

We Can Rest on God's Word

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[0 : 00] Y'all always make me cry before I come up here. Dang. Y'all killing me. Killing me. 6'5", 200, stinking 90 pounds. Y'all making me cry before I get up here. There's a guy.

He's over at my church right now. He's like 19, 20 years old. You saw him. He's the guy who knew English really well. Raghav. He hasn't been saved very long, maybe like a year and a half, something like that. The guy's always in the Bible.

He's just like, well, Pastor, he's a punk too, by the way. And I know he's probably watching this. He's like, well, Pastor Jim, you said this. And I was reading the Bible the other day and it said this. And I was like, you've been saved like a year and a half.

Just keep reading your Bible, okay? So then I'll go back and look. And I was like, you know, maybe it was a little right there. But anyway, he wrote me this letter. They all wrote us letters before we came back.

It was like the best and the worst day all rolled up in the one. They're like, did you enjoy it? And I'm like ugly crying. It was just horrible. So I'm like, yes, I enjoyed it so much.

[1 : 01] It was just, it was like ripping our heart out. But then telling us, they're telling us how much they loved us. But he wrote this letter, big long letter. He wrote me. I'm going to highlight a portion that he wrote.

You can kind of get a feel of what kind of guy he is and how he feels about me and about India and about God. He says, you are headed to a very dangerous place.

He says, America is a land of comfort, at least more comfortable than India. He says, I hope and pray that you will not fall in any temptation or be turned away from your calling to serve God in India. He says, our work is too great and it's too hard here.

He says, I read in the book of Stephen Ambrose on D-Day about the U.S. infantry. And their motto was, no mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great, duty first. He says, I realize that we are the first waves.

We're like the, he says, we're like the troops hitting the beach where the enemy is ready to hit us with everything that they have. He says, but we'll keep going on and give the gospel ahead. He says, I pray to God that if I'm, that I'm serving him here, that I will be serving him here, even if everyone quits, even if you quit.

[2 : 10] He said, and that God will give me strength to move on and go alone and give the gospel. He says, I love you, sir. And I hope to serve God humbly and truly. And I hope to be faithful to him at all times.

He says, do come back. I said, we're not dying. Okay. Everybody's like, everybody's like, please come back. I said, we are going to come back. We're not, we're not dying. We're not going to be dead or anything.

He says, do come back. I'll miss you and your family's presence in the church. God bless you and your family. If you really want to read the whole thing, you can. But that kid's only like 20 years old. And again, he's, he's a punk, but he is one that loves God, loves serving God, loves preaching.

And he's a, I mean, his second message that he preached, I think dad was there for that. I mean, it was good, wasn't it? I mean, I was surprised. I was like, I can take credit for that. No, I couldn't at all. I couldn't at all.

It was just a really good message. I was like, man, this, who is this guy? Where did he come from? But just pray for him. I'm, man, I'm just, I'm thrilled to be a part of Vision Baptist Church and Vision Baptist Missions.

[3 : 12] There is no one like you, at least in the U.S. for sure. We're trying to build little visions, I guess, and overseas, people that love missions, people that want to reach the world with the gospel and reach their people with the gospel.

So I just want to thank you guys for loving us. I want to thank you for taking care of us and treating us special. So it's amazing that God would use someone like me. Like Trent said, it's amazing that God would use us, isn't it?

I mean, it really is. You think about it. We're not that special. Blake said it earlier. We're not that special. We're really not. I don't even think we're average, man. I think we're like way below that. But God has seen fit to use people like us.

And it's just amazing to be a part of that. That's just great. All right, moving on. Let's preach for a little bit. We're going to be in Romans chapter 4 just for a little bit, 17 minutes, and I'll be done, I promise.

Romans chapter 4, we're going to go verses 16 through 25. I'm going to take for granted that you do know a little background about Romans and what's going on here. So we're going to look at the faith of Abraham tonight, the faith of Abraham.

[4 : 18] We're going to read verses 16 to 25. Brother James took us out for Indian food tonight. So if I seem like I'm doing a little bit of this and a little bit of that, okay, I'm trying, you know, not to be gross for you guys.

So 16 to 25. It says, There it is of faith that it might be by grace to the end of the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations. For him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be.

And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.

And being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed.

[5 : 23] If we believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification. Alright, so we're going to look at the faith of Abraham. The faith of Abraham.

Verse number 16, Abraham's faith was based on a promise. His faith was based on a promise. Verse number 16, there it is faith that it may be a grace by the end of the promise might be sure to all the seed.

Isaac was the promise that's talked about here. Genesis chapter 12, we see the promise is given to Abraham. But this promise, he's talking about here, he's talking about Isaac. The birth of Isaac.

That's what we're talking about, based on a promise. You know, our faith, it will be tested. If we live long enough in the Christian life, our faith will be tested. It will be challenged by contradicting circumstances.

It will be challenged by critics. And the only anchor that we're going to have in that time and in that place are going to be the promises of God. That's going to be the only thing that we can hold on to.

- [6 : 16] Because there's nothing else to hold on to except for the word of God. Based on this promise, the faith of Abraham was based on a promise. Not based on Abraham. Not based on Abraham. One of my favorite stories in the Bible is Genesis chapter 15.
- When God makes the promise with Abraham. And as the tradition was, they would go through together with a contract. And that would bind each party to that contract. But when God made that promise with Abraham, who went through?
- Only God did. Signifying that, hey, it's not up to you, buddy. I'm going to keep the promise. I'm going to do what's right. It's not going to be based on you. And as we know in the Old Testament, Abraham fell.
- And he did lots, well, not lots. But he did several bad things that we wouldn't hopefully do. But yet God still carried on with his promise. It wasn't based on Abraham.
- Not based on any works. It wasn't based on circumcision. It wasn't based on how good Abraham was. This promise, the faith of Abraham, it was proven through obedience. It was proven through obedience.
- [7 : 15] His obedience was evidence of his faith. His obedience was evidence of his faith. Believe and obedience are inseparably linked together. It's hard to say you're a believer and you don't follow what the Word of God says.
- You don't obey what the Word of God says. And it happens all the time. In India all the time. You're Christian because you're born in a Christian family. Not because you follow the tenets of the Word of God. Not because you believed in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior.
- All right, it's that way here too as well, is it not? Oh yeah, I'm Christian. But I never come to church. I never read my Bible. I never do anything that makes me stand out as being Christian. Belief and obedience are inseparably linked together.
- Faith is an action. It's an action. Not only do we believe all that God has said, we obey all of his commandments. Our conviction leads to action. This action, it contains no power.
- It's God who works according to his will. So it's based on the promise. The faith of Abraham was based on a person. Based on a person. Verse number 17. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations before him whom he believed.
- [8 : 16] Even God who quickeneth the dead and calleth those things to be not as though they were. As it is written, God's Word. That's how God has revealed himself to us. God has never come down from heaven.
- He has never appeared in front of me. This is how God is revealed. This is how I know the character of God is in this book right here. Not through any other way. Not through visions or miracles or any of these other things.
- God is revealed through his Word. Abraham believed in that. Faith is not based on us, our behavior, our works. Faith is based on God. Plain and simple, it's based on him.
- It's based on facts from God's Word. It's always been amazing to me, all right, that Indians are some of the smartest people in the world. Some of the most educated people in the world. But yet, they will believe mythology.
- They will believe things that their facts do not back up. We have the facts of the Word of God to back up our faith. When our faith is strong, we rest in God's Word. And it brings him glory.
- [9 : 16] We see God's power. We see God's power. Based on a person, it was God's Word. We see God's power. Look what it says. It brings dead to life. That's why an idiot like me, that's why God can do something in a country.

Because when all you do is give this right here, this is what brings the dead to life. This is why anyone can go to any country and say, hey, I've got what works. I've got what brings the dead to life. Not my words, not my actions, but this right here.

Abraham believed that. It was God's power. Brings the dead to life. Reveals things that before were not there as if they were. What an amazing God we serve. Well, God can't do that. God can't do this.

God's not going to work. You can't do anything in China, Mark. I'm sorry. All right? That's not the God we serve nowadays. Thailand's going to be harder. India, we definitely can't do anything there. Definitely not.

God can do whatever He wants to do. He can bring those things to life that never were even there. We all have a need to contribute something. But faith forces us to admit that the things we truly need are beyond our power to produce.

[10 : 19] And only God can provide those things. But we all have that need. We make promises to God and try to keep them. And if we promise, then we must perform. And that would make anyone, even Abraham, waver in unbelief.

We have not promised God. We didn't make the promise to God that we would supply all our needs. God made that promise. We have not promised God that we would overcome the world. God made that promise.

We didn't make the promise that we would remove these mountains from our path. But God has made that promise. God has not said, if you have enough faith, I'll do whatever you wish. God never said that.

God never said that. God said, if you put your faith in me, I will enable you to do whatever I want. That's what God said. That's what faith is. It was based on a promise, based on a person.

It was based on a persuasion. Verses 18 to 21. There was no confidence in what he could do. You remember, he tried that already. Abraham tried that already. Remember, he said, hey, God said, I got a promise for you.

[11 : 19] Isaac's going to come. But then what did Abraham do? Ishmael, right? We got Ishmael now. That is Abraham working out instead of doing work instead of trusting God.

Faith is not fear contradicting circumstances. Man, it doesn't matter what the circumstances are. God can do whatever he wants to do. True faith becomes stronger when confronted with impossibilities.

And you know what kind of faith you got. I'll be honest with you. One of the best things about the mission field is that you get firsthand experience at watching God do something that you could never in a million years do yourself.

You get to see him do amazing things. Some of you men and women with gray hair in here, you've seen God do some amazing things if you've placed your faith in him. It's amazing. Focused on the promises and not the problem.

He focused on the promises and not the problem. Dude was 100 years old. That's a problem. Okay? That's a problem. If you're wanting children, that is an issue.

[12 : 23] That's an issue. But he didn't focus on that. God said, I will give you a son. And he focused on that instead. Focused on the promise, not the problem. Faith always goes beyond reason.

Don't let doubts make you doubt. Don't let doubts make you doubt. This is what's true. Not what anyone else says. Not what anyone else believes. It's what this says.

This is what we follow. Spurgeon said, look at yourself and your doubts will increase. Look at Jesus and they will disappear. That's true. So true. God's promises are his responsibility.

And I'm thankful for that. I'm glad that reaching India is not up to Jim Roberts. Because it wouldn't happen. I wouldn't have a video to show you. I would have like disappointment and a broken heart and like, well, you know, I haven't done anything.

I've really just lived and ate and that's about it over there. I'm glad it's not up to me. It's up to God. What God demands, he provides for. What God has promised, he will do. God will never ask you to do anything you can't do.

[13 : 23] He enables you to do it. If you're willing. If you're willing. When God commands, he at that time gives power to obey. Go you into all the world. Guess what? You can do that. You can be a part of that.

Love your neighbor. Guess what? You can do that too. You can do that too. I know that may be a little more difficult, but we can do it. We must. All right. I'm closing up. I got six minutes. Three things application.

Number one, you got to accept that the will of God is the best thing that can happen. You've got to accept that the will of God is the best thing that can happen. Very simply, you got to let God be God.

All right. You got to get out of the way and say, God, whatever you want, I'm happy with that. Whatever way you want this situation to go, I'm pleased with that. I'm just happy to be involved. I'm just happy to be here.

Nothing needs to be added to God's will to make it good. It is not God plus my prayers. It's not God plus my good deeds. It's not God plus anything. The will of God is good by itself.

[14 : 22] Perfectly fine. Faith only operates within the boundaries of God's will. You know, most of the time our prayers, when we pray, they're not in cooperation with God's. God's will. But so we want God to cooperate with our will, right?

God, do this. God, do that. We're not really happy with what God's will is because it goes against ours. We try to get God to cooperate with our will when all he wants is for us to cooperate with his.

Everything in the Christian life depends upon an adequate understanding of who God is. There is God as he is and there is God as we conceive him to be. We don't worship God as he is, but as we conceive him to be.

If our concept of God is wrong, our worship is going to be wrong. Our concept and everything that come up with who God is and what God is has to come from this. Not from here.

Not from here. Not from out here. But from this. This right here. An accurate knowledge of God is essential to proper faith. Let God be God. Number two. Let the Bible say what it wants to say.

[15 : 22] Let the Bible speak. Don't speak for it. Don't make the Bible say what you want it to say. Say what the Bible says. Faith is not a means of getting man's will done in heaven, but a means of getting God's will done on earth.

That's not original to me. We must refuse to manipulate the word of God to say what we want it to say and let it speak for itself. If we believe that God's will is always best, then we'll always be satisfied to let the Bible speak for itself.

Knowing that God will always do what's right. God will always do what's right for me. Even if I don't think that. Lastly, we've got to see ourselves as God sees us.

Let God be God. Let the Bible say what it's going to say. What it says. And we've got to see ourselves as God sees us. The understanding of faith frees us from the slavery of our feelings.

Man, we're emotional people, aren't we? We feel this. We feel that. What does God say about you? I mean, it doesn't matter if you feel worthless.

[16 : 24] If you feel like God can't use you. It doesn't matter how you feel. God says, oh, you're special to me. God says, oh, how I love you. The thoughts of you are just wonderful.

I love you. There's nothing that you could do for me not to love you. Even if you fail me. Even if you give up on me. Guess what? I still love you. We must see ourselves as God sees us.

The Bible, not our feelings, determine our faith. We measure our spiritualness by our feelings. Oh, I feel spirited today. I feel spiritual. I feel great today.

I'll be honest with you. Most days I don't. Mission filled? Most days I don't. Don't feel great. But you know what? I believe this. I believe what God says about me. I believe that.

I don't feel like reading my Bible most days, but I do. Because I want to know what God says about me. We can rest on God's word and not our feelings. Three things. Got to accept what the will of God is.

[17 : 21] Let God be God. Let the Bible say what it's going to say. Let it say what it wants to. And we got to see ourselves as God sees us.