

The Truth About Faith, Prayer And How God Answers

Peter's Great Escape

Acts 12:1-19

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Faith

Biblical faith is an **ACTION**, not a **FEELING**.

Acts 12:9-15/ Luke 14:28-33/ Proverbs 22:3/ Luke 24:13-35/ John 20:24-29/ Daniel 3:17-18/ Mark 14:32-36/ Judges 6-8

Prayer

Prayer is an **ACTION**, not a **MINDSET**.

Luke 5:16/ Luke 11:1-2

The power of prayer is based on **WHO I PRAY TO**, not **HOW WELL I PRAY**.

Romans 8:15-16

How God Answers

Our job is to **ASK**; God's job is to do what's **BEST**.

James 4:2/ Luke 11:5-10

God's **GOODNESS** and **SOVEREIGNTY** are not theological doctrines;
they're bedrock **REALITY**.

Proverbs 9:10/ Hebrews 11:6/ Isaiah 55:8-9/ Job 1:20-22

Food for Thought

For the week of August 2, 2020

(Questions and Scriptures for further study & discussion)

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have adjusted the Food for Thought format so the questions can be used for group discussion as well as personal study and reflection.

WHAT'S YOUR HIGHLIGHT?

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Larry mentioned three "goofy" definitions of biblical faith. Which of these do you struggle with thinking is true the most?

Can you think of a time in your life when you struggled with believing one or more of these definitions?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. We heard this weekend that biblical faith is "trusting God enough to do what He says." In John 4:43-54, we read about Jesus healing the son of a government official. In what ways do you see this description of faith reflected in the official's response to Jesus?

John 4:43-54 New International Version (NIV)

⁴³ After the two days he left for Galilee. ⁴⁴ (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.)

⁴⁵ When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there.

⁴⁶ Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

⁴⁸ "Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

⁴⁹ The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

⁵⁰ "Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live."

The man took Jesus at his word and departed. ⁵¹ While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. ⁵² When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him."

⁵³ Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and his whole household believed.

⁵⁴ This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

Can you think of any examples in your life when you trusted God enough to do what He said? What was the outcome of how the Holy Spirit worked in your life and in the world?

2. Throughout the Bible, God provides us with motivation to trust Him enough to obey what He tells us to do. What motivations do you find in the following passages to keep obeying and pushing forward despite the fact we can't see the outcome?

1 Corinthians 15:58 New International Version (NIV)

⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Hebrews 12:1-3 *New International Version (NIV)*

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁶ For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Which one of these passages is the most motivating to you?

3. The quality of communication in any relationship is directly related to the quality and depth of the relationship. The same is true in our relationship with God. Nehemiah was a man whose relationship with God had quality and depth, which can be seen in his prayer life. Read Nehemiah 1:5-11 and jot down anything that gives you insight into Nehemiah's relationship and communication with God, and how it might impact or help you grow in your own prayer life.

Nehemiah 1:5-11 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁵ Then I said:

"LORD, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you. ⁷ We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

⁸ "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, ⁹ but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'

¹⁰ "They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. ¹¹ Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man."

I was cupbearer to the king.



NORTH COAST SUMMER SERIES & CLASSES

We have two classes left this summer! Check out our website for more details! northcoastchurch.com/classes

Self-Leadership with Pastor Ned Mervich, Thursday, August 6 at 7pm (Register on our website.)

Summer Study Series: Is God Evil? with Pastor Christopher Hilken, Friday, August 14 at 7pm (Streaming online on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.)

We had a great collection of classes this summer that covered a variety of topics. To watch recordings of these classes, please visit our website: northcoastchurch.com/classes