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Faith

'The steps of faith fall on the seeming void
And find the rock beneath'



The goal in this life is to know God and *'they that know (their) God shall be strong an carry out great exploits'* (Daniel 11:32).

So in light of the amazing facts of salvation, how is the Christian called to live?

The Bible is emphatically clear on this so we will let scripture do the talking,

***'The just (believer in Christ)
shall live by faith.'***

Romans 1:17

The word 'living' encompasses all aspects of life including what we think, what we say and how we act.

So what exactly is faith?

***'Now faith is the substance
of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen.'***

Hebrews 11:1

In essence faith is not based on what we can perceive with the five senses.

The world says,

"I will believe it when I see it"

Faith says,

"if I believe it first then I will see it".



***'For we walk by faith,
not by sight.'***

2 Cor. 5:7

The Bible has a lot to say about Gods ways versus our ways.

*'For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways My ways says the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher
than the earth,
so are My ways higher than your ways
and My thoughts than your thoughts.'*

Isaiah 55:8-9'

Faith is believing and trusting what God says about you and your circumstances despite sometimes what you see or feel.

You may ask *'Does this mean that should pluck out my eyes or something?'*

No, it does not mean we forfeit the benefit of natural eyesight. As human beings we are to still use our brain and ability to reason however, instead of limiting our life to this, we use it as a point of departure.



Faith taps into a much higher law that helps us transcend (rise above) our natural limitations and circumstance and releases Gods ability on our situation. Through faith you are no longer 'imprisoned' to your everyday circumstances.

Why Faith?

You might ask, *'Why has God ordained us to live by faith instead of physically revealing Himself to us?'*

I believe that one of the main reasons is that when we go through the process of coming into line with God and His thoughts we undergo a radical inner transformation of the heart. A transformation so deep that it would probably never take place if we only perceived Him through the five senses. Faith is seeing the invisible, not the non-existent.

Is there any other way that the Christian can live and please God?

'But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for those that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.'

Hebrews 11:6

The Bible is clear that there is absolutely no other way to please God. In real terms, faith pleases God.

*'For it is by grace you have been saved **through faith** and not of your selves, it is the gift of God not of works lest anyone should boast.'*

Ephesians 2:8-9

It is our faith in Jesus that saves us (not our works) and gives us access to the goodness and grace of God.



This 'faith stuff' does sound pretty crazy... I mean, how far can someone go with it?

***'Jesus said to Him,
"If you can believe,
all things are possible
to him who believes."'***

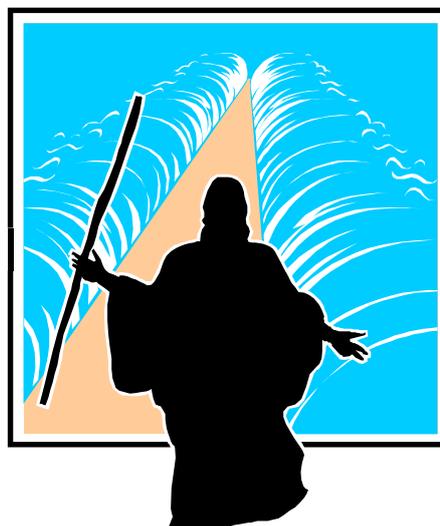
Mark 9:23

God says to us that our life is only limited by our faith.

Does that mean that if I need a miracle, my faith in God and His word can see it take place?

'And Jesus said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed of your affliction.' (Mark 5:34)

There are many instances in Scripture where people were desperate for a healing, or some sort of miracle and their faith in Jesus and His word brought the miracle into manifestation. In these situations these individuals believed Jesus and His word over their impossible circumstances and as a result, received their miracle.



A Woman Healed



'And, suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment.'

For she said to herself, "If only I may touch his garment, I shall be made well."

*But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; **your faith has made you well.**" And the woman was made well from that hour.'*

Matthew 9:20-22

So you may ask...

*'This sounds awesome!
How do I build my faith
so that I can believe for the miraculous?'*

***'So then faith comes by hearing
and hearing by the word of God
(message of Christ).'***

Romans 10:17

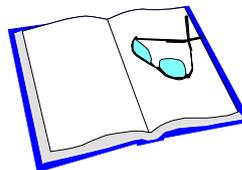
Studying and meditating on scripture renews our mind, builds our faith and prepares us to receive the spoken word (rhema) of God. When we regularly discipline ourselves in God's word we prepare ourselves to walk in the supernatural so we can fulfil the purposes that He has for us.

Illustration...

Everything we do starts out as a thought. Let's say for example, learning to drive a car. People don't just jump in a car and start driving! There is due process.



From infancy babies are driven around in cars. Then they get to an age where they watch what mum and dad actually do. Then at around sixteen years of age they actually start analysing what the driver does because they know that they themselves will be going for their driving license soon. Then after turning sixteen they study the road rules, do a written exam, practice driving and if they meet the prescribed standards they themselves start driving. There is a process.



Faith is much the same. How can you believe for something you have never heard of. When we read, study and meditate on Scripture we get to know who God is, what He has already done and what He can do in our lives.

These thoughts are like seeds. As we carefully go through the process of obedience it is like watering the seed. This ultimately results in a harvest of receiving from God what we have been believing for. It is important to know that we need to sow seed if we are ever going to reap a harvest.



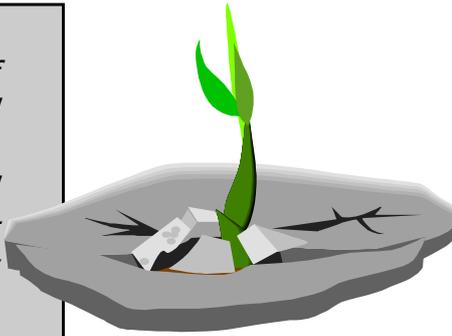
'And Jesus said "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground,

"and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, yet he himself does not know how.

"For the earth yields crops by itself: first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head.

"As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it because the harvest has come."

Mark 4:26-29.



In the New Testament the word *'Faith'* is used in an active (not passive) sense. In other words faith is not something you wear like a t-shirt but is an action that pleases God and makes things happen.

I once heard the phrase,

'Use it or lose it'

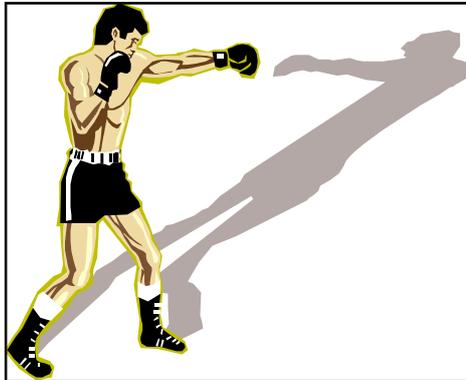
This definitely is applicable to faith. While faith is still something of a mystery, it is how God has called us to live and opens us to the realm of the impossible therefore we need to make it a life goal to work through how we can live by faith.

So is it really that easy?... can someone just read the Bible heaps and then walk in the miraculous? While that is going to be a great start, Scripture says that living by faith has its associated challenges.

*'Fight the good fight of faith,
lay hold on eternal life... '*

1 Timothy 6:12

The Bible says that our faith walk is a fight (not a walk in the park) but a fight in which we are destined to share in Christ's victory if we keep our focus on Jesus and walk in obedience. There are certain enemies to our faith that will address in later lessons.



On a practical "day to day" level the faith walk encompasses obeying the revealed will of God as outlined in Scripture to following specific directives from the Holy Spirit in certain situations (ie making specific life decisions).

***'...and let us run
with endurance
the race that is set
before us.'***

Heb. 12:1



Questions

Illustration...

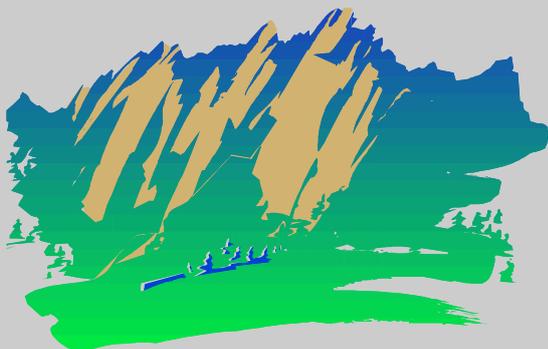
'The story has been told of a man who was crossing a desert in the days of the pioneers. He ran into trouble and was dying of thirst when he spotted a pump near an abandoned shack. He had no water to prime the pump, but he noticed a jug of water near the pump with a note attached. It read,



"There is just enough water in this jug to prime the pump, but not if you drink some first. This well has never gone dry, even in the worst of times. Pour the water in the top of the pump and pump the handle quickly. After you have had a drink, refill this jug for the next person who comes along."

What would the man dying of thirst do? To follow the instructions and prime the pump without first taking a drink would be an exercise of the kind of faith the Bible speaks about.

Faith requires that one stake his life on the truth of the promise. If the man follows the instructions, he takes the chance of pouring out all the water and getting none to drink if the pump fails. So he must trust the message is right. He must act in faith, without first receiving, and must trust in the truth of the promise.'



1. How are Christians called to live?

2. The world says, "I will believe it when I see it" what does faith say?

3. What is essential to please God?

4. How does faith come?

5. Why do you think the Apostle Paul likened living by faith to a fight?

6. How do you think you would go if it were you at the pump? What thoughts do you think could tempt you to drink the water instead of priming the pump?
