



# ~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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## Worship Music

[Don't Give Up-  
Calling Glory](#)

[Teach Me To Love-  
Calling Glory](#)

[You Are I Am-Mercy Me](#)

## Prayer

Lord, I ask You to help me become so full of the Word of God that my entire being is affected by its life-giving truth. As I dwell on Your Word and let it live inside me, my heart will be filled with joy, my mind will be flooded with wisdom and understanding, and my mouth will be filled with songs. Lord, I know that Your Word will take me to the richest spiritual place I've ever known in my life. So help me make Your Word feel at home in my heart so I can start living each day like I've struck it spiritually rich. Being rich in Your agape love, give me wisdom, knowledge, intelligence and understanding from You, I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

## Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

“ Creative Preaching and Evangelism”

Bob Coy

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Cathe Laurie](#)

Chapel Flock.....text a prayer..... request telephone number.....

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Or----

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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1 WHEN THE queen of Sheba heard of [the constant connection of] the fame of Solomon with the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions (problems and riddles). 2 She came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels bearing spices, very much gold, and precious stones. When she had come to Solomon, she communed with him about all that was in her mind. 3 Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king which he failed to explain to her. 4 When the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom and skill, the house he had built, 5 The food of his table, the seating of his officials, the standing at attention of his servants, their apparel, his cupbearers, his ascent by which he went up to the house of the Lord [or the burnt offerings he sacrificed], she was breathless and overcome. 6 She said to the king, It was a true report I heard in my own land of your acts and sayings and wisdom. 7 I did not believe it until I came and my eyes had seen. Behold, the half was not told me. You have added wisdom and goodness exceeding the fame I heard. 8 Happy are your men! Happy are these your servants who stand continually before you, hearing your wisdom! 9 Blessed be the Lord your God, Who delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the Lord loved Israel forever, He made you king to execute justice and righteousness. 10 And she gave the king 120 talents of gold and of spices a very great store and precious stones. Never again came such abundance of spices as these the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon. 11 The navy also of Hiram brought from Ophir gold and a great plenty of almug (algum) wood and precious stones. 12 Of the almug wood the king made pillars for the house of the Lord and for the king's house, and lyres also and harps for the singers. No such almug wood came again or has been seen to this day. 13 King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all she wanted, whatever she asked, besides his gifts to her from his royal bounty. So she returned to her own country, she and her servants. 14 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one [particular] year was 666 talents of gold, 15 Besides what the traders brought and the traffic of the merchants and from all the [tributary] kings and governors of the land of Arabia. 16 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold; 600 shekels of gold went into each shield. 17 And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; three minas of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. 18 Also the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with the finest gold. 19 The throne had six steps, and attached at the rear of the top of the throne was a round covering or canopy. On either side of the seat were armrests, and two lions stood beside the armrests. 20 Twelve lions stood there, one on either end of each of the six steps; there was nothing like it ever made in any kingdom. 21 All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver; it was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. 22 For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish came bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks. 23 So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom (skill). 24 And all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom which God had put in his mind. 25 Every man brought tribute: vessels of silver and gold, garments, equipment, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year. 26 Solomon collected chariots and horsemen; he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 27 The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as the sycamore trees in the lowlands. 28 Solomon's horses were brought out of Egypt, and the king's merchants received them in droves, each at a price. 29 A chariot could be brought out of Egypt for 600 shekels of silver, and a horse for 150. And so to all the kings of the Hittites and of Syria they were exported by the king's merchants.

## Chapter 10

Now the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon and so she came to Jerusalem with a very great company of people, camels, spices, a lot of gold, and precious stones: and as she came to Solomon, she communed everything that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all of the questions that she asked: not any thing hid from the king, that he did not tell her. And the queen of Sheba had seen all of Solomon's wisdom, the house that he had built, the meat at his table (1Ki 10:1-5),

And we remember the meat of his table is fantastic. How much food it took for every day to feed Solomon's household and all. One day's provision, three hundred bushels of fine flour, six hundred bushels of meal, ten fat oxen, twenty oxen out of the pastures or ten choice grade and twenty commercial grade beef, a hundred sheep, beside the harts, roebucks, fallowdeer and fatted fowl. That was every day. And so when the queen of Sheba saw this whole thing, the servants, the sitting of his table. No doubt everything of gold on his table, gold plates, gold cups and she saw the whole thing you know and the way they would bear his cup to him. The way he would ascend to the house of God and the whole thing. Man, she was just wiped out. And it said that.

there was no more spirit in her (1Ki 10:5).

She just, "Wow!"

And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in my own land of your acts and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words, until I came, and I saw it with my own eyes: and, behold, they didn't tell me half of all that is here of your wisdom and prosperity. It exceeds even the fame which I heard. Happy are your men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice (1Ki 10:6-9).

So interesting, she sees the whole thing and she says, Hey, they didn't tell me. I didn't believe it when they told me of all that was here. They didn't even tell me half of the story. It's fantastic. Oh, blessed and happy are the people who can just sit here and listen to your wisdom and all. And then, "Blessed be the Lord thy God."

Now no doubt at this point in his life Solomon was still walking with the Lord and honoring God because she saw the way he ascended into the place of worship and all. And he was still right on. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that when they see your good works, they will glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). And evidently, Solomon was doing it because as she sees the whole thing, she actually praises God, "Blessed be God." He was just really at this point in his life right on. But

unfortunately, his disobedience to God caused a lapse in his worship and in his dedication to God later on.

Now he also developed another navy to ply the waters of the Mediterranean. The first navy was down in the area of the Persian Gulf and all and would go down to Africa on the east coast of Africa, the Ivory Coast. And the other navy went out to the Mediterranean and covered the area of the Mediterranean going as far as England and bringing back peacocks and gold and rare trees and so forth. And so Solomon actually just had all of this glory and wealth and all that was coming in.

Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold (1Ki 10:14),

Interesting number.

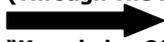
Beside that he had all of the spices that the merchants brought from the kings of Arabia. And he made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of gold went to one target. He made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pounds of gold went into each shield (1Ki 10:15-17):

Can you imagine that? Three hundred shields with gold, three pounds each. Boy, at today's market prices. Then he made this fantastic throne, six steps leading up to the throne. He made it of ivory and overlaid it with gold. With two lions that were carved there beside it.

His drinking vessels were all of gold, nothing was silver: for silver was accounted as nothing in Solomon's days. The king had the navy for Tharshish and the other one for Africa. And great riches and it tells of all the glory and so forth of Solomon.

Verse twenty-eight.

And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, linen yarn: the king's merchants received yarn for a price (1Ki 10:28).  
(Through The Bible Series C-2000; Chuck Smith; 1979-1986; Commentaries Through The Bible)

 "Knowledge Of The Holy" AW Tozer

#### CHAPTER 23; The Open Secret

When viewed from the perspective of eternity, the most critical need of this hour may well be that the Church should be brought back from her long Babylonian captivity and the name of God be glorified in her again as of old. Yet we must not think of the Church as an anonymous body, a mystical religious abstraction. We Christians are the Church and whatever we do is what the Church is doing. The matter, therefore, is for each of us a personal one. Any forward step in the Church must begin with the individual.

What can we plain Christians do to bring back the departed glory? Is there some secret we may learn? Is there a formula for personal revival we can apply to the present situation, to our own situation? The answer to these questions is yes.

Yet the answer may easily disappoint some persons, for it is anything but profound. I bring no esoteric cryptogram, no mystic code to be painfully deciphered. I appeal to no hidden law of the unconscious, no occult knowledge meant only for the few. The secret is an open one which the wayfaring man may read. It is simply the old and ever new counsel: Acquaint thyself with God. To regain her lost power the Church must see heaven opened and have a transforming vision of God.

But the God we must see is not the utilitarian God who is having such a run of popularity today, whose chief claim to men's attention is His ability to bring them success in their various undertakings and who for that reason is being cajoled and flattered by everyone who wants a favor. The God we must learn to know is the Majesty in the heavens, God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, the only wise God, our Saviour. He it is that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, who stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in, who bringeth out His starry host by number and calleth them all by name through the greatness of His power, who seeth the works of man as vanity, who putteth no confidence in princes and asks no counsel of kings.

Knowledge of such a Being cannot be gained by study alone. It comes by a wisdom the natural man knows nothing of, neither can know, because it is spiritually discerned. To know God is at once the easiest and the most difficult thing in the world. It is easy because the knowledge is not won by hard mental toil, but is something freely given. As sunlight falls free on the open field, so the knowledge of the holy God is a free gift to men who are open to receive it.

But this knowledge is difficult because there are conditions to be met and the obstinate nature of fallen man does not take kindly to them.

Let me present a brief summary of these conditions as taught by the Bible and repeated through the centuries by the holiest, sweetest saints the world has ever known:

First, we must forsake our sins. The belief that a holy God cannot be known by men of confirmed evil lives is not new to the Christian religion. The Hebrew book, The Wisdom of Solomon, which antedates Christianity by many years, has the following passage: "Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth: think of the Lord with a good heart, and in simplicity of heart seek him. For he will be found of them that tempt him not; and showeth himself unto such as do not distrust him. For froward thoughts separate from God and his power, when it is tried, reproveth the unwise. For unto a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter; nor dwell in the body that is subject to sin. For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide

when unrighteousness cometh in." This same thought is found in various sayings throughout the inspired Scriptures, the best known probably being the words of Christ, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

Second, there must be an utter committal of the whole life to Christ in faith. This is what it means to "believe in Christ." It involves a volitional and emotional attachment to Him accompanied by a firm purpose to obey Him in all things. This requires that we keep His commandments, carry our cross, and love God and our fellow men.

Third, there must be a reckoning of ourselves to have died unto sin and to be alive unto God in Christ Jesus, followed by a throwing open of the entire personality to the inflow of the Holy Spirit. Then we must practice whatever self-discipline is required to walk in the Spirit, and trample under our feet the lusts of the flesh.

Fourth, we must boldly repudiate the cheap values of the fallen world and become completely detached in spirit from everything that unbelieving men set their hearts upon, allowing ourselves only the simplest enjoyments of nature which God has bestowed alike upon the just and the unjust.

Fifth, we must practice the art of long and loving meditation upon the majesty of God. This will take some effort, for the concept of majesty has all but disappeared from the human race. The focal point of man's interest is now himself. Humanism in its various forms has displaced theology as the key to the understanding of life. When the nineteenth-century poet Swinburne wrote, "Glory to Man in the highest! for man is the master of things," he gave to the modern world its new Te Deum. All this must be reversed by a deliberate act of the will and kept so by a patient effort of the mind.

God is a Person and can be known in increasing degrees of intimate acquaintance as we prepare our hearts for the wonder. It may be necessary for us to alter our former beliefs about God as the glory that gilds the Sacred Scriptures dawns over our interior lives. We may also need to break quietly and graciously with the lifeless textualism that prevails among the gospel churches, and to protest the frivolous character of much that passes for Christianity among us. By this we may for the time lose friends and gain a passing reputation for being holier-than-thou; but no man who permits the expectation of unpleasant consequences to influence him in a matter like this is fit for the kingdom of God.

Sixth, as the knowledge of God becomes more wonderful, greater service to our fellow men will become for us imperative. This blessed knowledge is not given to be enjoyed selfishly. The more perfectly we know God the more we will feel the desire to translate the new-found knowledge into deeds of mercy toward suffering humanity. The God who gave all to us will continue to give all through us as we come to know Him better.

Thus far we have considered the individual's personal relation to God, but like the ointment of a man's right hand, which by its fragrance "betrayeth itself", any intensified knowledge of God will soon begin to affect those around us in the Christian community. And we must seek purposefully to share our increasing light with the fellow members of the household of God.

This we can best do by keeping the majesty of God in full focus in all our public services. Not only our private prayers should be filled with God, by our witnessing, our singing, our preaching, our writing should center around the Person of our holy, holy Lord and extol continually the greatness of His dignity and power. There is a glorified Man on the right hand of the Majesty in heaven faithfully representing us there. We are left for a season among men; let us faithfully represent Him here.

END



A.W. Tozer; Jesus, Author of Our Faith

AND OTHER ESSAYS ON FAITH

COMPILED AND EDITED BY GERALD B. SMITH

Aiden Wilson Tozer (April 21, 1897 - May 12, 1963) was an American Protestant pastor, preacher, author, magazine editor, Bible conference speaker, and spiritual mentor. For his work, he received two honorary doctorates. Among the more than forty books that he authored, at least two are regarded as Christian classics: *The Pursuit of God* and *The Knowledge of the Holy*. His books impress on the reader the possibility and necessity for a deeper relationship with God. Living a simple and non-materialistic lifestyle, he and his wife, Ada Cecelia Pfautz, never owned a car, preferring bus and train travel. Even after becoming a well-known Christian author, Tozer signed away much of his royalties to those who were in need. Prayer was of vital personal importance for Tozer. "His preaching as well as his writings were but extensions of his prayer life", comments his biographer, James L. Snyder in the book, *In Pursuit of God: The Life Of A.W. Tozer*. "He had the ability to make his listeners face themselves in the light of what God was saying to them", writes Snyder.

Tozer himself produced the works: *Let My People Go*; *Man : the Dwelling Place of God*; *Paths to Power*; *The Divine Conquest*

*The Knowledge of the Holy*, (1961) New York: Harper & Row, ISBN 0-06-068412-7; *The Pursuit of God*, (1957) Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, ISBN 0-87509-522-4

*The Root of the Righteous*; There are also many compilations of sermons and other writings which were edited and published by Christian Publications, Inc., after Tozer's death. Although the books were published posthumously, authorship is attributed to A. W. Tozer.

Wikipedia

**FOREWORD**

Tozer once warned Christian believers not to read the Bible as they would another piece of literature or a textbook. "I have always felt that when we read and study the Word of God, we should have great expectations," he explained. "We should ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the person, the glory and the eternal ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ." This book is centered on Jesus. It is based on sermons Tozer preached from the final chapters of the Letter to the Hebrews. The author's intention, from chapter to chapter, is to underscore the necessity of an active, abiding faith in Jesus Christ. Only in that way can we please God. More than in most of his books, Tozer reaches into his personal experience as he applies the rich truths of key texts. For that reason, it is fitting that the publisher will release this volume in May 1988—exactly twenty five years after Tozer's death on May 13, 1963. For those who try to collect Tozer titles as they become available, it should be pointed out that Jesus, Author of Our Faith is a companion volume to Jesus, Our Man in Glory, which is based on the earlier chapters of Hebrews. Together, the two books examine most of the important emphases in that significant Letter. They do so in Tozer's inimitable style and with his incisive expression. Gerald B. Smith

**DO YOU REALIZE THAT YOUR FAITH** is a gift from God? You should look upon your faith as a miracle. It is the ability God gives lost men and women to trust and obey our Savior and Lord. It is the ability God gives regenerated men and women to continue to trust and obey.

And Jesus is the author of our faith.

Are you satisfied, contented with your faith? Is it the kind of faith that is pleasing to God? Does it rest solidly upon the very nature and character of God? I raise these questions with the hope of finding some ripple of concern among God's people about this simple, straightforward statement in the letter to the Hebrews: "Without faith, it is impossible to please God."

In all of my ministry I have found comparatively few eager to consider what the Bible teaches concerning genuine faith in God. It is difficult, also, to find spiritual concern among Christians for trusting God and living to please the One who created us and who redeemed us back to Himself.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is often called "The Faith Chapter." Its opening message is familiar:

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. ... By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. ... And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Heb 11:1-6)

"The Faith Chapter." I doubt that most people recognize the full meaning of that term, "the faith chapter." I would like to amend the title by calling Hebrews 11 the "Faith in-God Chapter." Or, even better, the "Faith-in-the-Character-of-God Chapter."

The word "faith" can mean a thousand different things to as many people. It is especially so if in their thinking there is no basic reference to God, no consideration of His eternal will and no understanding of the lostness of mankind. I have discovered that professing Christians can read about the great exploits of faith in the past—and then immediately ask the age-old question, "But what is faith?"

No actual definition; Although the writer to the Hebrews declares that faith is being sure of what we hope for and being certain of what we do not see, he is not thereby actually providing us with a definition. Definitions have to do with human reason, human intellect, human philosophy. I think God had his own reasons for withholding a specific definition of faith from the pages of our Bibles.

God's record and appeal are spiritual messages, directed to the spirits of needy men and women. If our Christian testimony is to be vital and effective, we must understand that the Bible was not given to serve as a handbook of ethical considerations. Rather, it is plainly a book of morals. Therefore, when we take God at His word in committing ourselves to Jesus Christ, we discover that faith and morals are two sides of the same coin!

I repeat: The Bible is not a book of reason about things that are good and things that are bad. Rather, it is an authoritative book clearly demonstrating for us what is good and what is bad! On that basis, then, what does the Bible tell us about genuine faith?

Without dealing in pinpoint definitions, we know that faith as demonstrated in the Word of God is complete confidence and trust in God and in His plan of salvation through Christ.

Let us agree further that faith is a gift of God to every penitent, trusting person. Beyond that, faith is a miracle, for God gives lost men and women the blessed ability to trust and serve Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

The Bible assures us that faith in God is the plain gateway to forgiveness, to cleansing, to regeneration, to restoration. The Bible declares that where there is no faith there are no answers to fervent prayers. The Bible makes clear that every spiritual benefit flowing from the atonement of Christ is given to faith and is received by faith. All of this is common evangelical doctrine and is accepted wherever the cross of Christ is rightly understood.

Beware of faith in "faith"; I have often warned men in the ministry of their great responsibility when they begin to preach and counsel about faith. It is quite possible to lead people into the mistake of placing their faith in "faith" itself. I do not think any of us believes that as Christians we can or should ever be satisfied by emphasizing our faith in "faith." To do so would result in our bragging about the greatness of our faith and our trading mutual testimonies about the results of our faith.

I remember an old story, used more than once as sermon illustration. It concerned an anonymous Christian believer who testified of great faith and willing obedience with this rather amazing promise: "If the Lord ever asks me to jump right through that brick wall, I am ready to jump!"

My point is that we should not be busy magnifying our own great faith. Rather, we should be busy demonstrating the fragrance of God's love and grace in our daily walk. It is not proper to magnify faith if in doing so we forget that our confidence as believers is not in the power of faith but in the person and work of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I have heard ministers say that if the people in their congregations would memorize more Bible promises, they would immediately have more faith. Yes and no.

Study the Scriptures and you will find that we are not going to have more faith by counting the promises of God. Faith does not rest upon promises. Faith rests upon character. Faith must rest in confidence upon the One who makes the promises.

Faith says, "God is God! He is a holy God who cannot lie. He is the God who is infinitely honest—He has never cheated anyone. He is the God who is faithful and true!"

Yes, we must be concerned with the person and character of God and not just with His promises. Through promises we learn what God has willed to us, we learn what we may claim as our heritage, we learn how we should pray. But faith itself must rest upon the character of our God.

When I think of the angels in heaven who veil their faces before the holy God who is totally truthful, I wonder why every preacher does not begin preaching about God—who He is, His attributes, His perfection, His being and why we love Him and why we should trust Him!

**We must know God Himself**

It is not enough just to know things about God. It is important that we declare to people all round us that they must come to know God Himself.

Our faith in God is more than the provision of an eternal life insurance policy. Some Christians in their testimonies seem to view God as a lifeboat always coming to their rescue. Or perhaps they portray Him as a kind of ladder enabling them to get out of a burning building.

We dare not miss the point here. Our God takes pleasure in His believing children coming to Him with genuine faith, knowing that He is the rewarder of all who diligently seek Him. This kind of earnest, genuine faith—the faith of the Scriptures—is taught and fully demonstrated in this book of Hebrews.

The lesson that comes to us through the many dramatic illustrations of faith in Hebrews 11 brings us back to my earlier statement: Faith in God is to be demonstrated, not defined. Just as God's church demonstrates Christian love, this demonstration of godly, humble faith is God's ideal for His church.

It is not enough for preachers in their pulpits to try to define love. The love that God has promised must be demonstrated in the lives of the believers in the pews. It must be practiced as well by the man who occupies the pulpit.

We should put the matter of faith in that same category. God wants His people, including the ministers, to demonstrate all of the outworking of faith in their daily lives and practices.

In His Word, God tells us again and again that as believing children we are to live by faith and we are to walk by faith. This reference is to God's believing, trusting people and to the kind of faith that is saving faith. There are many other brands of faith being displayed in our world today. Saving faith—biblical faith—is on the highest level, for it is the life of trust and obedience that our Lord requires of us.

The Bible says faith is necessary to please God. It is plain, then, that there are unbelievers—men and women without faith who refuse to take God into consideration. It is my position that unbelief is not merely a different attitude of the human mind. Unbelief is always sinful because it presupposes an immoral condition of the heart.

The unbeliever says in effect to the Christian believer: "My gift of human reason tells me that you are unreasonable in the matters of your faith."

Christians have an answer; Christian believers have an answer born from their scriptural perspective. They are not afraid to declare that at the door of the kingdom of God man's reason is dethroned. For those who are living a life of faith and have found fellowship with God, human reason is no The apostle Paul warned the Corinthian Christians long ago that God had made foolish the wisdom of the world: But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise ... so that no one may boast before him.... Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." (1Co 1:27-31)

Human reason has always been in rivalry with God. Our human race took a great fall on the day Satan persuaded Adam and Eve to disobey their Creator God. He told them it was reasonable that they should have the same knowledge that God Himself has. Our first parents bowed to reason, taking the bait like hungry fish.

We are only too well aware of the results of their failure—their disobedience. Instead of becoming as gods in knowledge, they and their posterity fell to such a low level that they lost their capacity to know anything that really matters!

I am asked sometimes for my opinion on certain matters. Perhaps you would like to ask my opinion concerning the faculty of human reason, and I am ready to answer even before you ask! I believe that most people are more proud of their ability to reason than of any other faculty. They do not even suspect that nothing else they possess is as small as their power to reason.

Once those persons enter the kingdom of God by faith, reason becomes a useful servant—no longer ruling them as a false god. On the other hand, those who continue to live without Christ and without God will unknowingly live out their lives in a very real kind of sub-faith, strange as that may seem.

The rationalists exercise faith longer king. Instead, reason becomes a servant. I confess that it is very intriguing to me to consider the habits of the so-called liberal thinkers. They reject the validity of any kind of faith, declaring that they choose to reject religion because it requires faith. Yet they do not discern that they are going through many of the motions of faith every day.

They get up every morning fully expecting that the sun will be in its accustomed course when they rise. They fully expect that the morning newspaper will be delivered as promised. Although they cannot entirely explain it, they have no doubt that breakfast will satisfy their appetites—at least temporarily!

They step out on the sidewalk with full faith that it will not collapse under their weight. They do not call the office where they work to inquire if they still have a job. Something very much like faith tells them their job is secure and waiting.

Nearly every move they make is by a certain kind of faith and trust. Their boast is that they lean only on reason, but from dawn until bedtime their lives fit into a pattern of faith and trust, whether they admit it or not! Yet they will argue and debate at every possible opportunity that faith is unreal and cannot be accepted because it is not predicated on human reasoning.

We who are believing Christians refuse to agree with the unbelievers' premise that we are taking an unreasonable position. We simply accept our new realm of life and faith where reason becomes a servant. We find a blessed fulfillment in a life of trust. We discover in this relationship with God that faith actually becomes an organ of knowledge. That is why it is completely ridiculous for religious prattlers to insist that they can equate faith and reason.

According to both Matthew and Luke, Jesus prayed, saying: "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children." Yes, we do find that faith becomes an organ of knowledge.

In Hebrews we read, "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible" (Heb 11:3).

The proud thinkers tell us they believe in the eternity of matter. They are convinced in their own minds that there was never a time when things were not. To them, matter is eternal. For them, there is no invisible, eternal world back of the visible, temporal world we see and know.

The Bible tells us otherwise; But we lean on the inspired Word from the Holy Spirit of God, who gives us this truth: The visible came out of the invisible. It was God who framed the worlds. The things that are seen came from the Unseen. Thus we learn that matter came out of spirit, and before all things was God Himself! It is by faith that we can understand these things. And that is another way of saying, "By faith we know!" We know, too, that there is much imagination in the world. For that reason we contend that our faith is not a substitute for reality. Faith in God apprehends reality and spiritual things. True faith is not a function of imagination. I disagree with the modern theories that peace and happiness depend upon our ability to "project" ourselves out of subconscious minds. The proponents of that philosophy would have us believe that the subconscious mind sits around waiting for the conscious mind to talk to it. Then, if the conscious mind is willing to say to the subconscious, "You are going to feel good today!" you will really feel good all day. That is human imagination. Faith in God is a function of knowledge, not of human imagination. We do not by faith project out of ourselves an imaginary hope of heaven beyond this life. Jesus Christ has promised that our place is being prepared; it is a promise of our Heavenly Father. I tell you frankly that I would not want to consider any kind of a heaven that was projected out of my subconscious mind. I am looking forward to something far more substantial than a projection of my own mind or imagination!

What the Bible says; Now, if we really have a desire for our faith in God to increase and grow, do we have any New Testament direction or encouragement? Yes! We can take a lesson from the conversation about faith between Jesus and His disciples:

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." (Luk 17:5-6) The apostles apparently recognized their own need and addressed a direct prayer to the Author of faith—their Lord and Master: "Increase our faith!" Did Jesus reprove them for their earnest request, for their desire to mature in the realm of faith? No. Jesus did not reprove nor did He rebuke. Instead, He taught them and He encouraged them. Surely it should strike us with conviction that our Lord was saying that even to the smallest measure

of sincere faith the mightiest works for God are possible.

I ask: Do you believe as earnestly as you should that faith can bring the conversion of the human soul to God? Do you believe as deeply as you should that faith can unite you forever to Jesus Christ, your risen Lord and now your great High Priest in the heavens? Do you believe as you should that earnest and sincere faith in the living God can remove mountains of difficulty out of your way, can cast your burden of guilt into the deepest sea? The Author of our faith stands ready to make it so.

A concluding illustration

Let me conclude with a contemporary illustration of faith easily understood because it could happen in any family household.

A father and his nine-year-old son have a close and trusting relationship. The father reminds his boy that in a month he will be observing his tenth birthday.

"Son," he begins, "I know that you want a bicycle. I am going to order a brand new red and white bicycle, and it will be herein time for you to begin riding it on the morning of your birthday. It will be your very own bicycle—you will be the owner!"

Is that excited boy going to wait a month before he tells his friends that he is the owner of a shining new bicycle? Oh, no! He runs out immediately to give the great news to his friends. He is full of faith. He is full of expectancy. He already knows within himself the pride of ownership. His faith has given substance to his boyish hope. His faith has given a reality to the bicycle he has not yet seen!

He is not reporting to his friends an imaginary projection of his mind. He has his father's word. He is able to speak with assurance: "Believe it or not, I own one of the most beautiful bicycles in the whole world!"

That boy knows he can trust the character of his father. His faith is not in the factory that makes the bicycle. It rests in the character and the ability of his father to keep the promise he has made.

But, of course, there is one little friend in the neighborhood who remains cynical and unbelieving.

"Don't give me that dreamy line about having a bicycle," the friend insists with some belligerence. "Who is going to believe your story? I don't see any shiny new bicycle in your front yard."

For an answer, the boy with the faith, the boy who already knows the delight of anticipation, simply smiles a knowing smile. "Just give me till my birthday, and when you see me riding my bike past your house, you will wish my father was your father, too!"

We thank our Heavenly Father that our sincere faith in Him becomes for us a function of knowledge. It becomes substance and evidence!

Jesus is the Author and the Prefecture of our faith. With the apostle Paul we stand in faith and in knowledge: "I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day" (2Ti 1:12).

( Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 514-517)

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