

#71 THE DREAM.....

I am in a spiritual state of discouragement and depression. I am being tempted to give up in despair and defeat because I do not see the promises of God being fulfilled to my expectations. Someone comes up to me and takes my arm and leads me around a street corner. There I see waiting the answers to my prayers.

We must always remember that faith deals with the unseen realm, unseen to the natural eye. Yet at the right bend in the road, often just around the corner, will be the manifestation of our faith. There faith, hope and waiting will have completed their roles.

Our problem often in our spiritual walk and in this life of faith is again the danger of letting outward appearances discourage us. We run by faith, we believe by faith and we wait in faith. Time and circumstances tempt us to give up and stop running in faith. Faith is not a hyper-emotional feeling worked up by some preacher. Many so-called healings, spiritual manifestations and hyperventilations are no proof of faith or have no real substance in faith. Confessing, professing and constant quoting of Scripture is not a producer of faith either. Excitement, emotions and feelings may or may not follow genuine faith, but these are not faith.

Poor desperate souls have been told during some of these so-called healing services that they are healed by faith, and these souls get excited emotionally with wonderful tinglings only to go home and find to their great disappointment they are not healed. To add to this tragedy, they go back to be told by the same healer that they exercised unbelief and allowed Satan to rob them of their healing. My friends, when God heals He is not so petty to remove it because we fail and fall into sin or unbelief. He has better means of chastening us than holding a cruel stick of fear over our heads. Would to God He would use that cruel stick He is so often reputed to possess on the heads of those preachers who cause such harsh sufferings to misguided souls!

Even positive thinking is not faith! Often this counterfeit faith is used as a cure-all to obtain a good self image and positive thoughts about one's self. Positive thinking is good if it is based on the whole of God's Word and not on portions taken out of context to prove a point. Why, many will go to hell with a positive attitude that all is well with themselves and God, only to stand speechless at the Lord's judgment seat when sentenced to hell!

Positive thinking will not cover unconfessed and unrepented sin, nor will it work as magic to keep God off our backs so we can live selfishly, puffing up our egos with self-worth and esteem. There is not an ounce of good in any of us apart from God's grace and Christ's being lived in us. We are supposed to be losing our life according to Christ, not finding it. Christ said those who find their life will lose it, and that forever. The old man and the fleshly ways are to be put to death, not reformed!

Mental believing of God's Word is not faith either. Demons have that sort of belief yet are not saved. True faith is simple, but spiritual.

“Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen”
(Hebrews 11:1).

Hope is future. Assurance is the trust that waits for the unseen to be brought into the seeable realm. Faith sees into the unseen and holds firm that word or promise until God manifests it when, how and where He so desires. Any faith that seeks to bring about a result that is outside God's will, timing or glory will either be false, counterfeit or misguided. All this will lead to spiritual harm, not good. Faith

must not be used to commit the sins of covetousness and greed or materialism. Spiritual gifts and ministries have been and will be used at times by Christians to promote themselves and their own self-interests instead of God's glory. Such are bad stewards and will one day give an account for their robbery!

The faith that moves mountains is the same type of gift as true gifts of prophecy, words of wisdom and knowledge and discerning of spirits. It is given by and when the Holy Spirit so desires, and is not a twenty-four hour gift one uses as one pleases. These are different from the faith, wisdom, knowledge and discernment that one receives from growing in the knowledge of God's Word and from maturing in one's spiritual walk. We may grow in our faithfulness to God by learning of His faithfulness to us. The gift of faith is given to meet or solve a need, and is not to be had as our permanent possession. If we had a permanent gift of faith and healing, we could have cleared out the hospitals long ago! I have yet to meet such a gifted person, yet I have heard many claims to that fact.

I believe in all of the supernatural gifts, and know God moves through His people to use them. Yes, and perhaps He would accomplish more in and through His church, if the members of His body would yield increasingly to the cross-life. Our faith will grow as we walk and submit to the practical lordship of Jesus Christ. Then when mountain-moving faith is imparted it will flow out of us with or without an emotional experience. If just a small amount of this faith---as small as a mustard seed---can move a mountain, we will not have to work up any more in us by emotional excitements. God does not need our help in this faith, as it is given by Him and is His faith!