**We Walk by Faith, Not by Sight**

**Theme:** Learning to live by faith.

**Text: 1 Corinthians 2:11-14 (NLT)** No one can know what anyone else is really thinking except that person alone, and no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. {12} And God has actually given us his Spirit (not the world's spirit) so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us. {13} When we tell you this, we do not use words of human wisdom. We speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths. {14} But people who aren't Christians can't understand these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them because only those who have the Spirit can understand what the Spirit means.

Herein lies the difficulty that we face when we come to Christ. Having not grown-up thinking in spiritual terms we are governed only by what we can understand with our five senses. Now that we are Christians, we must learn to think like God thinks which takes place as we renew our mind through the power of His written Word (the Bible). While this may seem a bit confusing at first, I assure you that it will become much easier as you grow in your new life with God.

**Isaiah 55:8-9 (NLT)** "My thoughts are completely different from yours," says the LORD. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. {9} For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

God’s Kingdom operates upon the language of love and faith. As believers, we must learn to walk by what God’s Word tells us rather than the dictates of our natural senses. Seeing is not believing, but rather believing will cause you to see.

**2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)** For we walk by faith, not by sight.

**(NLT)** That is why we live by believing and not by seeing.

**I. Defining Faith**

 **A. To walk by faith we must first know what faith is.**

 **Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

 **(GWT)** Faith assures us of things we expect and convinces us of the existence of things we cannot see.

 **(Amplified Bible)** Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) **of the things [we] do not see** and the conviction of their reality **[faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses.].**

 **B. Faith takes hold of the unseen realities of God’s promises and brings them into the natural physical material realm.**

 **1.** We cannot see God with our physical eyes, yet by faith we lift our voices and hands in prayer to Him.

 **2.** We cannot see heaven with our physical eyes, yet we are convinced of its reality by hearing what God’s written word declares about it. This moves us to live with the expectant hope of eternity.

**II. The Eye of Faith**

 **A. Faith perceives as real fact what is not revealed to the senses.**

 **1.** The human mind has been conditioned to believe that seeing is believing. Yet our senses are not trustworthy, as they can easily be deceive.

 **2.** Illusionists make a living by deceiving the human senses. They are simply using slight of hand to create the illusion that something physically impossible is actually taking place.

 **3.** Our eyes and see the woman being sawn in half, and then joined back together. Our mind knows that this is not possible, yet our eyes try to convince us that it actually happened.

 **4.** The airplane pilot who refuses to believe what their instruments is telling them may eventually crash and burn. A pilot who is flying at 50,000 feet must learn to rely upon the information that their instruments are telling them, not just their eyes and ears.

 **5.** Faith turns our dreams into reality. Dreams have no substance, yet faith gives reality or substance to our dreams.

**B. Faith is seeing the world and our circumstances through the eyes of God’s promises, rather than what our senses are telling us.**

 **1. Our senses tell us that we have no money, yet we choose to declare by faith.**

 **Psalms 23:1-2 (NKJV)** The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. {2} He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

 **2.** **Our senses tempt us to fear the future, and those who may rise up against us, yet we can boldly say.**

 **Psalms 23:4-5 (NKJV)** Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. {5} You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

 **3. At times we are faced with circumstances that would cause us to imagine that our situation is simply hopeless. Yet as we act upon God’s promises we are encouraged with great confidence and hope so that we can confess.**

 **Romans 8:31-39 (NKJV)** What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? {32} He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? {33} Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. {34} Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. {35} Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? {36} As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." {37} Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. {38} For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, {39} nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

 **C. Our circumstances can be changed in a moment.**

 **2 Corinthians 4:18 (NKJV)** while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. **For the things which are seen are temporary,** but the things which are not seen are eternal.

 **(NLT)** So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.

 **(NCV)** We set our eyes not on what we see but on what we cannot see. What we see will last only a short time, but what we cannot see will last forever.

**III. Faith comes by hearing, faith is released by doing.**

1. **Faith that will not act is not faith at all.**

 **James 2:18-26 (NCV)** Someone might say, “You have faith, but I have deeds.” Show me your faith without doing anything, and I will show you my faith by what I do. **19**You believe there is one God. Good! But the demons believe that, too, and they tremble with fear.**20**You foolish person! Must you be shown that faith that does nothing is worth nothing? **21**Abraham, our ancestor, was made right with God by what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. **22**So you see that Abraham’s faith and the things he did worked together. His faith was made perfect by what he did. **23**This shows the full meaning of the Scripture that says: “Abraham believed God, and God accepted Abraham’s faith, and that faith made him right with God.” And Abraham was called God’s friend. **24**So you see that people are made right with God by what they do, not by faith only.

**25**Another example is Rahab, a prostitute, who was made right with God by something she did. She welcomed the spies into her home and helped them escape by a different road.

**26**Just as a person’s body that does not have a spirit is dead, so faith that does nothing is dead!

 **1.** **How sad that hell will be filled with people who believe in God. They acknowledge that God exists yet live as if He does not.**

 **1 John 2:4 (NLT)** If someone says, "I belong to God," but doesn't obey God's commandments, that person is a liar and does not live in the truth.

 **James 1:22-25 (NKJV) But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.** {23} For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; {24} for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. {25} But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

 **2. Faith that does nothing is worth nothing.**

 **B. Mental assent is not the same as faith.**

* Mental assent says, “I believe in God,” yet will not seek His forgiveness.
* Mental assent prays for an answer from God yet speaks as if He did not hear.
* Mental assent simple acknowledges that God’s Word is true but has no strength to act.

 *“Mental assent implores God to heal, yet if the healing is not manifest in an instant, leaves that place of prayer without the slightest rejoicing for the answer.”* ***F F Bosworth, Christ the Healer***

**III. Faith Begins Where the Will of God is Known**

 **A. It is impossible to exercise faith where there is an uncertainty regarding God’s willingness to do what we are asking.**

 **James 1:5-7 (NKJV)** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. **6**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. **7**For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

* If we are not confident that what we are seeking from God is His will, then the moment we face any opposition to what we are asking we will be shaken and moved away from our confidence in His provision.

**Conclusion:** Faith is the language of God’s Kingdom, and the means of taking hold of all His promises. By grace we are saved by acting upon the message we hear in the preaching of the gospel of Christ. By faith we press toward the mark of the high calling of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The entire Christian life is to be one of constant daily trust in the supernatural provision, and wisdom of God, for as it is written, the just shall live by faith.