

## FAITH AND THE RESULTS OF REDEMPTION

- A. Introduction: We have been studying redemption. To be redeemed means to be loosed or set free by payment of a price.
1. Through the sacrifice of Christ at the Cross, the price was paid to set us free from bondage to sin, Satan, and the curse of sin which is death in all its forms. Gal 3:13
    - a. God has met every human need through the Cross of Christ. From His point of view we are free and we are fully provided for. II Pet 1:3
    - b. That statement brings up a question. If we are free and fully provided for, why are we still bound in many areas of our lives and why do we have lack in our lives?
  2. The answer is that we must learn to walk in the reality of redemption. In order to do that, there are some things we must understand.
    - a. The provisions of redemption are spiritual realities. Spiritual means invisible. Invisible does not mean not real or less real. It simply means you cannot perceive it with your five physical senses. II Cor 4:18; Eph 1:3
    - b. However, the invisible, spiritual provision of redemption can become visible, can produce visible, tangible results through faith.
    - c. In the last lesson we said that God works in our lives by grace through faith. God's grace gives us what we do not deserve and cannot earn. Faith believes what God says about what His grace has provided and receives the provision of God's grace.
  3. To have faith means to believe. Faith and believe are two sides of the same coin. Faith is a noun. Believe is a verb.
    - a. Both words come from the same root word, PEITHO, which means to convince or persuade. To have faith means to be persuaded or convinced of something. You are so persuaded or convinced that you act or demonstrate actions that correspond with what you believe. James 2:18
    - b. II Cor 5:7--To have faith or to believe in the Bible sense means to become persuaded or convinced of things you cannot see because God has told you about them in His word, the Bible. We can then tell by the way you talk and act that you are persuaded.
  4. Eph 2:8,9--Faith is a gift from God. It comes to us through the word of God. Rom 10:17; Rom 12:3
    - a. When the gospel is preached to us, faith (persuasion) comes to us, and when we act on that faith -- believe in our hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead and confess with our mouths Jesus as Lord -- God's grace in the form of salvation comes to us. Rom 10:9,10
    - b. Faith receives what God's grace has provided. In this case, faith receives salvation from our sins.
  5. In this lesson we want to continue talking about the connection between faith and walking in the visible, physical reality of redemption.
- B. When we begin to talk about faith and receiving things from God by faith, it can lead to certain difficulties.
1. People can get very defensive. "Are you saying I don't have the benefits of redemption operative in my life because there is something wrong with my faith?"
    - a. When people say that, they are often reacting to what they consider to be a challenge to their sincerity and the genuineness of their commitment to Christ. But, when the NT speaks of faith that receives, it is not talking about your sincerity or the depth of your commitment to Christ.
    - b. The disciples were committed to Jesus. They left all to follow Him. Yet, He regularly challenged their faith: Where is your faith? Oh ye of little faith! Because of your unbelief! Mark 10:28; Mark 4:40; Matt 17:20
    - c. When the NT speaks of faith, it rarely refers to the depth of your commitment to Christ. It refers

to being persuaded of something you cannot see because God has told you about it. This faith is directly connected to your response to God's word. Matt 8:5-13

2. You must also understand that the NT speaks of several types of faith. In each case you must believe something you cannot see, but what you must believe is different with each type of faith.
  - a. Eph 2:8--Saving faith. With saving faith you must believe some things about the person and work of Jesus. Rom 10:9,10
  - b. Rom 1:17--Faith to live by. In this type of faith you order your life according to unseen realities: Heaven is my home. I'll one day stand before God and give account of my life. I live for His glory, not my personal happiness and satisfaction. I do what He wants, not what I want.
  - c. Faith that receives an answer or activates the power of God to produce visible, physical changes in your life.
    1. This type of faith can be divided into some sub-categories: faith that receives an answer to prayer (Mark 11:24), faith that moves a mountain (Mark 11:23), faith to be healed (Acts 14:9).
    2. In the previous two types of faith you are not believing to see something change in the material, physical realm. But, with this kind of faith, the point is to produce a visible change.
    3. Notice, what you must believe with faith that receives, faith that produces visible results, is different than what saving faith or faith to live by believes.
3. You must further understand that there are degrees of faith.
  - a. The NT speaks of strong faith (Rom 4:20), weak faith (Rom 4:29), growing faith (II Thess 1:3), great faith (Matt 8:10), little faith (Matt 14:31).
    1. It is possible to have strong faith in one category of faith (saving faith) but very weak faith in another category (faith to live by or faith to receive from God).
    2. Our faith (in each category) must grow and develop to be strong. Our faith must be perfected.
  - b. Paul preached the gospel at Thessalonica and people were gloriously saved. But, severe persecution broke out within weeks of their conversion. Paul was forced to leave the city.
    1. Notice, their faith in Christ as Savior (saving faith) was strong. I Thess 1:5-10
    2. But, Paul was concerned that their faith to live by (the faith to stand the storm of affliction and persecution) might not be strong enough to stand. They might be moved by these afflictions. I Thess 3:1-5
    3. He sent Timothy to encourage and establish their faith, and he wanted to come to them himself to perfect that which was lacking in their faith. I Thess 3:10
4. You must understand that forces rise up to challenge God's word in every category of faith. What rises up to challenge your faith?
  - a. Your circumstances -- the wind, the waves, what you can see, hear, taste, touch, smell. Every day, Abraham and Sarah's bodies got older.
  - b. Your own emotions --Peter saw the wind and he felt fear. When things don't change right away, you feel discouraged.
  - c. Your own logic -- You don't see it working and you conclude: I'm going down. God doesn't love me, etc. You don't see it working and you conclude, this faith stuff is no good.
5. Unless your faith is strong, unless your persuasion of the reality of God's word is full, you will be moved by these challenges.
  - a. Every sincere Christian believes the Bible until their senses and / or their emotions and their circumstances contradict God's word. Then, we find out which has the greater reality to you -- what God says or what you see.
  - b. Little faith looks strong in the boat. Our faith in healing is strong until we get sick.

- C. At the new birth we receive a measure of faith. It is a gift from God. It comes to us through His word.  
Eph 2:8; Rom 10:17; 12:3
1. That faith must now be developed. Faith is developed by feeding it and exercising it.
    - a. Faith is fed by the word of God, by taking time to read it and meditate on it. Matt 4:4
    - b. Faith is exercised as you begin to do what the Bible says and as you begin to say about yourself and your situation what God says. Heb 10:23
  2. Acts 3:1-11,16--A lame man was healed at the temple. Peter attributed it to faith in the name of Jesus.
    - a. Jesus had told His disciples that they could pray in His name and He would do it. John 14:14
    - b. Peter and John took Jesus at His word (faith) and it produces results (faith that receives).
  3. Acts 4:13--When Peter and John were questioned about the healing by temple officials, they took note of the fact that the men were bold and had been with Jesus.
    - a. Boldness, in the Greek, means all outspokenness, and by implication, assurance.
    - b. These men had been with Jesus, and their association with Him gave them a boldness or confidence or persuasion that invisible realities would produce visible results.
  4. That confidence, that persuasion, came from spending time with the Lord Jesus, the Word made flesh.
    - a. The Lord Jesus, the Living Word of God, reveals Himself to us through the written word of God.
    - b. John 14:21--The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who [really] loves Me, and whoever [really] loves Me will be loved by My Father. And I [too] will love him and will show (reveal, manifest) Myself to him -- I will let Myself be clearly seen by him and will make Myself real to him. (Amp)
  5. Heb 12:2--Jesus, the Living Word, through the written word, is the Author (Originator) and Finisher (Perfecter) of our faith.
    - a. The Living Word, through the written word, persuades us of unseen realities. Thus, He is the source of our faith.
    - b. The faith or persuasion that is produced by the word of God will always activate the power of God to cause to come into manifestation, to become visible, what God has provided for us through redemption. In other words, the Lord will make visible the unseen realities we already possess through redemption. He is therefore the Finisher of our faith.
    - c. The Lord will also perfect that which is lacking in our faith through His word.
- D. If you are going to develop strong faith to receive the visible results of redemption, you must take time to meditate in God's word. But, there are certain attitudes and actions you must develop as well.
1. You must realize that faith to receive is not a formula. It is confidence in a Person -- God Almighty who cannot lie and who is faithful to keep His word. I John 5:14,15
    - a. Abraham was fully persuaded that what God had spoken He would bring to pass. Rom 14:19-21
    - b. We hear someone give a testimony about how they were healed -- a man with a cancerous growth on his face looked into mirror everyday and said: God is working in me both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Phil 2:13
      1. This man did that because he read in his Bible that God was working His good pleasure in him. Healing is God's good pleasure. The man became persuaded that God was doing what He said. The man acted on God's word by speaking it out. The power of God brought visible results.
      2. We hear that testimony and think: I'll do that, too. We do it because it worked for him. Our confidence is in him and his story. But, that man has no power to bring anything to pass in our lives, and nothing happens.
  2. You must settle it in your mind and heart: If this does not work, it is because of human failure, not

because Almighty God failed to keep His word.

- a. When this doesn't work, people often respond with: I know I had faith. I did everything the preacher told me to do and it didn't work. Therefore, God must have a higher purpose in not answering my prayer.
  - b. That can't be so for several reasons.
    1. Nowhere in the Bible does God ever say, "I may not always keep my word because I have a higher purpose in mind". In fact, the opposite is true. God always keeps His word when people meet the conditions He sets, namely, faith.
    2. If you did everything the Bible says to do and it didn't work, then Jesus told a lie, because He said that if you believe you've got something before you see it, you'll see it. Mark 11:24
    3. If God sometimes doesn't keep His word because in His sovereign purposes He sees a better way, then you could never have faith (confidence) to receive anything because you'd always be wondering, what if this is one of those times when God has decided not to keep His word!?!?
  3. You must be determined to persevere. If faith to receive doesn't work for you at first, just keep at it -- feeding your faith, asking the Lord to perfect what is lacking in your faith.
    - a. Luke 18:1-8--Jesus told a parable about a woman who persisted until she got what she needed.
      1. Jesus related it to the kind of faith He wants to find on earth when He returns -- a faith that won't be denied.
      2. This doesn't mean God denies us. Other obstacles work to deny us -- our own unbelief, our failure to walk in love, the devil, etc.
    - b. Matt 17:20,21--When the disciples were unable to cast a devil out of a boy, Jesus told them it was because of their unbelief.
      1. He told them that such unbelief only leaves with prayer and fasting, or setting aside time to seek God.
      2. When we link this verse with other statements about where faith comes from, we can see that we seek God through His word which is the source of faith.
  4. You must be determined to cast down every thought and emotion that rises up to challenge the word of God. II Cor 10:5
    - a. You must decide that you are only going to allow thoughts that agree with God's word to remain in your mind.
    - b. Luke 5:1-5--Peter had all kinds of evidence which was contrary to God's word.
      1. He had sight: no visible fish. He had logic: He was a professional fisherman. Jesus was a carpenter, preacher. He had emotions: the frustration of no success combine with physical fatigue.
      2. Yet, he shut it all down, cast it all down with -- at thy word I will act.
- E. Conclusion: If we are going to walk in the reality of redemption we must become fully persuaded of invisible realities, so much so that we are not moved by what we see or feel.
1. That will happen only when we decide -- Let God be true and every bit of contrary evidence a lie. Num 23:19
  2. That will happen only as we take time to meditate in God's word and allow Him to persuade us by showing us Himself and His faithfulness.