

Why Christians Fail To Receive Pt 2

Prepared by: Pastor Blaine G. Smith

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Scripture Study

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." (Heb 4:2) "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (Gal 3:14) You will not get very far with God without mixing faith with the promises. We are told to fight the good fight of the faith. If we are told to fight then there must be hindrances to faith. In this lesson we will look at some hindrances. The best place I know to start is by looking at the ministry of Jesus. The Word says to look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Jesus looked for faith everywhere He went in His earthly ministry.

Mark 6:5-6

5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching. (KJV)

Matthew 13:58

And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. (KJV)

- ✠ The scripture didn't say He would not do any mighty works, it says He could not because of their unbelief. There is a difference between a lack of faith and unbelief. Unbelief is belief in the wrong thing and is usually associated with a hard heart. If unbelief hindered Jesus it will hinder us as well. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Little or no faith is usually a result of spending more time listening to the voice of the world than hearing the Word of God.

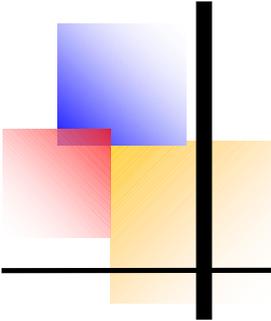
Matthew 17:17-20

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. (KJV)



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✠ Jesus' disciples tried to cast out a devil and could not. They asked Jesus why they could not and He said "because of your unbelief." In essence He told them you are faithless, twisted and distorted, if you had faith nothing would be impossible to you including casting out that devil. Unbelief and a lack of faith stopped the power of God in the disciples lives and it will stop the power of God in yours as well.

Hebrews 3:19

So we see that they were not able to enter [into His rest], because of their unwillingness to adhere to and trust in and rely on God [unbelief had shut them out]. (AMP)

✠ Unbelief kept the children of Israel from entering into the promise land and it will keep us from entering into the promises of God.

Mark 16:12-14

12 Afterward he appeared to two who were walking from Jerusalem into the country, but they didn't recognize him at first because he had changed his appearance.

13 When they realized who he was, they rushed back to tell the others, but no one believed them.

14 Still later he appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating together. He rebuked them for their unbelief — their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. (NLT)

Matthew 14:25-31

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

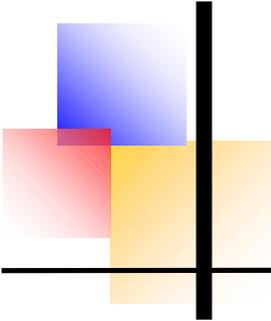
26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

✠ The disciples cried out because they were overcome with fear. Jesus once again had to tell them to get rid of the fear.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.



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✠ There is a great faith lesson in this story. Peter said, "if it is you Lord ask me to come." What else could Jesus say, it was Him. I would like to draw your attention to the word "come." Once Jesus spoke the word come, it became the Word of God to Peter. Peter was then authorized to walk on the water. After Peter was authorized, power was released to accomplish what he was authorized to do. It was Peter's faith in the word "come" that caused the power of God to hold him up on the water.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? (KJV)

✠ Jesus authorized Peter to walk on the water and the power of God was present to hold him up. So what caused Peter to sink? Verse 30 and 31 tells us why. Peter looked at the wind and became fearful. Peter was a fisherman and in his mind a combination of wind and water meant, sink. The wind didn't have anything to do with walking on the water except in Peter's mind. The wind wasn't affecting Jesus, He was still standing on the water when He reached out and caught Peter. It wasn't Jesus' will for Peter to walk out half way and sink. The Word of Jesus didn't change and the power of God was still present to hold Peter up. It was Peter that changed, he replaced faith with fear and began to doubt. Peter took his eyes off the word "come" and started looking at what he could see with his eyes, that is when he began to sink. Clearly it was Peter's faith in Jesus' word that caused the power of God to be released to hold him up on the water.

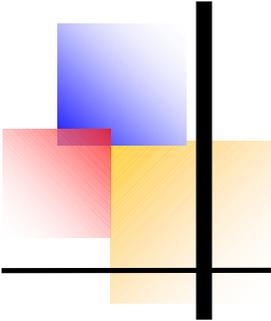
2 Corinthians 5:7

For we walk by faith, not by sight (KJV)

2 Corinthians 4:18

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. (KJV)

✠ How do we look at something we cannot see? Walking by faith allows us to see things that our physical eyes cannot see. The Greek word skopeo #4648 translated "look" is "to look at, consider" (Eng., "scope"), implying mental consideration, to take aim at (spy), i.e. (figuratively) regard: consider, take heed, look at (on), mark. When we are in a faith battle it is up to us the same as it was up to Peter to look at the Word and not the circumstances. We must cast down imaginations [reasonings] and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of the Word.



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2 Corinthians 10:4-5

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; (KJV)

✠ Your mind is the battle field. The fight of faith starts there. As long as Peter was looking at the unseen word of Jesus and casting down imaginations he was walking by faith not by sight. If Peter would have been a doer of 2 Corinthians 4:18 he would not have sank. Always remember there is no failure in God. Never blame God for your failure to receive His promises. If your situation doesn't line up with what the Word says then you have missed it somewhere. Either you didn't have the Word of God for your situation or you did just like Peter, you started looking at the circumstances instead of the Word. Peter was probably tempted to blame Jesus for letting him sink. People today do the same thing with the Word, they blame God for their failure to have faith in His Word. The Word [truth] says by His strips we are healed, the circumstances [facts] may say you are sick, but the Word [truth] always says you are healed. Circumstances [facts] are subject to change the Word [truth] is not. You have a choice to look at the Word [truth] or to look at the circumstances [facts]. If you put your faith in the Word you will be healed if you look at the circumstances you will become fearful and begin to doubt the Word [truth] and you will sink.

Mark 4:38-40

38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

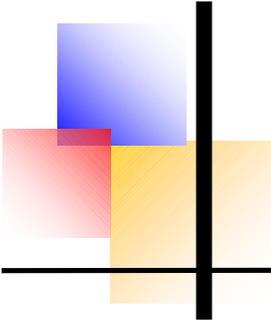
39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. 40 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" (NKJV)

✠ Fear and faith cannot be in your heart at the same time. You are either in fear or in faith. Jesus implied that if they would have had faith they would not have been fearful.

Luke 8:49-50

49 While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher."

50 But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." (NKJV)



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Matthew 9:28-30

28 And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." (NKJV)

✠ Everywhere Jesus went He made statements like , "according to your faith" or "your faith has made you whole." Whether we like it or not it is according to our faith.

James 5:15

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. (KJV)

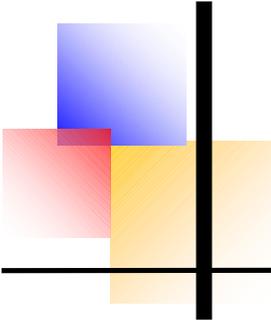
✠ The prayer of faith shall save the sick, not the prayer of hope or the prayer of begging and pleading. It is imperative that we follow God's rules of faith and prayer if we expect to get results. Many want to make up their own rules and when failure comes and it will, they blame God for not keeping His Word. Lets take a closer look at the prayer of faith.

22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God.

23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.

24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. (NKJV)

✠ In verse 22 the cross reference in my Bible says, have the faith of God. Faith is made up of two parts believing in your heart and saying with your mouth. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom 10:10) Jesus is teaching this same truth in Mark. Believing without speaking or speaking without believing in your heart is not faith. There is a fine line between believing with our mind and believing with our heart. There is also a fine line between speaking from our heart and speaking from our mind. Take time to learn the difference. One is faith the other is mental assent. Jesus said whosoever shall say. Are you a whosoever? Say this, it is official, Jesus is talking to me, because I'm a whosoever. Jesus said if whosoever will believe, say and not doubt they shall have whatsoever they say. Jesus went on to say in verse 24. Therefore or because of this I say to you that whatever you desire when you pray, believe that you have received it, and then will you have it. True faith is a result of filling your heart with God's Word to



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✠ the point that it begins to flow out of your mouth of it's own accord. Jesus said "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The way to monitor the condition of the heart is by listening to the mouth. Some people try to fool God by making a confession that originates and proceed from the mind. That might fool a few undiscerning people but it won't fool God. Mental assent looks a lot like faith but it is only a cheap imitation and it does not bring results. Lets look closer a verse 24. Jesus taught that if we expect to have the thing we desire we must believe we receive it when we pray, not when we can see it. This is the prayer of faith. You can always tell if you truly prayed the prayer of faith by the corresponding actions or works that follow the prayer. If you really believed you received the answer when you prayed you will act and talk like you already have it. There is a knowing, or a fixed heart that accompanies true faith. There is no wavering, doubting or hesitation. You know that you have received the answer when you reach that settled or assured place. It is at this time the answer comes, not after you can see the answer.

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (KJV)

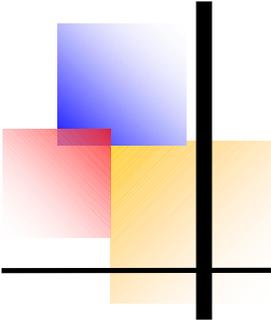
✠ Lets take a closer look at faith. Faith is always now, not some day or when the answer comes. Faith is based on what is spoken not what is seen. If it is seen it is not faith. Faith is the "substance" and the "evidence" of the unseen promise. In order for faith to produce the promise we must be assured in our heart that the substance of faith is more real than what is seen. Faith is the confirmation, the proof, the conviction and the reality of the things we don't yet see. When we perceive that faith is a fact and is more real than what we perceive with the senses change will come. Always remember prayer is not what makes faith work, faith is what makes prayer work.

Hebrews 11:1

NOW FAITH is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses]. (AMP)

Proverbs 24:3-6

3 By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established;
4 through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.
5 A wise man has great power, and a man of knowledge increases strength;
6 for waging war you need guidance, and for victory many advisers. (NIV)



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✠ We can study faith and prayer and still not enter into the promises of God. It is by wisdom, understanding and knowledge that the house is built and furnished with rare and beautiful treasures. Strength, power and guidance are made available to the one who knows and understands the Word of God. Waging war for souls requires guidance and Godly Spirit led counsel. Make it your quest in life to have a discerning, knowing heart full of wisdom and understanding.

Proverbs 3:1-8

1 My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart,

2 for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

4 Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

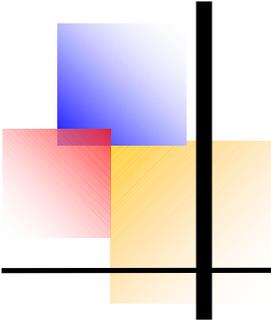
5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.

8 This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones. (NIV)

Note: We can pray day and night but if we are bad stewards over our bodies or finances God is not obligated to keep our bodies healthy or bless us financially. We can't live a life filled with stress, eat only cake and cookies, never exercise and expect God to keep us well. Also we cannot make unwise decisions, love things more than God and expect God to bless our finances. Wisdom, knowledge and understanding working with faith, perseverance and prayer is an unstoppable combination. Wisdom will cause you to have a discerning heart which will cause you to understand and to gain the knowledge of God. We must follow the rules and principles in the Word of God if we expect to receive the promise. The rules and principles are safeguards to keep the thief out of our inheritance.



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Study Questions

1. According to Mark 6:5,6 why could Jesus do no mighty works?
2. Refer to Matthew 17:17-20 and explain why Jesus' disciples could not cast out the devil.
3. What caused Peter to sink according to the teaching in Matthew 14:25-31?
4. Complete the following verse "For we..."
5. Referring to Matthew 9:28,29 who's faith healed them?
6. According to Jesus' teaching in when do we believe we receive?
7. Expound on Proverbs 3:1-8.
8. What did God reveal to you as you studied?

Extra Blessing

(Study to show yourself approved unto God 2 Timothy 2:15)

Mark 5:22-43

Jesus told Jairus not to be afraid just believe. Jairus started out in pleading and fear but he ended in faith. Note how Jesus ran all the unbelief out of the room before he prayed for the little girl.

The woman with the issue of blood "said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." She had faith to be healed and she also had corresponding actions or works. The reason she was fearing and trembling was because it was unlawful for her to be out in public with her condition. She could have been stoned for doing so.