

FAITH – The key to fulfilling our full potential in Christ



**God has so much planned for each of our lives.
The Apostle Paul wrote,**

**“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,”
(Ephesians 3:20)**

In the book of Hebrews we read,

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)



God's desire is that all people would be saved through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and that as believers, we would all embrace the fullness of life that He has planned for each and every one of us

- **The bible makes it clear that when we walk with God we do not have to fear the future**



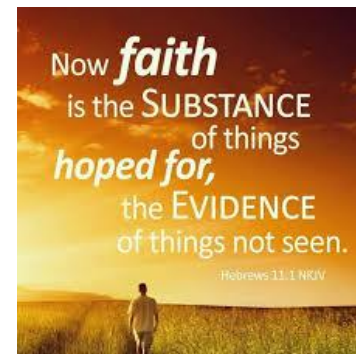
The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

- **We must simply believe what God has said to us in His word**

The angel Gabriel said to Mary the mother of Jesus, “For with God nothing will be impossible.” (Luke 1:37)

- **God has so much planned for our future as believers** – All God needs is our availability and willingness to trust Him as we step out in faith to do what He calls us to do in life
- It is as we step out by faith to do what God is calling us to do that we see the miracles in our life



**In the book of Hebrews we read,
“Now faith is the substance of things hoped
for, the evidence of things not seen.”
(Hebrews 11:1)**



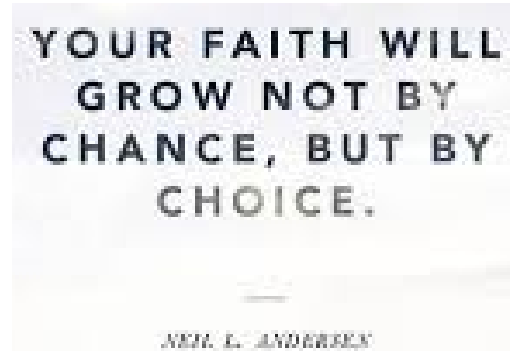
- We have one gift of life to make a great difference in this world for eternity. To store up treasures in heaven**

- As believers we have so much potential to make a great difference in this world in the times that we are now living in

Jesus Himself said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works that these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **If you ask anything in My name, I WILL DO IT.”** (John 14:12-14)

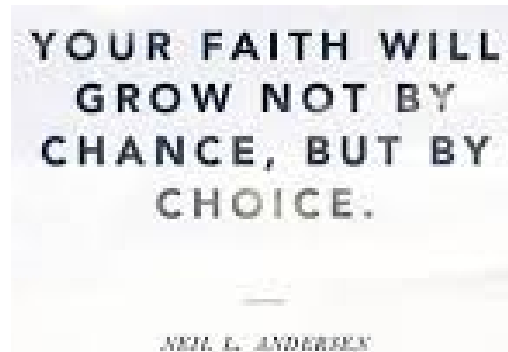


- However as Christians we are always *either growing* in our faith and walk with the Lord, or *regressing backwards*



- We are either pressing in and becoming stronger in our faith or drifting backwards in our walk with the Lord. We must continually choose to press forward against the spirit of the world in our walk with the Lord

- We will never just remain at the same level in our walk with the Lord.



- Just like our muscles grow stronger with exercise or weaken through a lack of exercise, so too we as Christians need to continually make the choice to actively grow in our faith through *ongoing* study of the Word of God, prayer and fellowship with other believers

This is why the Apostle Paul wrote, “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, *forgetting* those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”
(Philippians 3:12-14)



- God has so much in store for every believer's life
- But fear so often stops people from stepping out into all that God has planned for their life
- To realise our full potential in Christ we need to be people of faith



- Today I will be looking at how we can maintain a strong faith in a world which is becoming more and more ungodly and more opposed to the things of God

I will begin first quickly however by looking at some of the things that can undermine our faith



1) The negative things that people speak over our life

In Psalm One we read, “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.” (Psalm 1:1-2)

- **We must not allow the negative opinions of others to undermine our faith and to stop us from fulfilling God's plan for our life**



- Some people always see the glass as being half empty rather than being half full and can be wet blankets to our dreams
- This is why we need to be careful about who we share our dreams and plans with

- We see in the book of Numbers how a negative unbelieving report from just 10 spies sowed *fear and discouragement* into the congregation of the Children of Israel and stopped a whole generation from entering into the Promised Land. The 10 spies reported back as follows,

We Are Just Like
Grasshoppers

“The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”
(Numbers 13:32-33)

We see how this bad report broke the spirit of the Children of Israel and stopped them from RECEIVING what God has planned for their lives (A land flowing with milk and honey)



“And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in the wilderness!” (Numbers 14:2)

“Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us *to return to Egypt*?” **(Numbers 14:3)**

- So the negative words of others have the potential to greatly undermine our faith



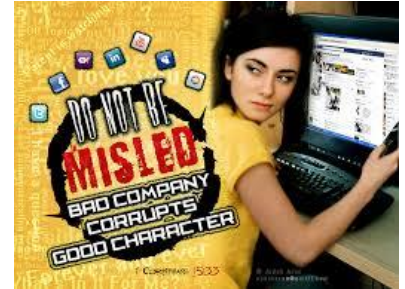
2) Continually looking at our problems and circumstances rather than to God's promises in His word

Jesus Himself said,



“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ Or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” **(Matthew 6:31-33)**

3) Allowing ungodly friendships to develop in our life. We become like the company that we keep and our Facebook contacts



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits.” (1 Corinthians 15:33)

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.” (Proverbs 12:26)

4) The negative things that we watch and listen to. With so many negative things going on in the world around us we must be selective about what we focus on in life



The Apostle Paul made it clear what we should focus on in life when he wrote, “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-meditate on these things.” (Philippians 4:8)

5) Continually looking back at our past failures.

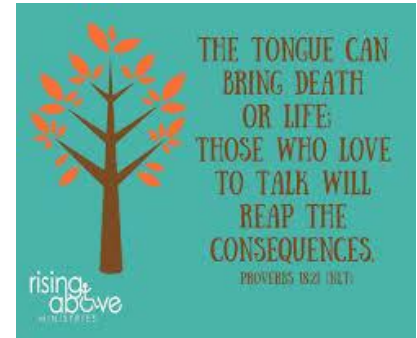
This can stop us from taking steps of faith to embrace new God given opportunities



In the book of Isaiah we read,

“Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” (Isaiah 43:18-19)

6) Continually speaking negative things over our future, especially when *under pressure* or when going through lengthy trials. Our words so often become self-fulfilling



In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.” (Proverbs 18:21) **AND**

7) Continually and willfully pursuing known sin in your life will greatly affect your faith and has the potential to draw you away from your walk with the Lord

Holding Fast to Christ ...Firm
To The End



Hebrews 3:7-14

In the book of Hebrews we read,
“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,” **(Hebrews 3:12-14)**

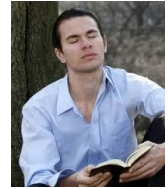
So how can we keep our faith continually built up so that we can appropriate all that God has planned for our life

1) We need to simply choose to build our lives based on God's promises in His word



The Apostle Paul wrote, “For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.” (2 Corinthians 1:20)

2) We need to continually build up our faith by **MEDITATING** on and speaking out God's Word



The LORD said to Joshua just before he was about to lead the Children of Israel into the Promised Land, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)

**The Apostle Paul wrote, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”
(Romans 10:17)**



**Jesus Himself said,
“If you abide in My word you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31-32)**

Consistently meditating on the word of God helps to keep our faith built up and strong. We need to frame our future by speaking what God says about our future in His Word

In the book of Jeremiah we read,

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29:11-13)



3) We need to simply CHOOSE to trust God at all times and in all circumstances and to allow Him to direct our steps in life

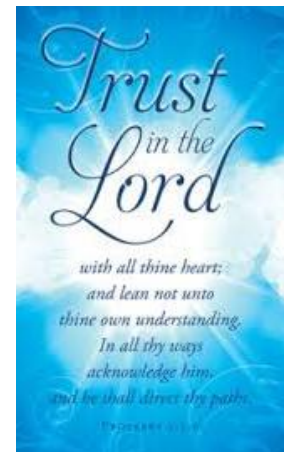
We must refuse to compromise when under pressure but continually follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The bible makes it clear that with God nothing will be impossible

Jesus Himself said,

“If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” (Mark 9:23)



**In the book of Proverbs we read,
“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And
lean not on your own understanding; In all
your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall
direct your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)**



- If we continually trust the Lord in every area of our life and allow Him to lead, we can be assured that all that God has planned for our life will come to pass – God will always make a way even where there seems no way



- But often His timing is different to ours. We need to learn to enjoy the journey in our walk with the Lord and to continually trust Him at all times

4) We need to continually pray in faith

- **We must refuse to be overwhelmed by our problems**



The Apostle Peter wrote,

“casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

- **We need to be quick to commit our problems and needs to the Lord in prayer. We have a God who both hears and answers our prayers**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
(Philippians 4:6-7)



- Jesus Himself promised that if we pray in faith we can be assured that our prayers will be answered (provided of course that they are in line with God's will for our life)



Jesus Himself said,

“Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.” **(Mark 11:22-23)**

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” **(Mark 11:24)**



The Apostle John wrote,

**“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him,
that if we ask anything according to His will, He
hears us. And if we know that He hears us,
whatever we ask, we know that we have the
petitions that we have asked of Him.**

(1 John 5:14-15)



The word of the LORD came to the Prophet Jeremiah in prison,

“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” (Jeremiah 33:3)



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5) We need to just accept the fact that when Jesus Christ is truly Lord of our life, that no matter what trials we may be going through in life, God is still in control AND will ultimately work things out for our own good.



Jesus Himself said,

“Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will.” **(Matthew 10:29)**

“Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.” **(Matthew 10:31)**

The Apostle Paul wrote, “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.” (Romans 8:28-30)



6) We need to simply accept the fact that when we do the will of God for our life, we can be assured that **EVERY** need in our life will be met

Jesus made this very clear when He said,

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” **(Matthew 6:33)**



As believers we can build our lives on this promise and live a life free from anxiety

7) We need to be continually in fellowship with other believers. We all need the support of other believers to remain strong in our faith



In the book of Hebrews we read,

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:23-25) **AND**

8) We need to win the battle for the mind by quickly replacing all wrong and negative thoughts with what God says about our life (Kingdom based thoughts) – Winning the battle for the mind is a great key to maintaining a strong faith



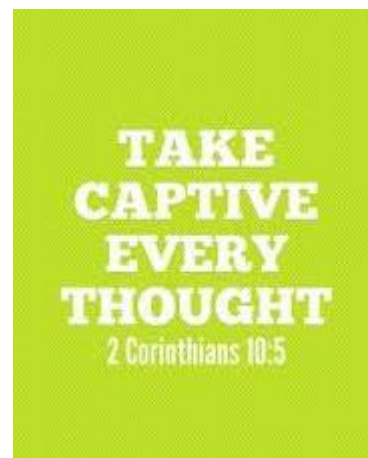
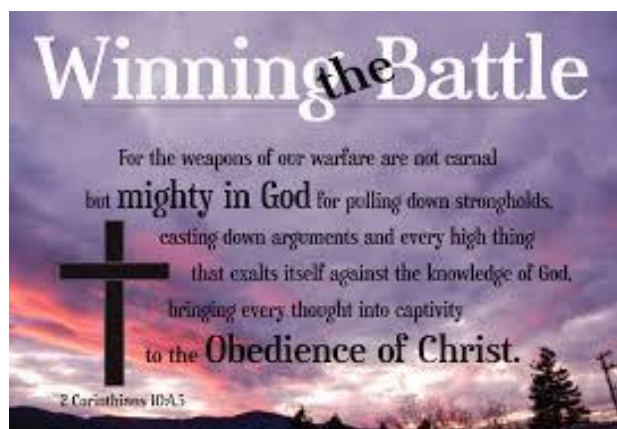
- The enemy will constantly bombard our mind with negative and discouraging thoughts to try and erode our faith



- We need to be quick to take all wrong thoughts captive before they take us captive and negatively affect our walk with the Lord

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” **(2 Corinthians 10:4-5)**



So in conclusion:

- May I encourage you to trust God at all times and to build your life on God's promises in His Word – To have faith in His ability to help you in time of need
- God has a great plan for our lives
- The bible makes it clear that what God starts in our lives as believers He will complete if we simply allow Him to direct our steps in life



King David wrote, “Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. **Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.” (Psalm 37:3-5)**



- *As we continue to put our faith and trust in the LORD*, we can be assured that what He has planned for our lives will come to pass



- He will help us to succeed and prosper in life.
- We can depend upon God's faithfulness at ALL times.
- So may I encourage you today to TRUST God at all times and in all circumstances so that all that He has planned for your life will unfold in the days to come.