*Introduction*

We have come a long way over the last couple of months in our walk to know what faith is and is not, how it should be a characteristic of our lives and how our faith is of no good at all unless it is in the one who is faithful, we put our trust in the trustworthiness of God.

**Faith for us** is hearing God say, "*I AM," and answering in our own lives, "HE IS."* Faith simply accepts God's description of Himself.

*God says, "I am delivering you from the storm". I say "He is delivering me from the storm"*

*Faith is taking God at what He says he is - because God is Faithful!*

We saw last week, the life of Joseph, a boy of 17years taken from his family by his hateful brothers and sold into slavery, put into prison unjustly and then coming to prominence as the Prime Minister to Pharaoh. During all the years of slavery and imprisonment he maintained his faith in the I AM. God.

What is the storm, the diversity, in your life? How do you face it?

Ask Him to give you faith to believe. Ask Him for faith that no matter what happens - no matter what conditions you face, no matter what storm you face - belief in Him is the only way out.

Paul says:

***Phil 4:11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances***

I believe that the moment faith gripped Paul he was content. He was in the centre of God's will and he had the promise of God.

He prayed through, and it didn't matter what happened from that moment on, God took the sting out of the storm.

He can take the fear out of the storm for you, too. Will you let Him?

Ride out your storm- God is not about to let you go under.

God will not permit anything to hinder His plans

We are in the days that Peter spoke of in Acts 2

***17“‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.  
18Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  and they will prophesy.  
19I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.  
21And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’***

Do we believe we are in those days?

If we don't we are going to get a surprise, because when the Holy Spirit is poured out, there will be many, many, who call on the name of the Lord and be saved - from sin and from the spirit of this world.

We are living in a time when God is calling believers to separate themselves from a perverse and wicked generation and live holy lives, sanctified lives of faith.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is this - Repent and believe! Repent of your sinful ways, and believe in ME. Why, because He is the one who died upon the cross to take the punishment for all the wrong we have done, who paid the penalty, so that we may go free. He rose from the dead to show that he alone has the power over death, and through Him we can have eternal life.

He loves you that much.

***John 20:31But these are written that you may believe[***[***a***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20:31&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26899a)***] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.***

Where are you with Jesus this morning - are you a true believer who is trusting in Him alone - if so you have faith.

But if you are trusting in yourself, the things you do, or a religion, then you do NOT have faith in anything trustworthy, and it will fail.

The start of faith is believing in Jesus Christ and his saving work on the cross.

Now the disciples who were believers, although somewhat confused at times came to Jesus and said:

***Luke 17:5 The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”***

Jesus' answer was:  
***“If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.***

He goes on to talk about the servant coming in from the field after a hard day. Will the master say to the servant, come and take the weight off your feet and eat? No he will say to the servant - Get MY tea!

But Jesus was dealing with how to increase faith in the chapter before

***Luke 16:10-13“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. 11So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? 12And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?***

***13“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”***

In Gods eyes, faith has nothing to do with the size or amount of work you want to accomplish, rather it has to do with the focus and direction of your life.

God is not concerned with your grand vision, he is concerned with who you are becoming.

There is a saying - "We are what we eat" In the Christian life that is very true.

Jesus has just told the crowd who were grumbling about him that he was the "bread of life"

In John 6:53 he says:

***53 Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.***

If we only apply this verse to the communion feast, we miss the point of what Jesus is saying.

The Lords table is not just symbolic, rather, it reminds us that He became our source of life through death.

We are to come daily and eat and drink of Him. The more we eat of Him, the more spiritual life will be shown in us.

We have an invitation to come to his table to eat and become strong in faith. We do this as we feed on the WORD of God and commune with him in prayer.

If we do not read the word, or pray very much, we will become spiritually thin and weak and become easy pickings for the devil.

But God has provided a way to make every child of God strong and able to resist the enemy.

Throughout Jesus' life we see Him in close union with His Father, he often took the disciples aside to teach them (feed them). Jesus was so committed to doing His Fathers will that it became His food and drink.

We are to do the same.

Let us end with a look at Peter.

When Satan sifted Peter at the trial of Jesus - he failed miserably - ***but NOT in his faith.***

You may be thinking "But he denied Jesus three times"

We know Peter's faith did not fail because just as he swore the third time that he didn't know Jesus, he looked into the eyes of Jesus and was reminded that that is what Jesus said he would do, and he went and wept bitterly.

The words 'wept bitterly' in the Greek actually means 'he cried a piercing, violent cry'.

Peter knew that Jesus had been right, and he had not listened, and he is shouting in anguish, saying 'Father forgive me - I love Him'

He had not failed in faith, because he still loved Jesus, even though he had failed.

Indeed Peter was the first to go inside the tomb when they had been told he had risen.

He was there at Jesus ascension, he was the one who spoke out at Pentecost. Where many were saved.

He had failed, but he had not lost faith.

Remember what Paul said:

***1 Cor 10:12-13So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.***

*Conclusion*

We grow in faith as we do the little things.... as we spend time in the Word and in prayer.

There will be many times when we fail, but God is faithful.

There will be many times we fall, But God will pick us up

There will be many times we are tempted, but God will say "No, this way".

The first step on the road of faith is to BELIEVE in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour.

Then trust His promises.

Then each time you fail or fall, with God's help, get up and carry on.

As you do, your faith in Him, the one who is trustworthy, will grow and grow.

Amen