set out. And as they sailed, Jesus fell asleep. So this is the story where they're in the storm, and Jesus is at the stern of the ship, of this boat, this small, I wouldn't call it a ship.

I would call it more of a large boat, a fishing boat. Jesus found a seat cushion, basically, and went to the back of the boat and started to sleep. And I like this about Jesus.

Because here he is, he is worn out. And the sea is going to get very violent, as we'll see in just a moment. And Jesus just continues to sleep.

Now, I don't think that Jesus is laying down in the back of the boat, and his head's on the pillow, and he's kind of looking out the one eye, trying to see the reaction of the disciples. I think he's sleeping. And I think he's so tired that he's just sleeping, and even though the boat is storm-tossed, he's just dead tired, and he's asleep.

[8 : 17] That's the ministry of Jesus, how hard he worked. A windstorm came up, or came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger.

Now, these storms were not unusual, the way that the Sea of Galilee is kind of butted up against mountains, and the mountain passes would come through, and those winds would kick in and really stir up a storm.

Back in Mark chapter 4, a furious squall came up, he describes it as, and the waves broke over the boat so that it was nearly swamped. So this is a big deal.

Now, remember, who's the makeup of the 12? We've got four professional fishermen who grew up right in this same part of town, right?

Right on the lake here. They were very familiar with these storms. They were very familiar with how to work a boat. They knew how to do this. It wouldn't have been unexpected for them.

[9 : 15] It wouldn't have been unusual for them. But this was not like any other storm. This was pretty significant. They went and they woke him. Now, they waited until it got to this point where they would say, Master, Master, they got his title right.

They got that part right. But the question is, did they fail the test? They could have come to Jesus before this moment.

They didn't. We are perishing. What does perishing mean? They're going to die. So you can imagine the expressions that they had.

In Mark's gospel, it says, Teacher, don't you care if we drown? And in all three gospel versions of this, there's three different phrases that are used as their expression.

And I think all three of them were used. I don't think it's like, well, Mark tells it differently, so one must be true and one must be false. I don't think that's it at all. I think these are different guys all shouting different things at the same time.

[10:23] Master, Master, we're going to die. Teacher, don't you care if we drown? Seriously? After all that they had witnessed up until this point, they're going to say this, really?

This is where you're going with this idea? This is some storm. Matthew's version, Lord, save us. We're going to drown. Wow. He awoke.

So Jesus woke up, not by the storm, but by their cries, and I'm sure they're jostling him and, Wake up! We're going to die! He rebuked the wind and the raging waves.

Now, you and I stand up in that moment and rebuke the waves and the wind and all of that, and guess what the waves and the wind are doing? Not with Jesus.

And I want you to catch this. They ceased. He spoke. They ceased. And not only did the wind and the waves stop, it became calm.

[11:33] My guess is in that moment, it went from a raging sea where they're about to die to like the water was like glass in a moment.

Who could do that? Who could do such a thing? They had seen Jesus do some incredible stuff. But this? And so this really kind of gets to them.

He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the waves, Quiet, be still. It's exactly what happens. Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

What a moment. And he said to them, Where's your faith? He's been talking about faith the whole time since he called them.

He's been not only talking about faith, he's been highlighting the incredible faith of people who are coming to him and expressing a faith that says, Listen, you don't even have to come to heal my servant.

[12:44] You just give the word and boom, he's going to be healed. You don't even have to be in the same room. You don't have to touch him. You don't have to just say the word. This woman who was saved and forgiven from her sins and her faith is such that she's coming and crying and weeping on the feet of Jesus and washing his feet.

And these four friends, you know, tearing through the roof. What an incredible demonstration of faith that they have seen now over and over again.

At the end of chapter four, people were just coming in droves to where Jesus was at in Peter's house. They're in Capernaum and they're coming to be healed and they're witnesses of all of this. They've seen it. They've heard it all. And the moment they're tested, where's your faith?

Where is your faith? He said to them, Mark's version again, why are you so afraid? You still have no faith. None.

[13:59] Not even a mustard seed, right? The amount of faith's not the issue. We're going to talk about that in a moment. That's not even the issue. They don't have any at all. Where did it go?

I mean, are these guys that bad? Are we that bad? No. They just needed some work.

And they were afraid. And they marveled. They were amazed. Luke's favorite word in his gospel.

Saying to one another, who then is this that he commands even the winds and the water?

And they obey him. This is different. This is unique. Now, here's the thing, and we experience this in our life as well.

The problem with the unexpected tests in life isn't that Jesus goes missing. The problem wasn't Jesus was asleep in the boat, that Jesus didn't care about them.

[15:05] None of that was the issue. Of course he cared about them. The issue for us and for them, our trust in Jesus is what goes missing.

Where's your faith? And the problem isn't that Jesus stops looking after us. That's not the case.

Even though Jesus is asleep in the boat, he's still looking after us.

The problem is we stop looking to him. So what do you do when, like the disciples, our soil needs a little work, right?

When our soil needs a little work, there's some things that we need to learn from this. Obedience can lead us out of storms, right?

That's what happened in this moment when they began to express their faith, when they finally woke him up and he calmed the storm. It can lead us out of storms.

[16:10] But here's the other part of the equation here. Sometimes it will lead us into storms. Question. Jesus can calm the storm, true or false?

Could he have started it? We don't like to think of that. Is that what Jesus did here?

Did Jesus knowingly set out in that boat, knowing he was going to cause this storm? Or was it just incredible timing?

Was it coincidence? Was it he knew it was going to be there, and so that's when he decided to... It's a question sometimes that we ask when we're put to the test.

And you're going to be put to the test, whether you're a believer or not a believer, whether you've got much fruit or no fruit or little fruit or whatever, wherever you're at in your relationship with the Lord, you will be put to the test.

[17:14] You will go through life's challenges. We live in a sin-sick world where even just disease, it's just the result of the fall of Adam and Eve.

We live in a world that's broken. So you're going to go through it. The question is, what will you do with it when it comes? When it comes.

And the question that many ask is, did Jesus cause this? Did Jesus cause the storm to come, this bad news that I got about my health?

I've got a cancer, or my child is dying, or my wife or my husband is sick, or I just lost my job, or it could be just a prodigal child.

It could be any number of things that we suffer through in life. Did he do this? Did he cause it?

[18:09] Sometimes we'll even say things, well, God's will is mysterious, or this is God's plan for your life. Are you sure?

Are you sure? We are instructed to pray that God's will would be done, which means that there are times where God's will is not done. Anytime we choose to rebel, anytime we choose to not obey, and again, because of the broken world that we live in, sometimes there are things that just happen. Did God cause it? Maybe not, but maybe God allowed it. And when I hear that expression, my question is, does it really make a difference?

Whether God caused it, or God allowed it. Either way, he could have stopped it from happening, and he still allows us to go through the storm either way.

So the question is, how am I going to respond? Am I going to allow those difficult circumstances, those trials, those storms that come away, am I going to allow them to drive me further away from God?

[19:26] Or am I going to allow them to drive me closer to the one who can lead me out? That's the question that we have to ask.

That's what we go through in this life. The other thing that storms do is they serve to reveal who we are and who God is.

Listen, these guys have seen faith in crisis. Right? They've seen faith in crisis.

The demon-possessed man in chapter 4 who was healed by Christ. The man with the withered hand. The paralyzed man whose four friends brought him. The woman who comes in.

The centurion. All these people with different storms in their life. They weren't the storms for the disciples.

[20:26] Their faith had yet been tested. Yet to be tested. But now this storm is for them. And they are being tested in this.

And it reveals their own faith. Just like it does for each of us. If we see someone else going through difficulty, we can relate but only so much.

But when we go through it, how will we respond when that happens? So the disciples, they turned to Jesus again as a last resort.

And again, where was Jesus when the storm came? He was with them. But he was sleeping. And the question for them, the question for us is where is your faith?

Not how much faith do you have but where is your faith? faith? And I've mentioned before the frustration that I get from preachers and well-intentioned believers who are like, well, you're going through this, you're not being healed because you don't have enough faith.

[21:45] That is such a misunderstanding of faith. and leads me to this next point here. What matters is not the amount of our faith.

What matters is the object. Who is our faith in? Who is our faith in? Now, what's interesting is this subject is not going to come up again until chapter 17 when the disciples come to Jesus and,

Jesus, will you teach us to increase our faith?

And Jesus is like, guys, come on. It's not about how much you have. You can have the faith of a mustard seed. What it is, is your faith in the right place? Is your faith in the Lord?

Is it in Christ? That's true for us. I mean, with the faith of a mustard seed, you could move a mountain. Right? What could you do with half a seed?

I mean, they're already tiny but it's not the amount. It's who your faith is in. That's what, that's what matters. Now, again, they have seen faith in action but let me ask you, which is the bigger deal?

[23 : 01] Going through a storm or the widow who lost her son who died? Which is the bigger deal? I would say death.

The death of your son is the bigger deal. You could survive the storm perhaps. You could ride it out. You could bail the ship. You could... And they had seen firsthand what happened with the widow's son.

They saw it. They were there. I mean, what's the bigger deal? The guy who was covered in leprosy from head to toe?

No one could go near him? He wasn't allowed to go into town? I would say the leprosy was the bigger deal than the storm. And they'd seen it right before their eyes.

In an instant, the man, boom, completely clean, completely healed, restored completely. The paralyzed man or the storm? All right, paralyzed, you might be able to get around a little bit but I'm still taking the storm over being paralyzed.

[24 : 11] paralyzed, right? I'm going to take my chances with... But again, they saw it. They were there. They witnessed it. The issue was none of those things were them.

It wasn't their experience. It wasn't their storm. And now, when their faith is being put to test, when the storm is theirs, do they pass the test?

Do we pass the test? See if you catch the difference here. There's a big difference between knowing that Jesus was in the boat and knowing the Jesus that was in the boat.

They knew that Jesus was in the boat, right? The question is, did they know the Jesus that was in the boat? That's our question.

You know Jesus is for you, right? You've trusted him for salvation but when it hits you, when the storms hit, when the trials come, do you know the Jesus who was with you in the storm?

[25 : 29] Last one and then we're done mercifully. faith is simply trusting slash believing God enough to do what he says.

Now, I have mentioned this before but I want to emphasize this a little bit. In the Greek language, the New Testament is written in Greek, Koine Greek, common language, street language, Greek. So it's very understandable by the people who were reading it and the three words, faith, trust, and believe are all the same Greek word.

No matter where you read it in the New Testament, if you're seeing the word faith or you're seeing the word trust or you're seeing the word believe, it's all the same Greek word. So why we have three English words to describe, to define the one Greek word, I don't know.

It's usually the other way around but in this case with this word it's true and it can be a noun form, faith, trust, belief. Those are nouns but they all mean the same thing.

[26 : 39] It can be a verb form. So are you trusting? Do you trust Jesus? Do you believe Jesus or believe in Jesus?

Do you faith Jesus? That's actually a correct way to say it because we don't in the English have a verb form for faith like are you faithing in the Lord?

It's actually a correct thing to say linguistically and understanding the Greek word is the same but whether you're faithing or you're trusting or you're believing it all means the same thing.

And what that means, what does that mean Rich? Faith or belief or trust is simply pictured like this chair. Do I believe do I trust do I faith that this chair is going to hold me up when I sit in it?

What is the test of my faith of my trust? It's actually just simply sitting on it. Boom. So now I have demonstrated that I have faith that I have trust that I believe in this chair that it will hold me up.

[27 : 52] That's all your faith in the Lord is. That he's going to do what he says. He promises eternal life for those who would simply believe.

For those who would simply faith. For those who would simply trust him as savior. And the evidence of our faith is that we're going to do what he says.

we trust him enough to do what he says which means following him in obedience. That's all it is. I'm going to trust him.

I'm going to faith him. I'm going to believe him. And then my life is going to reflect that in the way that I live. The choices that I make. And yes I'm going to mess up all along the way. But that dynamic never changes.

I may have different struggles. I will go through different tests. I may fail in temptation and sin. We all do. But the question is are you coming back to I have put my trust in Christ.

[28 : 54] I am trusting Christ today. I trusted him yesterday. I will trust him tomorrow. And I will follow him in obedience as a result of that. The band is going to come up and come on up guys and they are going to play a very well I'm going to ask you because we are having this discussion is this a very familiar song or not.

So I thought why well let's just find out. This is a version of a hymn called Trust and Obey. Trust and Obey.

I've heard I've sung the hymn Trust and Obey. Just raise your hand. Okay quite a few people in the room. So you'll be familiar with the lyrics.

There is a couple of extra lyrics in this version of it. But trust and obey that's what this is all about. I trust and then I obey.

Trust and obey. I don't obey which leads to trust. It's I trust and then I obey. There is a logical equation that starts with trust.

[30 : 01] I don't try to obey my way into a right relationship with God. I obey because I already have a right relationship with God that begins when I place my trust my faith my belief in Christ alone for salvation.

So let's sing this song Trust and Obey. When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word what a glory he sheds on our way while we do his good will he abides with us still and with all who will trust and obey trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey!

God we never can prove the delights of his love until all on the altar we lay!

for the favor he shows for the joy he bestows are for them who will trust and obey trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey Lord I love you please help me to trust and obey Lord I love you please help me to trust and obey then in fellowship sweet we will sit at his feet or we'll walk by his side in the way what he says we will do where he sends we will go never fear only trust and obey trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in

Jesus but to trust and obey trust and obey for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey Lord I love you please help me to trust and obey Lord I love you please help me to trust and obey Lord I love you please help me to trust and obey Lord I love you please help me to trust and obey me a few minutes and we'll do that. Also, our security team is going to meet real quick for a few minutes after the service. Right in the back corner there, right in the back corner there, see Ben. Everybody look at Ben. Raise your hand, Ben. Meet with you back there. Anybody that is interested in the security team or first responding, there's some training that's coming up next weekend, next

[35 : 01] Saturday that he'd like to tell you about. And if you have any questions about security team or first response, things that happen here, so that training is coming up. So see Ben afterward.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this day. Lord, we thank you for this heat. And Lord, thank you for these people willing to come and endure it for a season. And Lord, I pray that you bless them as they go. Thank you for the opportunity to gather and to hear your word once again. Lord, may we not take these opportunities for granted. We love you. We praise you. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you for coming.