



**Sunday April 07, 2019**  
**Faith**  
**Part-8 : Developing Strong Faith**

Review

In the previous message in this series on Faith (Sun Mar 24), we spoke about "Exercising Faith". We covered eight 'steps' to Exercising Faith.

We quickly review these:

- #1, Have A Desired Goal Based On God's Word
- #2, Be Determined To Have What God Has Promised
- #3, Fill Your Heart With The Word
- #4, Pray And Receive By Faith
- #5, Speak Your Faith
- #6, Act In Accordance To Your Faith
- #7, Thank And Praise God
- #8, Stay In Faith With Endurance

**Today : Developing Strong Faith**

Our faith in God can increase and become stronger. We can nurture our faith so that it becomes stronger.

**2 Thessalonians 1:3-4**

**3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,  
4 so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,**

Paul commends the Thessalonians that their faith was growing exceedingly, abundantly. Notice the environment in which their faith was growing exceedingly:

- ✓ their love towards each other was abounding
- ✓ they exercised patience (endurance) and faith in the midst of challenges

**PRACTICES THAT HELP NURTURE YOUR FAITH**

**#1) Nurture Your Faith With the Word of God**

**Romans 10:17**

**So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**



We know that faith is conceived, nurtured and strengthened by hearing the Word of God.

Hearing, speaking, meditating and practicing the Word of God is key to keeping our faith strong and built up.

In Romans 10:17 the Greek for 'word' is 'rhema'. 'Rhema' literally means 'utterance' and has to do with a spoken word, a word that has been uttered. We can hear the Word when it is preached by someone else. We can also hear the Word when we speak it out of our own mouths. As we hear the Word, faith is nurtured and strengthened.

God instructs us to meditate in His Word. To meditate as we understand it in English, means to ponder, to think deeply in a focused manner on something. The two Hebrew words often translated meditate, have a much wider meaning: (A) '*hagah*' means **to reflect, to imagine**, ponder, moan, growl, **to mutter**, to make a quiet sound such as sighing, to contemplate something as one repeats the words. (B) '*siyach*' means to ponder, converse (with oneself, and hence aloud), utter, commune, complain, declare, muse, pray, speak, talk. In Hebrew thought, to meditate upon the Scriptures is to quietly repeat them in a soft, droning sound, while utterly abandoning outside distractions. Meditation in God's Word involves **contemplation** (thinking deeply on the Word), **visualization** (seeing God's Word fulfilled with our imagination) and **confession** (declaring the Word). Meditating in God's Word is an important practice to nurture and strengthen our faith. [For more on how to meditate in God's Word, please see APC's free publication "God's Word"].

We know God's Word is like seed, as Jesus taught in the parable of the sower. Every seed will produce after its own kind. So in order to have faith for healing, we hear, speak, and meditate in God's Word on healing. Similarly, if you want to strengthen your faith in the area of provision and finances, hear, speak and meditate in the promises in God's Word on finances. We can do the same for all other areas of life.

We must also act on the Word of God. As we have seen earlier, faith is brought to maturity through works - through what we do (James 2:22). So we practice the Word of God.

Hearing, speaking, meditating and practicing the Word of God and doing this consistently - is key to nurturing and strengthening our faith.



## #2) Nurture Your Faith By Being Part Of A Community Of Faith

**Philemon 1:6**

**that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.**

The word "sharing" is the Greek '*koinonia*' meaning fellowship or communion. It has the idea of association, community, joint participation and intimacy. As believers we are to be part of a community of faith. We are in this journey of faith together. Yes there are things we are responsible for as individuals, and must grow in our personal faith. But this growth in personal faith also happens in and through the fellowship of our faith.

The fellowship of our faith becomes effective (i.e. active, operative, powerful) when we acknowledge every good thing which is in each other, because we are all in Christ. So this is how we become a community of faith and how we nurture faith in each other as a community. We must acknowledge the good things we have because we are in Christ. This refers to our spiritual blessings, our spiritual inheritance and grace that God has lavished on us as His own sons and daughters. We are to recognize, acknowledge, call this out in each other. Spend time with people who will help build your faith, not sow doubt and unbelief into you.

Now this does not mean we don't address sin, wrong doing, character issues and other areas that need to be addressed. Surely we must. But, even when we address such matters, we do so looking at what God can do in the individual and in view of the spiritual riches that belong to all of us in Jesus Christ.

## #3) Nurture Your Faith With Testimonies Of Faith

Sharing testimonies of faith and sharing testimonies of God's wonderful workings in our lives will encourage and nurture faith.

The Psalms are full of exhortations to talk, tell, share, declare, and proclaim the works of the Lord.

**Psalm 105:2,5**

**2 Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works!**

**5 Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,**

**Psalm 145:4-5**

**4 One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts.**

**5 I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, And on Your wondrous works.**



In fact when God's people forgot the works God had done, they walked in unbelief (Psalm 78:11,32; Psalm 106:13).

Take time to listen to testimonies of God's wonderful works. This will nurture and strengthen your faith.

We now share **five important foundational truths** we must be firmly established in so that we can always walk with strong faith. These truths that we must be established in are what undergird strong faith in God. We also share **four practices** that we maintain that help develop strong faith.

## **TRUTHS THAT UNDERGIRD STRONG FAITH**

### **#1, Be Established In The Integrity Of God's Word**

**John 17:17**

**Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.**

**Isaiah 40:8**

**The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."**

We must understand and accept the integrity of the Word of God. God's Word is truth. God's Word stands. God watches over His Word to perform it. Everything in the natural world is subject to the Word of God. Everything else can change, but God's Word remains. God's Word is final authority in our lives. We must be established and settled in this truth. Faith is based on the Word of God and for us to have strong faith, we must be established in the integrity and finality of God's Word over everything.

### **#2, Be Established In Christ's Finished Work On The Cross**

Whatever Jesus did on the Cross He did it for each one of us. We receive from and share in the finished work of Jesus on the Cross.

We must know, understand and be established in all that Christ did on the Cross. The Cross is God's redemption for us from the Fall. **Everything Adam brought us under through the Fall, Christ delivered us through the Cross. The Cross is God's complete antidote for the Fall.**



- Sins are forgiven.
- The power of sin is broken.
- Wholeness for our whole-person, spirit, soul and body has been provided for.
- The curse has been removed and blessing has been released.
- Satan and all his demonic forces have been disarmed and destroyed.
- We are redeemed.
- We are brought into God's own family and into God's own Kingdom.

#### **Colossians 1:12-14**

**12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.**

**13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,**

**14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.**

Each one of us have been qualified to share in this inheritance.

We must be established in the truth of our redemption through the finished work of Christ on the Cross. We must know that Christ's provision is for us personally.

### **#3, Be Established In Our Identity In Christ**

#### **2 Corinthians 5:17**

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

God has brought us into union with Christ. We are in Him. We must know who we are in Christ. The truth that **who we are in Christ is who we really are** must be settled in our hearts. We must live out of this life we have in Christ as new creatures. Hence, when we respond to life's challenges we do so out of our identity in Christ. [See the free APC Publication "Who We Are In Christ" for a detailed study on our identity in Christ].

### **#4, Be Established In The Reality Of The Presence And Power Of The Holy Spirit**

#### **John 7:38**

**He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."**

The Holy Spirit indwells and empowers us as believers. He is our Helper. He anoints and empowers us. His power accompanies our work of faith. When you speak the Word you are using the sword of the Spirit against the enemy. The Holy Spirit raises up a standard against the enemy. When you minister there are rivers of the Spirit's presence and



power flowing out of you to touch lives. The anointing on you destroys satanic yokes and overthrows demonic burdens. Being confident in the life and power of the Spirit in us will enable us to be strong and bold in our faith.

## **#5, Be Established In The Authority Of The Name Of Jesus**

**Mark 16:17-18**

**17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;**

**18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."**

We must also know the authority that has been delegated to us through the right given to us to use the name of Jesus. We must know what it means when we say 'in Jesus' name'. When we use the name of Jesus we are exercising our delegated authority. Through the use of His name, the Lord Jesus has authorized us to represent Him, to stand in His place, and to act on His behalf, doing what He would do if He were present Himself. We expect the same outcomes, as if Jesus were there in Person. Using the authority of Jesus' name we can exercise our faith boldly against sicknesses and against all demonic works.

## **PRACTICES THAT DEVELOP STRONG FAITH**

### **#1, Always Declare God's Word**

**Hebrews 10:23**

**Let us hold fast the confession of our hope** (Greek '*elpis*' = anticipation, expectation, confidence, faith) **without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.**

Consistently speak and declare what God has spoken in His Word concerning various matters of life. While we are not denying what we may be facing, we speak God's Word over those situations in faith. Our faith speaks, and the God-kind of faith can only speak what God has spoken.

### **#2, Always Maintain A Clear Conscience**

**1 John 3:21**

**21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.**



**22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.**

The conscience of the voice of our spirit (heart). We need to maintain a clear conscience. That is a conscience free from guilt, shame and condemnation. If we are guilt ridden then our faith is crippled and we are unable to act with boldness and confidence. A guilt ridden conscience will not be able to have confidence toward God.

How do we maintain a clear conscience - a heart free from condemnation. We must be honest, and confess our sins and receive the cleansing through the blood of Jesus Christ, as we are taught in 1 John 1:7-9. We embrace the righteousness that is ours in Christ Jesus, given freely by His grace. We also walk in obedience to His commandments doing what is pleasing in His sight, as taught in 1 John 3:22. This is how we maintain our heart free from condemnation.

We can then exercise our faith with boldness and confidence, without any sense of guilt, shame or condemnation.

### **#3, Always Exercise Your Faith**

As we stated at the very beginning, faith is like a muscle. The more we use it, the stronger it becomes. Regularly exercising our faith will make it stronger. **In every situation have a faith response - think, speak and act in faith.** Start at the level where you are.

### **#4, Always Be Motivated By Love**

**Galatians 5:6**

**For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.**

Faith works through love. Love must be our motivation if we are to exercise our faith. Be motivated with love for people as you exercise your faith. Avoid wrong motivations such as pride, jealousy, competition, etc.

MINISTRY TIME | SALVATION CALL



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

**Sunday April 07, 2019**  
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This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

**Preparation**

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at [apcwo.org/sermons](http://apcwo.org/sermons) . Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

**Welcome**

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

**LISTEN to God's Word**

Read the following Scripture passages: *Matthew 15:28; Mark 11:22-24; Romans 10:17;*

**INVESTIGATE God's Word Together**

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

#1) Write down action steps you will take to hear and meditate regularly in God's Word on topics that matter to you (e.g. healing, finances, success, family, etc.)

#2) What can you do to help develop a community that encourages and strengthens faith in the lives of God's people you relate with - based on Philemon 1:6? This could be a life group or a church community you are part of.

#3) God has done and continues to do wonderful things in our lives. Very often we keep these things to ourselves. But there is tremendous value in testifying to God's wonderful





works. What can you do to tell of His wonderful deeds in your life to help nurture faith in other believers you associate with?

#4) As believers, how can we come to a place where we are firmly established in these "Truths That Undergird Strong Faith"?

#1, Be Established In The Integrity Of God's Word

#2, Be Established In Christ's Finished Work On The Cross

#3, Be Established In Our Identity In Christ

#4, Be Established In The Reality Of The Presence And Power Of The Holy Spirit

#5, Be Established In The Authority Of The Name Of Jesus

#5) How can we consistently maintain these "Practices That Develop Strong Faith"?

#1, Always Declare God's Word

#2, Always Maintain A Clear Conscience

#3, Always Exercise Your Faith

#4, Always Be Motivated By Love

If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

#### **FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey**

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

#### **ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another**

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

*1, families to be protected and strengthened*

*2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*

*3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.*

Close by thanking God together.