

THE POWER OF FAITH

“Everyone born of God has overcome the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God” (1 John 5:4, 5).

“Faith is the victory” says both scripture and song. There is power in faith! What are its benefits?

1. By faith we are made right with our Maker. Violence, lawlessness and filth have been glorified as the norm for human behavior through a variety of media. Many, if not most, people are unconcerned with their relationship with the Lord. There is a basic indifference to the laws of God. There is little respect for authority on any level. The way to awaken our hearts and minds to a value of right relationships is through faith in the Lord Jesus.

2. By faith we grasp and understand the promises of God. That’s because we have confidence in the One who keeps His promises. A few of these promises include:

“Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.” So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” (Heb. 13:5, 6).

Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ ... nothing in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:35, 39).

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. (Eph. 3:20).

3. By faith we live daily overcoming the trials of life. The “heroes of faith” in Hebrews 11 show us what it means to walk by faith in God. “By faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; they shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength, and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.” (Heb. 11:32-34).

Faith put Daniel in the lion’s den. Faith caused Stephen to be stoned to death, and John to be beheaded. They didn’t all receive a happy ending on earth, but they lived by faith!

4. By faith we live with God forevermore. Death, ultimately, comes to all. But it is not the final end, for we go to live with Him. “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Phil. 1:21).

- Harvey M. Starling, *The Heightner*, Fairburn, GA (*Bulletin Digest*) -

Faith is daring the soul to go beyond what the eyes can see.

News & Notes

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE: Paige Walker (Oak Glen), granddaughter of Beulah Walker. Congratulations and best wishes to Paige.

REQUEST FOR PRAYERS: Continue to remember Dave Exline (Hanoverton congregation) in prayer and his serious health issues.

SHUT-INS: CROSSROADS: Sarah Miller. **VALLEY OAKS CARE CENTER:** Fred Larrimore, (Room 210). **IN FLORIDA:** Ilene Rayl, 1745 Pointe West Way, Vero Beach, FL 32966.

What Will You Take With You?

Your home is flooding because the river near you has burst its banks. A small rescue boat is waiting outside while you gather a few precious belongings. What will you take with you?

A forest fire rages and races toward your home in a hot dry area. You have 10 minutes to grab whatever you can and safely get out of the danger zone. What will you choose to take with you? What would you latch onto? Family photos? Important documents? Money under the mattress? These would be good and logical choices. You would be wise to save all the valuables that you could for later.

However, when the Lord returns, we will not have time to grab anything, fix anything or change anything, as it will all happen in the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:52). We will also not take anything with us (1 Timothy 6:7). In the past, we have said that we will take our record of life with us, but in reality, God holds those records (Revelation 20:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10). So what is the point of this lesson? Be faithful every day. Be prepared to leave this world every day.

- Rick Laing, Austin, TX (via *Bulletin Digest*) -

The Basis of Victory

The early church faced a world blanketed by paganism. Born in a small rather insignificant country, it expanded its influence throughout the civilized world. The spread of Christianity against impossible odds was accomplished to the amazement of world historians. Edward Gibbon wrote *The Decline of the Roman Empire*. He, an agnostic, explains the success of Christianity in these words: (1) the intense **zeal** of Christians (2) their **doctrine** of a future life (3) their claim for **miracles** (4) their pure **morality** (5) the **unity** and **discipline** of early Christians. Many years later a modern historian said that they “out-lived,” “out-thought,” and “out-died” their pagan contemporaries. The power of God was felt in those early years. It could still change our world if we were as committed and zealous to “out-live” and “out-think” or as to “out-die” those in the world about us. We must live above the world’s standards. We must be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We must face the hereafter in hope with peace in our hearts. We are different because He was different. May we unite in allowing the world to see that difference. Opposition only spurred the cause of Christ forward, but indifference within His body can and has crushed its rate of growth.

- John Holland, via *Bulletin Digest* -