

JESUS, PERFECTER OF OUR FAITH

(No. 1262 – 3/3/25 – Sermon Online Zoom)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Review “It’s All About Faith”

B. Faith doesn’t come from us; it comes from Jesus the Author:

1. **Heb. 12:1-2:** *¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ²Let us fix our eyes on **Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith**, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*
2. **Rom. 12:3:** *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with **the measure of faith God has given you.***
3. **Eph. 2:8-9:** *⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through **faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—**⁹not by works, so that no one can boast.*

C. God doesn’t expect us to perfect our own faith; Jesus is the Perfecter!

D. We saw last week that we can be weak or lacking in faith. How do we increase our faith? How can we make sure our faith is growing?

2 Thess. 1:3: *We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because **your faith is growing more and more**, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.*

II. JESUS IS ALWAYS DEVELOPING OUR FAITH

- A. **Mat. 14:22-31:** *²²Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowd. ²³After He had dismissed them, He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone, ²⁴but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. ²⁵During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw Him*

walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. ²⁷But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ²⁸"Lord, if it's You," Peter replied, "tell me to come to You on the water." ²⁹"Come," He said. Then **Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.** ³⁰But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, **beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"** ³¹**Immediately Jesus reached out His hand and caught him.** "You of little faith," He said, "**why did you doubt?**"

- B. **John 6:3-6:** ³Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with His disciples. ⁴The Jewish Passover Feast was near. ⁵When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶**He asked this only to test him, for He already had in mind what He was going to do.**
- C. Seeing Jesus' miracles helps us to put our faith in the power of God
 - 1. **John 2:11:** This, the first of His miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed His glory, and **His disciples put their faith in Him.**
 - 2. **1 Cor. 2:4-5:** ⁴My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a **demonstration of the Spirit's power,** ⁵**SO THAT your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.**
- D. Jesus meets us where we are:

John 20:24-29: ²⁴Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into His side, **I will not believe it.**" ²⁶A week later His disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷Then **He said to Thomas,** "Put your finger here; see My hands. Reach out your hand and put it into My side. **Stop doubting and believe.**" ²⁸Thomas said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

- E. Jesus prays for our faith!

Luke 22:31-32: ³¹“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. ³²But **I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail.** And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

III. WE MUST DO OUR PART IF WE WANT TO GROW IN FAITH

- A. Saturate yourself in the Word of God and listen to the voice of God:

Rom. 10:17 (NKJV): *So then, **faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*** [“Go, doubting nothing” testimony]

- B. Pray in the Spirit:

Jude 20 (NKJV): *But you, beloved, **building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.***

- C. Fix your eyes on Jesus:

Heb. 12:2: *Let us **fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith,** who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

- D. Do whatever He tells you:

1. **John 2:1-5:** ¹*On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.* ²*Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.* ³*And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”* ⁴*Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”* ⁵*His mother said to the servants, “**Whatever He says to you, do it.**”*
2. **James 2:14-26:** ¹⁴*What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?* ¹⁵*Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food.* ¹⁶*If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?* ¹⁷*In the same way, **faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*** ¹⁸*But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by*

what I do. ¹⁹You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. ²⁰You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

²¹Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?

²²You see that **his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.**

²³And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God's friend. ²⁴You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. ²⁵In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? ²⁶As the body without the spirit is dead, so **faith without deeds is dead.**

3. Hebrews 11 tells what each hero *did* “by faith” (Abel offered, Noah built, Abraham obeyed and went and offered Isaac, Moses left Egypt, etc.).
 4. Faith is a “walk” (2 Cor. 5:7) that requires us to “walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham” (Rom. 4:12).
- E. Note: Jesus usually told people to *do* something (often strange things that made no sense to the natural mind!):
1. Ten lepers (**Luke 17:14**): *When He saw them, He said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.*
 2. Blind man (**John 9:7**): **“Go,”** He told him, **“Wash in the Pool of Siloam”** (this word means Sent). **So, the man went and washed, and came home seeing.**
 3. Man with a shriveled hand (**Mat. 12:13**): *Then He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” So, he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other.*
 4. Lazarus’ tomb (**John 11:38-40**): ³⁸Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹**“Take away the stone,”** He said. **“But, Lord,”** said Martha, the sister of the dead man, **“by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”** ⁴⁰Then Jesus said, **“Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”**

IV. CONCLUSION

- A. It's all about faith!
- B. Jesus is very interested in our faith—He gave us our faith, and He will perfect it!
- C. Even when we doubt or lack faith, He is always working and praying so that our faith will grow stronger.
- D. We must do our part—study the Word of God, listen to His voice, pray in the Spirit, fix our eyes on Jesus, and do whatever He tells us to do.
- E. Faithful is the One who called us, and He will do it!