



Dare to Believe

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We are going to review that we can only experience God’s salvation when we

believe. Notice the story of Zacchaeus who had climbed up a tree to see Jesus pass along the way, “And Jesus said unto him (*Zacchaeus*), This day is salvation (*soteria*) come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.” (Luke 19:9). Jesus brought salvation to this man’s house! What is salvation? It means rescue or safety both physically and morally; it also means to be delivered!

Let’s start from the very beginning of belief; the Bible first uses the concept of “a believer” as it describes our father Abraham, who “**believed in the LORD**; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Gen 15:6)! We can begin therefore with this example to learn that the act of believing causes “the righteousness of God” to come upon the believer!

The ancient nation of Israel needlessly suffered; Paul teaches that essentially they did not obtain what they should have, because they did not believe. The Apostle details Israel’s foremost unprofitable skepticism, “the word preached did not profit them, ***not being mixed with faith*** in them that heard it” (Heb 4:2). In other words they did not believe the things that they heard! Because they did not believe, they could not obtain the thing that they hoped for. They did not even believe even after witnessing miraculous events with their very own eyes!

What about you? Do you believe? Jesus set-up everything so that we cannot receive salvation (*soteria*) from Him until we really believe, “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, **and shalt believe in thine heart** that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be ***saved*** (*sozo – a form of soteria.*)” (Rom 10:9). Jesus made it clear, **you must first believe**; and, if you do, then you will be saved! This is so clear and unmistakable! From it we learn that belief always precedes salvation (*soteria*). Let me share an example that may bring out what I am trying to convey: if we were to attend some great Christian crusade of the past; let’s say one of Billy Graham’s crusades of the 1980’s. Let me ask a question, “Who would have been saved during the Christian crusade?” The scriptural answer is simple; whoever **believes** will be the ones who are saved, “**and shalt believe** in thine heart . . . thou shalt be **saved**” (Rom 10:9)! The point is that we must all believe God for ourselves! I cannot believe for you; nor, can you believe for someone else! When you think about it, this concept of believing for oneself is very powerful because it reveals that the Kingdom of God operates equally in every individual according to his or her own beliefs! Politics, race, religion, beauty, intelligence all have nothing



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to do with the one who believes! Believing is the thing that you and I are supposed to do! God does not love some person more than another; instead, He

always reacts to the individual that believes!

Let's study a Biblical example of belief in action. We will certainly gain some important knowledge from this example, “And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?” (Mark 4:37-38). Now let's carefully notice Jesus' reaction! Did He get up and pray the following **religious sounding** prayer? “Dear Heavenly Father, we know that you know all things; we know that you are here in this greatly troubled lake. And dear LORD, if it is your will, we ask that you will somehow act and act quickly since there is a great deal of water in the boat. And if not most high God please give us grace to go down like true men. Far be it from us to try to understand the mysterious ways in which the LORD works! And if we go under then let our drowning somehow be to your great glory! And LORD you know that we put our fate into your hands. Amen!” Was that the prayer that Jesus prayed during the storm? Obviously not! Instead, what did Jesus really do? It says that “he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm” (Mark 4:39). Jesus simply **believed** that His words were sufficient to calm the storm! There comes a time when true believers must simply believe and act according to their belief! When was the last time that you stood up during your storm and said, “Peace, be still?”

God wants people who actually believe! Believing is the only thing that God would not do for us! The simple truth is that God simply will not believe for you! Does anybody here want to really believe? Do you realize the fact that Christians are characterized as, “believers?” Believing is what we are supposed to do! Do you have anything wrong with your health? If you believed in Jesus for your salvation, you can also believe in Him for your healing, “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases” (Ps 103:3). Notice that the God who forgives your sins is the **same** God who heals your diseases! He told Moses, “I am the LORD that healeth thee” (Ex 15:26). Incredibly, many people have sufficient faith to believe for salvation; however, they somehow get lost and do not express that same belief for their healing! However, this Bible study is not about the topic of healing; rather, it is about believing!

Notice the amazing story in the Book of Luke, “And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: **and the power of the Lord was present to heal them**” (Luke 5:17). We learn that the power of God was present to heal them however there is no evidence that anybody was actually being healed! What is the deal here? The scripture plainly says that the power of God is present to heal them; but, nobody was being healed. Let's continue with the story, “And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. 19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. 20 And **when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee**” (Luke 5:18-20). Jesus did not heal because they



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ruined the roof of that house; Jesus healed them because they all believed that Jesus would heal their sick friend on the stretcher!

I believe in divine healing! There are several instances in my life where I have been healed by the stripes of Jesus Christ! But the skeptical may ask, “Well, if you believe in divine healing, then why don’t you go down to the hospital and empty out all of the beds of sick people?” There really is an answer to this seemingly ponderous question! You can answer back, “You believe in salvation don’t you? You believe that God wants everyone to be saved don’t you? Well then why don’t you go down to the nearest jail and save everybody inside?” They will immediately answer something like, “Well, you simply can’t force them to believe on Jesus!” By the same token, you cannot force everybody that is sick and in bed to really believe in the Divine Healer! And, if the individual will not believe then he simply won’t experience any divine healing. On the other hand, “Jesus said unto him, ***If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth***” (Mark 9:23). Receiving healing is certainly one of, “all things” that are possible through Jesus! The point is that like believing for salvation, your believing must start with your own self!

Notice there is a difference between wanting and believing! Faith is the element that accesses the blessings of God! Faith is not natural; instead, faith or believing is supernatural! When you are in a boat during a violent storm your first reaction is to say, “Oh God, we are all going to die!” Faith empowers the individual to say, “Peace, be still!”

Notice a very special and quite unique woman from the masses who, “***said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole***” (Matt 9:21). This woman realized Jesus’ power and she believed and even spoke to herself concerning her belief, “If I may but touch his garment, ***I shall be whole***” (Matt 9:21). Her mouth actually spoke out the thing that she believed, “for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matt 12:34). The woman actually believed that she would be healed. She said, “if I can but touch Jesus’ garment!” Notice Jesus’ words because they reveal a great deal concerning this specific healing. Let’s notice the things that He did and did not say,

- “Daughter, because I have a great love for you, you are therefore made whole;”
- “Daughter, you have suffered so very much over these past twelve years; therefore, because of your great suffering, you are made whole;”
- “Daughter, since I am the LORD, I make you whole?”

Jesus did not say any of these commonly believed concepts! Notice what is actually recorded, “Daughter, be of good comfort; ***thy faith hath made thee whole***” (Matt 9:22). We need to understand the answer to the question, “What made the woman whole?” What did Jesus say is the thing that made her whole? He said, “***thy faith*** hath made thee whole” (Matt 9:22). Did Jesus or did the woman’s faith make her whole? We are either left to believe in Jesus’ words or we are left to assume something else that we may have learned along our religious education! Notice also that the woman did not say within herself, “If it is God’s will to heal me, then when He passes through town He will come by my house and heal me.” In reality, Jesus didn’t even know of the woman’s intentions! Notice that He said, “***Who*** touched my clothes?” (Mark 5:30). This means that even though it is God’s will to heal, it our individual responsibility to contact him through our faith in order to receive our own healing! Notice Jesus’ reaction to the woman’s faith, “Jesus, immediately ***knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him***” (Mark 5:30). This means that there



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is a supernatural virtue within God that believers can tap into. The example teaches that through faith we can actually draw out our needs from Jesus!

Just like that woman, no matter who you are, you can through belief get on Jesus’ priority list! If Jesus even had a list of things to do that day, that woman certainly was not on His list! Instead, Jesus was heading for Jairus’ house. Jairus came to Him and said, “My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, **come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed**; and she shall live. 24 And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. 25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years” (Mark 5:23-25). Remember that the woman with an issue of blood appeared unannounced and with out an invitation on Jesus’ way to heal Jairus’ daughter. Can you imagine how busy Jesus is, even now? This ought to be greatly encouraging to you! This means that Jesus is never too busy to respond to our faith!

Jesus interrupted His busy schedule on that day because of the woman’s faith! This indicates that God always moves in the direction of faith! Jesus is always looking for faith! Notice that He said, “Who touched my clothes?” (Mark 5:30). The point is that Jesus did not anticipate a person to draw out healing from Him along His path. He realized that virtue (*the power of God*) had gone out from Him! Further, we have learned that it is faith that made the withdrawal. This means that Jesus is always on the lookout for an individual who exercises faith! We must realize that it is faith (*belief*) that God is looking for in humanity, “without faith (*belief*) it is impossible to please him” (Heb 11:6). To receive virtue or the power of God out of Jesus, we must first exercise belief in our hearts!

Have you ever heard that in order to receive a miracle from God, it must be His will? Sure, we all have. Notice that Jesus settled a growing argument on the same issue concerning God’s will. The scribes came to Jesus’ disciples one day in some kind of dispute (*argument*). A man spoke, “I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; **and they could not**” (Mark 9:18). We must realize here that just because Jesus’ disciples could not cast out the demon from the child, that actual fact of their inability all by itself did not mean that it was not God’s will to release the child from that demonic possession! It is always God’s will to release a demon possessed person from the power of the fallen world! Notice Jesus’ reaction to that situation, “**O faithless generation** (*This means that the issue was an issue of faith!*), how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me” (Mark 9:19). Here Jesus identified faith (*believing*) as a central issue!

As that story continued the man asked Jesus, “**if thou canst** do any thing, have compassion on us” (Mark 9:22). Now remember, the man was talking to God! He asked God, “**if thou canst** do any thing!” He had heard about Jesus; therefore, it was obvious that Jesus’ will was to heal the sick. But in the mind of the man, demon possession, that is a really, really **big** problem! Notice that the man even made the problem worse by asking, “**if thou canst** do any thing!” If you carefully examine this statement, you will discover that it actually conveys skepticism, “I am not even sure that you can do anything!”

Now compare this man who had a demoniac son with the woman who had an issue of blood. She said, “If I may but touch his garment, **I shall be whole**” (Matt 9:21). Do you see the differing levels of belief being expressed? Notice the two statements: “if thou canst” as opposed to, “If I may!” There is clearly a difference in the words, “if you can”



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and “if I can.” It was the “if I can” individual who supernaturally drew out the virtue from Jesus. The woman concluded, “I will be made whole!” There is a real

difference here in the belief of these two people. Do you ever take your problems to Jesus and say: “If you can;” “If you are willing;” “It is all up to you;” instead of saying in your heart, “If I can . . . I shall be made whole!” The question is not, “if God” but, “if you!” If you can believe, then Jesus will perform, “If thou canst **believe**, all things are possible **to him that believeth**” (Mark 9:23). We learn from Jesus’ reply to the man of the demoniac child that believing is the most important element! Ultimately, Jesus worked with that man’s belief in order to heal the child, “straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, **Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief**” (Mark 9:24). Essentially Jesus told the man your belief is sufficient material from the spirit realm for me to work in this situation.

Jesus meets us at the point of our faith! The centurion told Jesus, “speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed” (Matt 8:8). In other words he was asking Jesus, “Can you work with me in this fashion?” And Jesus said, “I can work with that!” Jesus meets us at the location of our faith!

When you eventually need something in the natural realm, you need to learn from the Biblical expressions of belief! However, wherever, in whatever fashion your faith can be mustered, then do that thing! The woman said in her heart, “I’m going downtown even though I am not supposed to mix with the crowd. And, when I can touch Jesus’ garment, I will be made whole.” Touching Jesus’ Hem became the woman’s point of faith! Because of the woman’s illness she was enjoined by the law to remain separate from the people; nevertheless, she stepped out on her faith!

On the other hand remember the disciples, “Master, Master! We are all going to die!” Now how did that request work? Not too good. We will remember that the LORD asked/rebuked them, “Where is your faith?” In actual fact, Jesus expected them to react in faith without doubt. He elsewhere said to Peter concerning walking on water, “O thou of little faith, **wherefore didst thou doubt?**” (Matt 14:31).

James wrote, “**let him ask of God**, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; **and it shall be given him**. 6 **But let him ask in faith**, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed” (James 1:5-6). Now notice that James continues to make a powerful statement; and, if we carefully examine his statement, then we will learn that the exact opposite of his statement is also true, “**For let not that man (the doubter) think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.**” (James 1:7). Reason teaches us along with other Biblical statements that the exact opposite of that statement is also true, “Let the man (*the believer*) expect that he shall receive whatever he asks of the LORD.” We all remember Jesus’ expression, “when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24). If we wish to receive, we must ask of God; however, we are required to ask in faith, **believing!**

Since we go by the label, “believers,” then we need to live up to our description! We must continue to grow in belief! Whatever I have today is what I have believed for yesterday. Everybody say, “I am a believer in the word of God and God is working in me!”

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