*Introduction*

So far in our journey looking at the subject of faith, we have seen the difference between faith and sight, and faith and hope.

Last week Daniel showed us something of the faith of the disciples.

In recapping for those who may have not been here and to get our minds and hearts prepared for what God will say to us this morning, we have seen that the world would have us see before we believe, but God turns that on its head stating that faith comes by believing first, then we will see.

We have also seen that faith comes from the heart and our hope comes from the mind. Faith is in the present, hope is in the future.

God lives in the eternal NOW.

To faith, He never reveals himself as "I was" or as "I will be", but always as "I am".

When faith contacts God it is always in the present.

If we apply this truth to our prayer lives it will revolutionise what we ask for - and get!

***Mark 11:24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.***

In faith, we ask now and we receive now, it is ours. This does not mean that we actually, physically receive everything straight away. The phrase "and it will be yours" is a future tense.

So that is where we have been, or have come from.

This morning we are going to look at faith as one of the spiritual fruits. Next week, DV, we will look at Faith as a gift.

I say this because faith works in one of two ways.

Let me give you an analogy to try and explain what I mean, so that you get the difference between the gift and the fruit.

Try and imagine a Christmas tree and an apple tree side by side.

On the Christmas tree, presents are tied. It is a practice in some countries to do this, instead of placing them under the tree.

In this way, the Christmas tree bears gifts, the apple tree bears fruit.

In the case of the Christmas tree a gift is both attached to it and removed from it in a single, brief act. The gift may be a jumper and the tree a cedar tree. There is no direct connection between the tree and the gift. The gift tells us nothing about the tree from which it is taken.

On the other hand there is a direct connection between an apple and the tree that bears it.

The nature of the tree determines the nature of the fruit, both its kind and its quality. An apple tree can never bear an orange. A healthy tree will bear healthy fruit, an unhealthy tree will bear unhealthy fruit.

***Matthew 7:17-20Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.***

The fruit on the apple tree is not produced by a single act, rather, it is the result of a steady, continuing process of growth and development.

To produce good fruit, the tree must be carefully cultivated.

Now if we apply that analogy to the spiritual realm, a spiritual gift is both imparted and received by a single act. It is in essence a transaction that tells us nothing of the nature of the one who has the gift.

***1 Cor 12:11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.***

The Holy Spirit gives as He determines - to whoever he likes.

On the other hand spiritual fruit expresses the nature of the life from which it comes; it comes as a result of a process of growth.

In order for us to attain good fruit we have to be cultivated by the Holy Spirit, we have to grow and that comes over time. with skill and perseverance.

We could describe the difference as the gift of faith would express ability, the fruit of faith would express character.

But we do not need to chose one over the other, fruit does not exclude the gift and vice versa.

So having tried to explain the difference between the gift of faith and the fruit of faith, let us move on to look at what faith is as a fruit.

There are two aspects of the fruit of faith, they correspond to two different but related uses of the Greek word for faith = pistis.

The first is trust and the second is trustworthiness. (we will DV look at the 2nd aspect next Sunday).

**1. The first aspect of faith as a fruit is TRUST.**

Jesus emphasized that one of the requirements of entering the Kingdom of God was to become like a little child

***MATT 18:2-3He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. 3And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.***

Children are very trusting, it is also a quality we see in men of the bible who were spiritually mature - Abraham, Moses, David, Paul etc. These men placed their trust in God.

The fruit of faith, in this aspect may be defined as a quiet, steady, unwavering trust in the goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness of God.

No matter what the trials or seeming disasters that may be encountered, the person who has cultivated the fruit of faith will remain calm and restful in the midst of it all.

There confidence in God will be unshakable, knowing that He is in complete control of every situation and circumstance.

The outward expression of this trust is stability.

***Psalm 125:1 Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever.***

Picture what the psalmist is saying - all the earth's mountains may shake and tremble and may even be totally removed - except one. Mount Zion can never be shaken. It alone will abide forever.

So it is with the believer who has learned to trust. Others around him/her may panic and be in confusion, but they will remain calm and secure.

***Psalm 87:1 His foundation is in the holy mountains (KJV)***

He has founded his city on the holy mountain (NIV)

***Psalm 37:5 Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this:***

This is about having faith. But notice there are 2 things required of us.

1. *Commit* - to commit is an act.

2. *trust* - an attitude.

The act of commitment leads to an attitude of trust.

When we walk in this way we are assured that God *"will do it"*.

Committing a matter to the Lord is like taking cash to the bank and depositing it in your account.

Once you have received your receipt for the deposit, you no longer need to be concerned for the safety of the money, that is now the banks responsibility - not yours.

Its ironic in some ways that a person has no problem trusting the bank with their money, yet find it hard to trust God with a vital part of their lives that they have committed to Him.

Faith means believing that what we have committed to Him - He will do. No doubts.

But faith as a fruit has to be cultivated. An apple grows from the blossom, then a small apple that is not ready for eating and then into one that is ready. It takes time, it takes looking after.

In Psalm 62:2 King David states

***He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.(KJV)***

He goes on to say in v6

***He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.***

When we are new Christians our trust is, at times frail and we are shaken, but the more we cultivate the character of trusting the more our faith grows until we can say "I will not be moved".

Mature trust is wonderfully depicted by Paul in his letter to Timothy:

***2 Tim 1:12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.***

*Conclusion*

We have been and are looking at the subject of faith.

For the Christian, faith comes in 2 forms, the gift of faith, which we will eventually DV look at, and the fruit of faith which is part of who we are.

We have seen this morning that faith as a fruit, has two aspects, the one we have looked at today is trust.

Faith involves an act - a commitment, and an attitude - trust.

When we cultivate these 2 things our faith grows, and the fruit is shown in the way we live - we begin to live by faith.

That faith manifests itself in our everyday lives by giving us a calmness when things appear to be going wrong, a stability in an unstable world.

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because those who come to Him MUST BELIEVE.

But in order for God to fulfil His part, we have to do ours - we have to commit and trust.

If you do not know Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, you have to go past the head knowledge of merely knowing the stories about Jesus. You need to commit to Him.

Give him your life and TRUST in HIM for your salvation. TODAY.

If you are a Christian, we are to bear the fruit of faith (the other fruit as well), it has to become part of who we are.

We have to commit whatever it is to Him who is able, and trust Him TO DO IT!

May God bless you this week as you walk in faith.

Amen.