



Growing in Faith

“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other” (2 Thessalonians 1:3 NKJ).

In this Teaching Letter I want to share some things you can do that will increase your faith in God and in His Word. Increased faith is a worthy goal for both every Christian. It is essential for salvation—we “are saved by grace through faith” (Ephesians 2:8)—and for every other spiritual transaction throughout our lives. James wrote about the importance of faith, for example, in receiving wisdom from God: “But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man unstable in all his ways” (James 1:6-8 NKJ).

In Hebrews 11:1 faith is described as one of the foundational elements of the Christian life: “Faith is the substance [foundation] of things hoped for” (my explanation added, see *The Passion Translation*). When building a house or other important structure, we know the importance of a strong and appropriate foundation. The right foundation will support and uphold through the storms that are sure to come. A professional builder knows the first requirement for a good foundation—especially for a large structure—is that it be situated on solid rock. Our faith foundation must be firmly based on the only Rock, Christ Jesus.

Basing our eternal faith and hope on any anything except Jesus and God’s Word will prove disastrous. Jesus pointed out that the wise person—who both hears and does what Jesus says—is like one “who built his house on the rock; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall for it was founded on the rock” (Matthew 7:24, 25 NKJ).

Jesus continued, “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will

be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall” (vss. 26, 27). Ultimately, our lives and our eternal destiny depend upon where our faith foundation is laid.

1. The first thing we can do to help our faith grow is simply: pray for more faith. Jesus’ disciples asked Him to increase their faith. This is recorded in Luke 17:5. Because their faith was daily set alongside His, they could easily see theirs did not measure up. So they wisely asked Him to increase theirs.

More faith may not often appear on our list of prayer requests, but it is an excellent request to add. Jesus said: “. . . ask, and it will be given to you. . .” (Luke 11:9 NKJ). We ask for many things; why not ask for increased faith?

One Scripture writer states that Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2), so faith is obviously something God is actively addressing in His people’s lives. It is on His work list, and He is not slack in His work. Our desire and prayer will accelerate His work. Our request for more faith is sure to be answered.

2. Secondly, to help our faith grow, we should approach God’s Word with an attitude to believe every word of it. That may sound like it could go without saying. Of course, God’s Word is true! Of course, we believe it! However, frankly I’ve been shocked at myself when I have read a promise in the Word of God and found myself doubting it. (Confession is good!) If we are honest with ourselves, there are things in God’s Word that we have difficulty believing they could be true *for us*.

Even though I sometimes find God's promises to be fantastically large and difficult to believe for myself, I know the attitude I need to come to Scripture with is "I believe God's Word." Period. I decided decades ago to have that attitude, and I won't change it. So, I will take hold of the exceedingly great promises of God and will believe until I fully believe them all for myself, down to the core of my being—every one of them.

I encourage you, in the process of growing your faith, to decide to believe God's Word, every verse—even those you don't quite understand. Also the parts that are beyond what you have experienced as true in your life to this point. If we set our hearts and minds to believe, eventually we will. Jesus is more solid than the Rock of Gibraltar and God's Word is true in its entirety. Let us set our minds and hearts to believe.

When I speak of believing, I'm referring to the ongoing process of establishing some truth from God's Word deep within us. It's this process that I believe the Apostle Paul meant when he wrote: "I planted. Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:6). He described a process in agriculture in which a seed is planted and grows to maturity.

In this passage in 1 Corinthians 3, Paul refers to truth which he preached and taught the Corinthian church. He planted the truth in seed form. Truth that we hear for the first time is like a seed. Often we examine it before we decide to allow it to be planted. We decide whether we will contemplate that truth further or cast it aside. In order to grow, truth seeds must be planted and watered. Paul said Apollos followed him and watered the truth Paul had preached. God then gives the increase. (Read the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13 for further study.)

The Holy Spirit told me once that I needed to get the truth that God loves me to a very deep level in my soul. In other words, I needed to believe it deeply. At that time I would have said that I knew God loved me; however, the Holy Spirit revealed that I didn't believe it like He wanted me to. Basically, it was head knowledge. My faith in God's love for me needed to grow—to be strongly established. That truth needed watering in order to send down deep roots and to grow upward. I did the things I am writing about in this Teaching Letter as my part in God's process.

Approaching God's Word with an attitude of believing will allow the Word to "profit" us. The writer of Hebrews said: "For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, **not being mixed with faith** in those who heard it" (Hebrews 4:2 NKJ, emphasis added). Those who did not believe did not receive.

3. Thirdly, in order to grow your faith, read, meditate on and memorize Scripture regarding faith and believing. The Apostle Paul said: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17 NKJ). When we actively read and meditate on a portion of God's Word, it works in us. Whatever the topic is—that truth is going deeper into your heart and taking root there. As we meditate on the truth, we are watering it. God will cause it to increase and we will profit by it. One result will be increased faith.

In order to grow faith, we read, meditate on and memorize Scripture regarding faith. If I wanted to increase in love, I would meditate on Scriptures about love (as well as practice being more loving). You may want to compile or find a list of Scripture for yourself on faith. (I have prepared two lists that you can use to get started. [CLICK HERE](#) to go directly to the first list or go to the [Teaching Letters](#) page at sonjahuntministries.com. These lists follow Teaching Letter 50. They are titled "Scriptures on Faith" and "Scriptures on Believing.")

Next month's Teaching Letter (51) will continue this topic of growing in faith. Blessings to you and may your faith grow! I know it will. God gives the increase! --SH

GOD'S WORD FOR TODAY
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