

CALL to PRAYER -

Thank God for the gift of faith.

Intro – Our *Definitions* series has us defining Faith. We began by dissecting faith and observing that saving faith has 3 main/essential ingredients (knowledge, conviction & trust - 2 Tim. 1:12). Last week we saw how to distinguish between true faith and false faith. *Saving Faith Works & Saving Faith Lasts*. True faith is alive & active; it does things. A dead faith is immobile/stagnant. A living faith also lasts...it endures to the end whereas a fake faith will run out of gas before the finish line. Today we are going to seek out the origin of faith. Where does faith come from? How do I acquire faith? Where do I get it and how do I get more of it if I already have some it? These are important questions (address some next week). Faith is a gift of God that His Spirit delivers by way of His Word. Faith is a gift that can grow. It can be exercised and cultivated, and believers are responsible to use their faith and expand their faith. The more you know of God the more you grow your faith. The more trials you endure the more opportunity for your faith to get stronger. But today we focus on the origin of faith – where does faith come from?

Rom. 10:8-17; Eph. 2:8-9 - Definitions 8 - Acquisition of Faith**WHERE DOES FAITH COME FROM?**

- Faith is a gift Saving faith is not self-generated; it is God given
 - Eph. 2:8 “...not of yourselves, it is the gift of God...”
 - Sinners are the RECIPIENTS of grace & faith.
 - Grace & faith are both gifts received.
- Ephesians 2:8-9 states this in three ways, so we won't miss this important detail.
 - 1] “...not of yourselves...” Eph. 2:8
 - Saving Faith is not innate. It does not originate within man
 - Our faith is our faith, but our personal faith is not personally made.
 - Saving faith is not self-made or self-generated.
 - If it is self-made then it is not a *saving faith*.
 - The heart of man is deceitful (Jer. 17:9) and not capable of creating saving faith.
 - Sinners don't make faith...or come up with faith...they are given faith.
 - 2] “...it is the gift of God...” Eph. 2:8
 - Heb. 12:2 *Jesus is the Author & Finisher of our faith* (patent /copyright)
 - God is our faiths Originator / Creator. He writes the first & last page
 - He begins it and completes it - Phil. 1:6 (Phil. 2:13)
 - Phil. 1:29
 - Our ability to believe is something that it granted to us (given)
 - Acts 18:27b - “...those who had believed through grace.”
 - James 1:17
 - Faith is a gift that comes down from the Father.
 - “I know not how this saving faith to me He did impart...” (#337)

- 3] *"not as a result of works so that no one can boast."* Eph. 2:9
 - No one should brag about their ability to believe
 - 1 Cor. 4:7 (1 Chron. 29:14)
 - Salvation is by the gift of faith precisely so no one can boast about it
 - S. Waldron *"Faith is like Gideon's 300"* Judges 7:2
 - God does it so we can't say, *"My own power has delivered me."*
 - 1 Cor. 1:29-31 (Psalm 40:16 / Psalm 115:1)
- Faith is having God's arm revealed to you so you can grab it.
 - Isaiah 53:1
 - Believing the message = The arm of the LORD being revealed
 - Peter's confession was not self-generated
 - Matt. 16:13-17
 - Matt. 11:27
 - 1 Cor. 12:3 *"...no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit."*
 - If you have confessed Christ, then thank the Triune God for your gift of faith!
 - Flesh and blood didn't reveal it or generate it...God gave it/revealed it!
- Faith is a gift God gives through His word
 - Romans 10:17
 - Faith is not innate. Faith comes to us from outside of us.
 - Faith comes to us....is delivered to us... by way of The Word of God
 - God's inspired words are imbedded with the power to create faith
 - People can't believe without hearing the gospel message
 - Rom. 10:13-14
 - 1 Cor. 1:21 - *"...the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe."*
 - Cornelius had an angel tell him where to hear the message that imparted faith
 - Acts 11:13-15
- *"He who has ears to hear let him hear."*
 - Jesus would often conclude a teaching with that phrase.
 - Can you hear the message?
 - Do you believe the message? Matt. 13:16 (Matt. 13:13-15 / Deut. 29:4)
- If we are to be people of faith, then we must be people of the Word
 - The Bible is imbedded with power to create and build faith
 - God's Word is the means and the delivery mechanism to give us faith
 - If we neglect His Word, then we cut off the avenue of faith
 - Our faith is proportioned by our saturation of God's Word
 - We are to meditate on it day and night (Psalm 1:1-3)
 - Islam call Christians, *"The people of the Book."* Are you?

HOW DO I INCREASE MY FAITH?

➤ Tune in next week to find out :-]

Hymn # 411 *"Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus"*