

The Surprising Supremacy of Faith

Introduction

- Faith plays a surprisingly central and primary role in the Christian life
- Martin Luther's insight: "God our Father has made all things depend on faith, so that whoever has faith will have everything, and whoever does not have faith will have nothing"
- The TV/aerial analogy: Faith is like an aerial that connects us to the invisible spiritual realm that surrounds us

Point 1: Faith is Essential for Salvation

- Ephesians 2:8-9: "By grace you have been saved through faith... it is the gift of God, not of works"
 - Salvation comes through faith, not through our own efforts
 - Works (our attempts to earn or deserve salvation) are enemies of faith
- Romans 1:16-17: The gospel reveals "a righteousness that is by faith from first to last"
 - Faith is the starting point and the continued means of righteousness
 - We cannot start with faith and then switch to works

Point 2: Faith is Required to Please God

- Hebrews 11:6: "Without faith it is impossible to please God"
 - Even good works without faith cannot please God
 - Faith requires believing both that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him
- Romans 14:23: "Whatever is not from faith is sin"
 - Even seemingly good actions, if not rooted in faith, are considered sin
 - Our motives and source of power matter to God, not just our actions

Point 3: Faith is Our Means of Victory

- 1 John 5:4: "This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith"
 - Faith is how we overcome the world's influence and temptations
 - Not through self-discipline or self-effort, but through faith
- Ephesians 6: The shield of faith extinguishes the enemy's fiery darts
 - Faith protects us from accusations, lies, and manipulation
 - Faith is our defensive weapon against spiritual attacks

Point 4: Maintaining a Faith-Centered Life

- Colossians 2:6-7: "Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him... strengthened in the faith"
 - We must continue in faith just as we began
 - 2 Corinthians 5:7: "We live by faith, not by sight"
- The Galatians' warning (Galatians 3:1-7)
 - They began in the Spirit but tried to be perfected by the flesh

- Paul's rebuke: "O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?"
- Galatians 5:4,6: "You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ... The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love"
 - Relying on works actually separates us from Christ
 - Faith is the only thing that truly counts in our relationship with God

Conclusion and Practical Applications

- We are saved by faith, live by faith, and walk by faith
- When we lose our way, we must return to faith as our foundation
- Faith means:
 - Trusting God's word over our feelings or senses
 - Relying on Christ's work rather than our own goodness
 - Believing Jesus' death was sufficient to pay for our sins
- Recognize the common temptation to slip from faith into works-based thinking

List of Verses used in this talk

INTRO

God is invisible - Colossians 1:15

God is everywhere - Jer 23:24

In the Bible there are accounts of those who have seen the spiritual world - Eze 1:4-28

The spiritual (invisible) realm is the "real" realm out of which everything physical was made, and the physical will cease to exist one day - Heb 11:3, 2 Pe 3:10

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH

1. **SAVED** by it. - Eph 2:8-9
2. From "**FIRST TO LAST**" - Rom 1:16-17 NIV
Live by it. 2Co 5:7 NIV - "7 For we live by faith, not by sight."
3. **PLEASE GOD** by it. Heb 11:6
4. **OVERCOME** world by it. 1Jo 5:4
The "**shield** to defend against the devil's attacks. Eph 6:16 ESV - "16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;" Rev 3:21 - "to him who overcomes I will give..."
Col 2:6-7 - "Just as you received Christ, continue to live in Him" (Faith)
5. **ANYTHING ELSE IS SIN.** Rom 14:23 NKJV — "But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin."

HOW DO WE LOSE FAITH?

Alternatives to Faith - the things that block or kill faith ...

- **Sight** / feelings
- Works / law / flesh
"Deserving"
- **Unbelief** - believing other competing things

THE STORY OF THE GALATIANS

Gal 3:1-3, 5-7

Observing Old Testament laws (circumcision and feast days) to please God - (Gal 5:2, Gal 4:10-11)

Gal 3:11-12

Gal 5:2, 4, 6 NIV

1Co 15:50 NKJV - "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"

Rom 12:3 NKJV - " God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."