

to ensure that through my example of prayer and love my descendants and others may see Christ in me. I want them to follow in the path of joy and peace that I have known in my Christian life. In the fullness of time they will follow me to be with God forever.

Keith Honeyman (Western Cape, South Africa)

<http://devotional.upperroom.org/devotionals/2013-10-19>

News:

Kevin and Becky Cavasos' daughter Levina has thyroid cancer and has begun treatments. Kevin is Mike Cavasos' brother.

Sandy Cavasos is receiving further treatments for generating lumbar discs. October 25 is the Fall get-together at the Cunninghams. Around 6 P.M. until they're tired of us.

Prayer List:

Healing: Jerry Robinson's mother Norma. Mike and Sandy Cavasos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.

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<http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>



Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

20 October 2013

Topics

A.M. Bible Class: What About Cornelius?

Acts 10

A.M. Lesson: Abraham Justified by Faith

Romans 4

P.M. Lesson: Charms, Spells and Astrology

Isaiah 47

Wednesday: Elijah and Obadiah

1 Kings 18

Notes

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Ben Atchley: 428-2246

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Services

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

Ask In Faith, Without Doubting

Neil Short

In last Wednesday's class we noticed that both Elijah and a Phoenician widow had some serious doubts of God's character (1 Kings 17). Both individuals came to much stronger faith by the end of the chapter. The question arose about God's expectation that his people have faith that is doubt-free. This study seems to suggest that doubt-free faith is not at all an expectation of God's. It was suggested that struggling with doubt has a way of increasing our devotion to the Lord. Having doubts makes our choices for faithfulness all the more meaningful. No doubt = no valid choice*.

I was thinking about a Scripture that nobody suggested at the time. Does it apply to the above lesson? We should look at it. The passage is James 1:6.

Whoever asks shouldn't hesitate. They should ask in faith, without doubting. Whoever doubts is like the surf of the sea, tossed and turned by the wind (CEB).

This verse is frequently conscripted to support the claim that "asking without doubting" produces affirmative answers. The passage makes no such claim. All we need to do is closely examine what the passage actually says and doesn't say.

The passage does NOT say that "asking without doubting" gets you what you want. What it says is whoever asks should ask "without doubting."

Next, the kind of doubt that is a problem is one that results in no stability. This doubter will believe anything. He is double-minded (vs. 8). This kind of doubt isn't the kind of glimmer that lurks at the edges of one's faith. It's the kind of doubt a person has when he will believe anything!

Finally, there is a context to this prayer. It's a request for a specific thing: wisdom.

But anyone who needs wisdom should ask God, whose very nature is to give to everyone without a second thought, without keeping score. Wisdom will certainly be given to those who ask (James 1:5).

God is generous in giving wisdom to those who ask (see also, 1 Kings 3:9 = 1 Chronicles 1:10; Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 15:33; Ephesians 1:17). There are many requests I can make that I will not receive, no matter how doubt-free my faith (e.g., James 4:3).

Having doubts about one's faith is not a faith flaw. It goes with the territory of faith that is "the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, NRSV).

Is your faith solid enough for you to act on it. Do you believe in the "coming judgment" (Acts 24:25) with enough conviction that you will prepare for it?

* John Cunningham.

To Another Faith

Jim McGuiggan

What is "faith" doing in a list of miraculous spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11? Jim McGuiggan comments on that very question in his little commentary on the passage.

Wisdom or knowledge imparted miraculously, I can understand. But faith imparted miraculously? Faith here is plain ordinary faith! It cannot be otherwise. Even "wonder-working" faith is ordinary faith. But in this case,

we're obviously hearing of someone who is *characterized* by faith (which may or may not be associated with miracle-working, 13:2 & 13). Abraham was characterized by faith. All believers are aided by God to *give* (it's a grace – 2 Corinthians 9:8,14) but there are those who are *especially* marked by grace – Romans 12:8. Their ability to make money is honored by their ability to share the wealth they're blessed with. This special and deeper capacity for giving is a gift of God.

But why aren't all characterized by faith? Why aren't they all characterized by gracious giving? Wouldn't God want us all to be equally gifted? Presumably, if things were ideal. But they aren't. I don't know all of the elements involved in the Spirit's decision to give this gift or that to this person or that. I just know there's more in that than opening up someone's head and dropping it in there.

I'll finish with this. When Israel marched around the walls of Jericho and God knocked the walls down (Hebrews 11:30), did they have *miraculous* faith? When Rahab by faith welcomed the spies (11:31), did she have *non-miraculous* faith? When Israel by faith (11:29) passed through the Red Sea, did they have *miraculous* faith? When Moses by faith refused to be called Pharaoh's daughter's son (11:24) was that *non-miraculous* faith? Talk of "miraculous faith" is misleading at best. The gift mentioned in this passage may even have manifested itself in wonder-working (13:2).

Commentary on 1 Corinthians [Lubbock: Montex: Lubbock, 1984], 169-170.

Recite [these words that I am commanding you today] to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. (Deuteronomy 6:7 NRSV)

Legacy of Faith

Last year I celebrated the "threescore years and ten" spoken of in Psalm 90:10 (KJV). When I look in the mirror, I see with some regret my sagging muscles, wrinkled skin, and my gray balding head. I am reminded of the nostrums, balms, and guaranteed cures for these conditions that assail me from the screen of my TV and from the pages of newspapers and magazines. Temptation is there, but instead of trying to renovate the old, I observe with excitement and joy the vibrant, young extension of my life in my children and grandchildren. I do not mourn my gradually fading memory. Instead, I joyfully use my remaining God-given resources and spiritual gifts