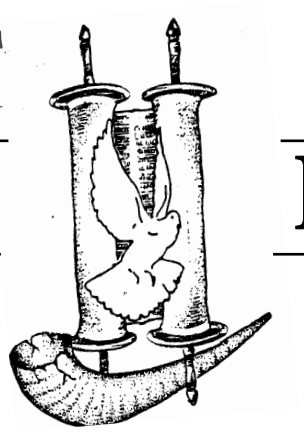
# GELOOF FAITH

## In Die Woord In The Word



**Geloof is uit die gehoor en die gehoor is deur die Woord van God Rom. 10:17**

**Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Rom. 10:17**



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# VOLKOME VERLOSSING

***Jesus was gewond sodat ons genees kon word.***

Om wedergebore te word is 'n buitengewone belangrike gebeurtenis. Tensy jy nie weer gebore is, kan jy nie die Koninkryk van God sien of binnegaan nie **(sien Joh. 3:3-5).** Dit is egter nie 'n eenmalige ondervinding nie; verlossing is eerder 'n voortgaande proses. Deel van verlossing is om gedoop te word. Ons wil nie 'n twispunt begin nie, maar jy kan nie weer gebore word sonder om gedoop te word nie. As jy egter gered wil word, is doop die sleutel in die proses, want **Hy wat glo en hom laat doop, sal gered word (Mark.16:16).**

Om gered te word beteken baie meer as om net jou siel vir die hemel reg te kry. Iemand het eenkeer gesê: "Die evangelistiese begrip van verlossing is om siele vooraf vir die hemel te verpak." Dit mag tot 'n mate so wees, maar verlossing het baie meer as slegs 'n vooraf verpakking vir die hemel.

Ons wil 'n gedeelte uit die Nuwe Testament ondersoek, waarin die skrywer die Griekse woord vir "om te red" gebruik, wat *sozo* is. Wanneer ons kyk waar hierdie woord in die Skrifte voorkom, sal dit ons 'n idee gee van wat in verlossing ingesluit is.

Die boek van Mattheus spreek oor Jesus se bediening vir die siekes, deur te sê: **"En die manne het almal wat ongesteld was, na Hom gebring;... en almal wat dit (Sy soom) aangeraak het, het gesond geword" (Matt.14:35-36).** Hierdie gedeelte spreek nie net oor die toestand van die siel nie; dit praat ook oor diegene wat siek is. Soveel as wat Jesus aangeraak het was volkome genees. Hoe volkome is ons verlossing?

Genesing en Verlossing

Laat ons na sommige plekke in die Skrif kyk waar die Griekse woord *sozo* – wat "verlossing" beteken – gebruik word. In die Evangelie van Markus, ontmoet Jesus 'n blinde man genaamd Bartimaeus, op die pad na Jericho (sien **Mark. 10:46-52). "En Jesus antwoord en sê vir hom: Wat wil jy hê moet Ek vir jou doen? En die blinde man sê vir Hom: Rabboeni, dat ek mag sien" (Mark. 10:51).**

Die blinde bedelaar Bartimaeus, het net een ding in sy gedagte gehad. Al wat hy wou hê was om te sien en dit is wat hy gekry het. **En Jesus sê vir hom: Gaan, jou geloof het jou gered. En dadelik het hy**

(Vervolg op bls. 2)

*(Vervolg vanaf bls. 1)*

**gesien en Jesus op die pad gevolg (vers 52).** Die letterlike Griekse vertaling van Jesus se woorde lees: "Jou geloof het jou gered". Dit is verlossing.

In **Luk.8: 43-48** lees ons oor die vrou wat aan bloedvloeiïng gely het. Sy het agter Jesus gekom en Hom aangeraak. Sy wou egter nie herken word nie, want volgens die Joodse wet, was enigeen met bloedvloeiïng onrein en het geen reg gehad om iemand aan te raak nie. Hierdie vrou was verleë, maar sy was so desperaad vir genesing dat sy die wet weerstaan het.

**En toe die vrou sien dat sy nie verborge gebly het nie, kom sy bewende en val voor Hom neer en vertel Hom voor die hele volk om watter rede sy Hom aangeraak het en hoe sy onmiddellik gesond geword het. En Hy sê vir haar: Hou goeie moed, dogter, jou geloof het jou gered. Gaan in vrede (Luk.8: 47-48).**
Hoe wonderlik! Om genees te word van beide blindheid en bloedvloeiïng is altwee dele van verlossing.

Offer Dank
Daar is geweldige potensiaal deur dankie te sê. Dit stel nie net die wonder werkende krag van God vry nie, maar ook nadat God se wonder werkende krag in werking gestel is, plaas danksegging die seël op die ontvangde seëninge.

**En toe Hy in 'n sekere dorp ingaan, kom tien melaatse manne Hom tegemoet, wat op 'n afstand bly staan het. En hulle het hul stem verhef en gesê: Jesus, Meester, wees ons barmhartig! En toe Hy hulle sien, sê Hy vir hulle: Gaan vertoon julle aan die priesters. En onderwyl hulle weggaan, het hulle rein geword. En een van hulle, toe hy sien dat hy gesond was, het omgedraai en God met 'n groot stem verheerlik. En hy het op sy aangesig neergeval by sy voete en Hom gedank. En hy was 'n Samaritaan. Toe antwoord Jesus en sê: Het tien nie rein geword nie? En waar is die nege? Was daar niemand onder hulle te vinde wat omgedraai het om God te verheerlik behalwe hierdie vreemdeling nie? En Hy sê vir hom: Staan op en gaan; jou geloof het jou gered (Luk. 17:12-19).**

Al tien melaatses was fisies genees. Iets ekstra het egter met die een wat dankie kom sê het gebeur. Jesus het gesê: "*Staan op en gaan; jou geloof het jou gered*". Die woord vir"*gered*" is in grieks *sozo* wat beteken "*om te red*". Weereens beteken dit feitlik altyd iets meer as slegs fisiese of tydelike voorsiening van God. Dit is die allesinsluitende woord vir verlossing.

Daar was een belangrike verskil tussen die melaatses. Nege was uitsluitlik fisies genees. Die tiende, wat terug gekom het om God te dank, was nie net fisies genees nie, maar ook geestelik – sy siel is gered. Hy is in 'n regte, ewige verhouding met God gebring. Die ander nege het gedeeltelike, tydelike seën ontvang; die tiende het volkome, permanente seën ontvang. Die verskil was die dank offer.

Jesus was Gewond sodat ons Genees kon word.
**Nogtans het Hý óns krankhede op Hom geneem, en óns smarte — dié het Hy gedra; maar óns het Hom gehou vir een wat geplaag, deur God geslaan en verdruk was. Maar Hy is ter wille van ons oortredinge deurboor, ter wille van ons ongeregtighede is Hy verbrysel; die straf wat vir ons die vrede aanbring, was op Hom, en deur sy wonde het daar vir ons genesing gekom (Jes. 53:4-5).**
Hierdie vertaling is nie letterlik nie en het baie gelowiges ontneem van hulle fisiese regte in Christus. Tog is daar geen twyfel aan die korrekte betekenis van die woorde nie. "*Krankhede*" beteken "*siektes*"; "*smarte*" beteken "*pyne*". Hulle is basiese Hebreeuse stam woorde, wat met die betekenis gebruik is in die dae van Moses en het vandag nog dieselfde betekenis. Dit word in die Skrif duidelik verklaar:
**En toe dit aand geword het, het hulle baie na Hom gebring, wat van duiwels besete**

*(Vervolg op Bl. 3)*

**was; en Hy het die geeste met 'n woord uitgedrywe; en almal wat ongesteld was, het Hy gesond gemaak,**
**sodat vervul sou word wat gespreek is deur Jesaja, die profeet, toe hy gesê het: Hy het ons krankhede op Hom geneem en ons siektes gedra (Matt.8:16-17).**

**Hy wat self ons sondes in sy liggaam op die kruishout gedra het, sodat ons die sondes kan afsterwe en vir die geregtigheid lewe; deur wie se wonde julle genees is (1Pet. 2:24).**

Ons sien dat Mattheus en Perus, wat albei Jode was en Hebreeus geken het, deur die Heilige Gees geïnspireer is, die regte betekenis vir hierdie woorde van Jesaja gegee het. As jy hierdie gedeeltes van Mattheus en Petrus saamvoeg, kry jy drie stellings uit Jesaja 53:4-5 oor die fisiese en geestelike gebiede. Fisiese gebied: Hy het ons krankhede op Hom geneem; Hy het ons siektes gedra; ons is genees. Geestelike gebied: Hy is terwille van ons oortredinge deurboor; Hy is verbrysel terwille van ons ongeregtighede; Die straf wat vir ons die vrede aanbring was op Hom.

Verwyder Versperings vir Genesing
Dikwels veroorsaak dinge in die harte en lewens van God se mense dat versperings teen genesing opgerig word.

Sewe algemene versperings is: 1) Onkunde van God se Woord (sien **Jes. 5:13; Hosea 4:6**); 2) Ongeloof (sien **Heb. 3:12-13**); 3) Onbelyde sonde (sien **Spr. 28:13**); 4) Haatdraendheid en onvergifnis teenoor ander (sien **Mark. 11:25-26**); 5) Betrokkenheid met die okkult (sien **Exodus 23:24-26**); 6) Onskriftuurlike verbonde bv. Vrymesselary (sien **Exodus 23:31-33**) en 7) Die invloed van 'n vloek (sien **Deut. 28:15-68**). Soms word siektes veroorsaak deur of die omgaan met die teenwoordigheid van bose geeste. Laat ons na net een voorbeeld uit die Evangelie van Lukas kyk.

**En toe die son ondergaan, het almal hulle siekes, mense met allerhande kwale, na Hom gebring, en Hy het een vir een van hulle die hande opgelê en hulle gesond gemaak. En duiwels het ook uit baie uitgegaan en geskreeu (Luk. 4:40-41).**

Wanneer die bonatuurlike mag van God in werking tree, kan bose geeste dit nie langer verdra nie; hulle moet uitkom.

Daar is verskillende maniere waar bose geeste met siektes geasosieer word. Daar is geeste van swakheid, pyn, kreupeles en dood, om net vier te noem. Jesus het 'n vrou teengekom wat inmekaargetrek was en nie regop kon staan nie. Eerder as om haar toestand as 'n fisiese siekte te behandel, het Hy gesê dat sy deur 'n gees van krankheid vir agtien jaar gebind was. Hy het haar toe van die gees verlos en sy het dadelik regop gestaan (sien **Luk. 13:11-13**).

Genesing vir Almal
**En toe dit aand geword het, het hulle baie na Hom gebring, wat van duiwels besete was; en Hy het die geeste met 'n woord uitgedrywe; en almal wat ongesteld was, het Hy gesond gemaak,**
**sodat vervul sou word wat gespreek is deur Jesaja, die profeet, toe hy gesê het: Hy het ons krankhede op Hom geneem en ons siektes gedra (Matt. 8:16-17).**

Mattheus gebruik twee woorde vir fisiese probleme: *"swakheid"* en *"siektes"*. Om tussen hulle te onderskei is swakhede – die dinge wat ons vatbaar voor is soos allergiese reaksies en by steke. Siektes kan ons definieer as werklike siektes soos cholera of griep.

Mattheus het geskryf dat die genesings bediening van Jesus die vervulling van Jesaja 53 was, beklemtoning dat Jesus *"almal genees"* het. Waarom? Omdat dit die ewige plan van God was, Hy het toe al ons siektes geneem en ons pyn gedra. Dit is goeie nuus! As die kerk dit werklik

geglo het, sou evangelisasie baie maklik gewees het.

In sommige van ons byeenkomste was meeste van die mense Moslems. Geweldig baie het gekom, sonder dat dit werklik geadverteer was. Waarom? Omdat ons vir die siekes gebid het en hulle is genees. Nie almal nie maar 'n hele paar. Die blindes het gesien, dowes het gehoor en verlamdes het geloop. Glo my, daar is geen probleem om 'n skare te kry wanneer genesings plaasvind. Dit is die nommer een metode in die Nuwe Testament om mense te lok.

## Skatkis

**In die begin het God die hemel en die aarde geskape (Gen.1:1).**

"In die begin", toe God begin het met Sy verstommende en wonderbaarlike skepping van die heelal, het dit glad nie soos die eindresultaat gelyk nie.

In Sy oneindige wysheid het Hy die een ding na die ander, soos 'n meester skilder, bygevoeg. Die een verfstreep na die ander bygevoeg om 'n meesterstuk te skep.

"In die begin" toe ons Christus aangeneem het, het Hy ons geneem soos geestelike vormlose stukke klei en het Hy stukkies weggeneem en stukkies bygevoeg en ons meer en meer na Sy beeld gevorm.

Ons kan nooit weet wat Hy ingedagte het en hoe Hy ons sal lei op die lewenspad nie. Ons weet egter dat Hy die werk wat Hy in ons begin het sal klaarmaak.

# UIT ONS KANTOOR

Dit lyk onmoontlik dat dit amper die helfte van die jaar is en dat die tyd so vinnig verby is. Dit dien as 'n wekroep vir ons om die tyd uit te koop soos die Woord van die Here ons vermaan om te doen. Ja ons leef in dae wat dit lyk asof "sonde en die bose in oorvloed" is, maar ons word deur God se Woord aangemoedig wat sê: **... waar die sonde meer geword het, het die genade nog meer oorvloedig geword (Rom. 5:20).** God se genade sal altyd vir ons genoeg wees maak nie saak wat se omstandighede in ons lewens ontstaan nie. Die Here het Sy kinders toegerus met elke stuk van die wapenrusting en elke wapen wat ons ooit nodig sal hê om geestelike oorlogvoering in hierdie "bose dae" uit te voer. Ons kan elke struikelblok in die Here oorwin, omdat Jesus ons die oorwinning gegee het. Hy het die wêreld, die vlees en die duiwel oorwin, en het die sleutels van die hel en die dood (Openb. 1:18). Ons hoef nie te vrees oor wat vandag mag gebeur nie of wat die toekoms inhou nie, omdat **Hy** die toekoms hou en ons in Sy hande is. Dit is waarom dit so belangrik is dat ons hierdie waarheid met die wat in vrees en onsekerheid leef moet deel, veral in hierdie dae van soveel onsekerheid in die wêreld. Dit is moeilik om jou voor te stel wat hierdie tyd op God se kalender moet lyk vir die wat nog nie gered is nie, wat nie die sekerheid het om die Here te ken en Sy beskerming, voorsiening en leiding te hê nie. Net soos Paulus, moet ons bid en vra dat deure vir ons geopen moet word om die wat nog nie gered is nie van Jesus te vertel. Die tyd is dringend, die tyd is reg, die tyd is nou, en dus moet ons die tyd uitkoop om siele gered te kry as gevolg van die "bose dae" wat ons nou teëkom.

Ek bid vir elkeen van julle vir God gegewe geleenthede om Jesus met die verlorenes te deel, en om werkers in Sy eindtyd oes van kosbare siele vir Sy Koninkryk te wees. Onthou om die tyd uit te koop, omdat ons nie die dag van Sy koms weet nie. Ons is steeds volstoom aan die gang, met alle hande aan boord, en julle sal net so verheug soos ons wees om die hoeveel literatuur te sien, wat die Goeie Nuus bevat, wat ons in die land en buite sy grense, op 'n gereelde basis, kan uitstuur. Dit doen ons harte goed, en ons gee altyd die dank aan die Here vir Sy leiding en bestuur en vir Sy krag vir elke dag. Ons loof Hom vir Sy getrouheid en ons dank julle dat julle so 'n belangrike deel is van wat Hy ons voor geroep het om vanuit die Stanger Christelike Sentrum te doen. Julle gebede, aanmoediging en ondersteuning op elke manier word werklik waardeer en maak alles moontlik. Dit voel egter dat om dankie te sê nie genoeg is nie, maar die Here ken ons harte en ons weet dat Hy by magte is om alle seëninge oorvloedig oor julle te maak. Baie liefdegroete van ons almal by die Sentrum,

*Meg en die Gebedspan*

# What is Faith?

The Bible tells us in the Book of Hebrews chapter 11 verse 1 what faith is. **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.** In the Amplified Bible this verse reads as follows; **Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title-deed) of the things (we) hope for, being the proof of things (we) do not see and the conviction of their reality- faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses.**

Simply put, our faith is the "matter" or "material" of the things we are hoping and praying for. It is the proof of things we have not yet seen and the certainty of their reality although we have not yet perceived them! Faith is the **substance**, the catalyst required of us by God so that He will bring those things hoped for into reality. But this faith must be directed towards God's ability to bring that "hope" to pass. Have faith in God! (Mark 11; 22). That is essential. In verse 6 of Hebrews chapter 11, an important truth is revealed; **But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.**

When His Apostles asked Jesus saying, **"Increase our faith",** we read in the Book of Matthew: **So the Lord said unto them .....for verily I say unto you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matt. 17:20.**

Jesus spoke this amazing promise to His disciples, and since Jesus **is the Truth** (John 14:6), we can be sure that He meant what He said, and that what He said is possible! The **truth** of His words is not the issue then, the real issue is, "how do we acquire the faith necessary to remove a mountain?"

Many people say that they do not have faith, or that their faith is not strong enough. They have some strange notion that faith is something that they have to whip up suddenly in a crisis, and that they fall far short of the requirement. Some frantically declare; "I believe! I believe!" and by the sheer anxiety in their voice you can tell that they are trying not to only convince themselves, but those around them as well. They enter a sort of struggle within themselves. But faith is not conjured up through hype; in fact faith is quite the opposite, because faith is simply **TO TRUST**. It is in fact, trusting your Heavenly Father to do what He has promised to do in His Word, if you abide by His conditions. It requires you to lean on Him completely, knowing that you can rely on Him and His promises in child like manner. This then, completely eliminates all the struggle of trying to work up "enough faith", acceptable to the Lord in your time of need, because trust is a place of **REST**, and not an act of **STRIVING!**

Jesus said in **Matt. 18:3-4: Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.**

Let us consider for a moment this TRUST or FAITH, which is completely different to head knowledge! You can only fully trust or have complete faith in your fellowman, husband, wife or parent when you know them personally and have found them to be reliable. You do not know ABOUT them, you know them intimately! You know, and are sure of their love for you and loyalty to you! To illustrate this important point, consider the following example. When my children were still at school, we all had lunch together every day. They would hurry home each day after school and burst into the house and make straight for the dining room table! There lunch was served and they tucked into it with great gusto after their hard day at school. This happened daily and was the most natural thing in the world. They would arrive with absolute assurance that there would be a meal waiting for them. We are quite sure that they never doubted for a moment that their lunch was awaiting them when they arrived! They just KNEW that there would be a meal and they looked forward to it! This is an example of practical **faith or trust**! Faith and trust in a father and mother who would see to it that a plate of food would be ready at the right time, and that their needs would be met. Why did it never occur to them to wonder, doubt or worry about whether or not their lunch would be there for them? ***Because they had learnt to have absolute trust in the parents who provided it for them.*** Why did they have such unwavering faith in their parents? Because they knew them and thus had the ASSURANCE of their love for them and the ASSURANCE that they would never disappoint neither would they let them down. They knew that if necessary, their parents would have gone without, so that they could eat. The Word teaches that unless we become as little children we will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matt. 19:14)

A child finds it easy to simply believe and **trust** his father's word and promise, and yet an earthly father who is a sinner may still tell a lie, but God's Word and His promises are infallible because He is infallible, they are everlasting, because He is everlasting, and He and His Word are one. Father God tells us in His Word that He is not a man that He should lie! (Num. 23:19)

We as Christians know that Christianity is not a 'religion' (like Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other world religions), **but is a personal relationship with Father God, our Heavenly Father, made possible only through Jesus Christ our Lord.** When we receive Jesus as our personal Saviour, God becomes our Heavenly Father and Jesus said we were to pray saying 'Our Father' (Matt. 6:9) As Born again Christians, we have a Father/child relationship. It is a loving personal relationship. In a physical relationship between an earthly father and his child, the love of his earthly father; (regardless of how deep and sincere it may be) is, at best only a shadow of the immensity of God's Great love for, and His faithfulness towards every child of His! We have only to consider the incredibly high price Father God paid in giving His only begotten Son to the world, to die such a terrible death on the Cross at Calvary, so that you and I can become His children through that wonderful work of reconciliation! What unfathomable love! John 3:16 tells us **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

Everyone needs to read our book "The Lord's Table and Healing" for a fuller understanding of the great love and provision of our Heavenly Father, and the costly price that only Jesus the Lamb of God could pay for you and for me. WHAT GREAT LOVE! The child learns this love by knowing his parents as they spend years living together and spending time together. In this way he gets to know his parents intimately. This relationship of absolute trust or faith does not take place overnight; it comes about as a result of living together and walking the same road. It comes about through learning by experience the reliability and dependability of the parents. The results however are absolutely wonderful in the long run when that child displays an unwavering trust and faith in his parents. So it is with our Heavenly Father, there is no easier or quicker way of developing faith or trust in Him! There is no instant recipe. Faith comes by getting to KNOW Him through *spending time* with Him and *walking* with Him. This is done by reading His Word and in prayer, which is communication with God the Father in the name of Jesus. This will build up our trust in Him so that we will never waver in our faith regarding His promises.

**What Faith is not**

Now that we have established what faith is, let us consider what it is NOT. Faith we have established as being trust, and trust comes from the heart. Faith is not simply believing with the mind. Belief is not Faith until action accompanies it..

Since 1979 this ministry has brought us into contact with many people who confess to being believers - people who say that they "believe", but let us look at what James 2:19 has to say. **Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble...**

The devil and demons believe all about God, but they do not act upon His word!

It is acting upon what we believe that makes us true believers! "Believe" in this sense is a verb. If you are told that there is a bomb in your house, you would not just keep sitting in your chair "believing" that what you had heard was true, because if you ***truly*** believed what you had been told, you would **act** upon what you **believe** by evacuating the house as quickly as possible!! Faith is acting upon what you believe. Faith without action is dead according to James 2:17. It may be that the action is just "standing" in faith, as we are exhorted to do in Eph. 6:13 — **and having done all, to stand!**

We have often been asked by someone to pray for healing for a loved one whom they describe as being "a real believer", yet when we speak to the sick person personally, we discover that he may well be a regular church goer, who believes that God exists and that Jesus Christ came to this earth and commanded us to love our neighbour, but that is about the sum total of what he believes! You see, thousands of non Christians also believe this, but it does not make believers of them. Believers are those who totally and completely **TRUST** in Father God and His Son Jesus Christ. Trust them to answer their prayers according to the promises in God's Word.

**How is Faith obtained?**

The Word of God tells us in Ephesians 2:8: **For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:** In other words this scripture is saying that it is because of the grace of God that we were saved, and that this salvation became ours through FAITH, however the faith that was essential for our salvation, was not even of our own merit, it was a gift of God.

In Eph. 2:8-9: **For by grace are ye saved**

**through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.** God actually gives the measure of faith by which we can believe for our salvation!The way in which our Heavenly Father actuates this "God-given-faith" in us, is through His Living Word – the Bible. It is after all through His Word that we realised we were sinners in need of a Saviour, and that God loves us with an everlasting love that leads us to repentance. The Bible is God's chosen method, and there is no other way to obtain faith in Him.

Each one of us, who is born again of the Spirit of God, begins our new life in Jesus with a measure of faith which is a gift from God. So no one can say that they do not have any faith, because this would contradict God's Word.

Romans 12:3 tells us that **everyone** who is born again through having accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and Lord, has a God given measure of faith. **For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.** Remember that Paul was writing to the Church of Rome, the Body of Christ. If you are a member of His Body here on earth, you have "the measure of faith", just as does every other child of God. Remember, God does not have favourites, and because of this He gives to each one of us an equal measure of faith. This faith is a gift of God to you and to me.

But this faith is actually like a seed which has been planted in our heart by the Holy Spirit and then has to be fed and watered with the Word of God so that it can grow big and strong, for us to really be able to trust God fully. Once again emphasis is laid on the knowledge of the Word by which we build our relationship with our Heavenly Father, and by which faith increases.

In Romans 10:17 we read: "**So then faith** (trust) **comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.** It follows therefore that our faith in our Heavenly Father comes and grows stronger by hearing and reading His Word on a regular basis, and then acting on it and discovering that it can be relied upon! As you read the Word, it is God actually speaking to YOU! Although you are using your eyes to read, your ears are hearing the voice of your Heavenly Father as He speaks to you through His Word. His Words are Spirit, Life and they are Truth (John 17:17 and John 6:63), therefore they feed your spirit man and in doing so your faith grows.

We cannot pray for more faith or stronger faith; we must spend more time in the Word of God for our faith to grow. As we read the TRUTH of our Almighty God, of His care and provision for all those who love Him, and how He worked miracles throughout the centuries in the lives of those who put their trust in Him and believed Him, we will become aware of His faithfulness, and our trust will increase. His Word tells us in Hebrews **13:8: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, end forever. Mal. 3:6: For I am the Lord, I do not change.**

**Why do I need Faith?**

The Bible tells us very clearly that without faith it is impossible to please God. We read this in **Heb. 11:6. But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.**

It is quite clear then that we please God by displaying our faith in Him and His ability, and conversely we grieve the heart of Father God when we display a lack of faith. Jesus always commended those who came to Him in faith when requesting healing. He would say, "Your faith has made you whole" or "according to your faith so be it unto you." And yet we often come to our Heavenly Father with doubt in our heart, saying: "Heavenly Father, I know that You love me, because You sent Jesus, Your only Begotten Son, who paid for my sin on the Cross, and you bless and provide for me every day, yet I do not have enough faith or trust to believe that You are going to heal this illness."

The most important reason then for desiring to have faith, is that it pleases God. It delights Him when we show Him that we trust Him in all circumstances. He rewards our faith in Him. That is why the devil attacks our faith and tries to undermine our trust in Him. We are exhorted to "fight the good fight of faith". Our faith is the devil's target, and so when we choose to believe God's Word and display a trust in Him, we overcome the enemy.

On the other hand the Word also tells us that the man who wavers when he asks of the Lord, will not receive anything at all! James 1:6-8: **But let him ask in faith, with no doubting for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**

Wavering shows a lack of faith and double mindedness and is an insult to the Mighty God who is also our loving Heavenly Father. We must come to God in faith, trusting Him completely, when we pray: **For we walk by faith, not by sight. (Cor. 5:7).** The Word of God also tells us in **Rom 14:23 ……. for what soever *is* not of faith is sin.**

**According to your Faith**

An equally important reason for having faith is

because God desires to bless us and answer our prayers, and He only responds to prayers prayed in faith, trusting Him. We read in Matt. 13: 58: **And He** (Jesus) **did not many mighty works there** (Nazareth) **because of their unbelief.**

The Bible speaks of different kinds of faith.

In Matt. 6:30 Jesus speaks of LITTLE FAITH.

We read in Matt. 8:10 where He speaks of GREAT FAITH.

In Mark 4:40 He talks of NO FAITH.

In Luke 12:28 we read of SMALL FAITH.

Stephen, we read in Acts 6:5, was FULL OF FAITH.

UNFEIGNED FAITH, 2Tim.1:5

In 2 Thessalonians, Paul speaks of GROWING FAITH.

When praying for people, Jesus always commented on their faith. In the book of Matthew we read the following account of the centurion who actually caused the Son of God to MARVEL because of his faith!! **Matt. 8:5-10: And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man,* Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it.* When Jesus heard *it,* He marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**

It is amazing that it was often those other than His disciples who displayed more faith in Him. This was certainly the case with the Canaanite woman whom we read about in **Matt.15:22-28: And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, help me. But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.**

In the case of Jesus cleansing the ten lepers, to the one who came back to thank Him, **Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. Luke 17:17-19.**

Then there is the wonderful account of the woman with the issue of blood who was determined to get to Jesus. We learn the lesson of her faith in the Book of Matthew.

**And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *Him,* and touched the hem of His garment: For she said within herself, If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned Him about, and when He saw her, He said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. (Matt. 9:20-22).**

Faith is determined, it is persistent, it is focused, it is unwavering, and it knows that Jesus is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

Such was the faith of blind Bartimaeus who believed that Jesus was the promised Son of David, the Messiah, and grabbed at his chance of a miracle when he heard He had come to Jericho where he lived. Although he could not see Jesus, Bartimaeus was determined to receive his sight, and persisted until he had His attention! We read this wonderful account of his unwavering faith in **Mark 10:46-52 : And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me.**

**And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.**