

**IT
STARTS WITH**

Faith



It Starts with Faith

Can I ask you a question? What is it that you desire? I mean really take a moment and think about it. For most people, it doesn't take long. They can tell you in an instant that they want; money, a house, a career, a family, and good health. For some it may be things that money cannot buy like peace of mind, freedom from addiction, or love. No matter what it is you feel you are lacking, in order to receive it there is only one place to start. Faith. Yes, you heard me correctly. Just like the title says, it starts with faith. What exactly does faith have to do with anything? I can answer that with one word, everything. First, let's get an understanding of what faith is in the first place. In order to do that, we have to seek the counsel of the one who created faith. The creator of faith and all things is God and we can find His counsel in His word.

The first stop on our journey of faith is Hebrews 11:1 (KJV)

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

According to the Oxford dictionary, a substance is the real physical matter of which a person or thing consists and which has a tangible, solid presence.

The Amplified Bible states it this way:

“Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses]”

What does all this really mean? It means that your faith is a real thing. It has the ability to bring into existence the desires of your heart. Faith starts with hope, and then turns into reality.

Let's start off with an example. Let's say I want a car. First, I hope for the car (I have a desire for it). Then that hope becomes my reality, my one and only reality. “I have a car.” It may not look that way to others at the moment and my situation may even say something different, but none of that matters because my true reality is my faith, “I have a car.” Faith is the evidence of things not seen, that means your faith is proof of what you are believing for regardless if anyone else can see it or not. Your faith is the proof of its existence.

In the Beginning

This whole faith thing may be a new concept for you, but it is in no way new. All things were created by faith. The world that we live in was created by faith. You don't want to take my word for it? That's fine, let's go to Genesis. Most people know that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Then the Bible begins to go in detail at verse three.

Genesis 1:3

“And God said, let there be light and there was light.”

The process of faith in creating light is no different than the faith that you must have in your own life to create the world that you desire for yourself. First, God had a desire for the light. “I want there to be light in the world.” Without desire, there is no creation. He then believed in that hope and brought it to reality. “Let there be light” and guess what, there was light. The results that God received in the beginning of creation are no different than the results you receive in your life when you decide to take a hold of faith and not let go. Why would our results be any different when we were created in the image of God?

Genesis 1:27

*“So God created man in **his own** image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”*

Being a Bishop and Prophet of God, I have heard it said over 1000 times that we are created in the image of God. At first mention it sounds

great, but what does it really mean to be created in the image of God? Imagine that you are in a pottery class and the teacher pulls out a pot she made. She instructs the class to make the exact same pot. They are creating their pot in the image of the one that the teacher made. The difference is that God is a spirit. So when we were created in His image that does not mean physically. You can see that just by taking a look around where you are. Everyone looks different; different races, facial features, hair lengths, heights and eye colors. We were created in the image of His person, His character, His authority. We were created in the image of who He is. That means we were created to have faith just like Him.

You're a Natural

Everyone already has faith. We were created with faith because we were made in the image of God. Our current life is evidence of our past faith. Whether you are aware of it or not, you have had faith all along. Some people have faith in sickness. They know that cancer runs in their family so they believe that they will get it. They are just awaiting the diagnoses that they have it. Some people have faith in poverty. They are broke, their parents are broke, so they will always be broke. Guess, what? All these things will come to pass. Why? Because of your faith. Whether your faith is in poverty or prosperity does not matter. Faith is about creation, and you will create whatever your faith has attached itself to, whether it be life or death. We have faith for things all of the time. None of us are lacking the amount of faith that it takes to produce the manifested results in our lives.

Romans 12:3

“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

This scripture is living proof that God has indeed given everyone faith. Maybe God gave your grandmother a gallon of faith and only gave you a teaspoon. According to the Scripture, God has given us all the same amount of faith. *“God has dealt to every man **the measure of faith,**”* Romans 12:3. The measure, means that there was only one measure that was given to all mankind. There is not one person who has lived, that received a greater

measure of faith then you did. It seems to me as if the matter of faith has been settled. We all have it, we were all given the same amount, and we all use it whether we realize it or not.

The more you use your faith the more you build up your faith muscle. Faith is like lifting weights. The more you use it, the stronger it becomes. That is why it is so difficult to get some people out of a poverty mentality. They have had faith in poverty their whole lives. Their faith in the area of poverty is so strong that you can't tell them anything different. Now that we know we have faith, we just need to make sure that we are putting it in the right place.

The Author

If you ask me, there is no better place to start with your faith than with the author of faith, Jesus the Christ.

Hebrews 12:2

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

I really like how the Amplified version breaks this down:

“Looking away [from all that will distract] to Jesus, who is the Leader and the Source of our faith [giving the first incentive for our belief] and is also its Finisher [bringing it to maturity and perfection]. He, for the joy [of obtaining the prize] that was set before him, endured the cross, despising and ignoring the shame and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Jesus is the author of our faith. All things that were created, were created by Jesus.

John 1:3

“All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.”

Through His death and resurrection, He became the finisher of our faith. Jesus died on the cross to restore mankind's relationship back to God. He did so by taking the sins of the world upon Himself and rendering those

that believed in him righteous and justified. Everything we would ever need was accomplished by his death and resurrection. When He hung on the cross He said three heartfelt words that became the culmination of our faith. *“It is finished”* (John 19:30).

The awesome thing about placing your faith in Jesus is that in him is everything that you could possibly need. Whether it is health, wealth, love, restoration, deliverance, or peace. All these things and more are found in him.

Colossians 2:10

“And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.

The word complete means whole, lacking nothing. In Christ you are lacking nothing and possess everything that you could ever need. The key to tapping into that wholeness that dwells within Jesus is faith. It all begins with believing that the price he paid on the cross was for you. That He washed your sins away and started you on a new path of righteousness in Him. That He is the son of God sent into the world just for you.

If you do believe that, then let's take this moment to put your faith to use. Why wait any longer?

It is rather simple. In order to receive the change in your life that you desire, your faith has to start with Jesus. It has to start with salvation. The Bible says that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved (Romans 10:9).

Your prayer does not have to be perfect, all you need is faith in Jesus. If you choose to, you can read this short prayer.

Father, I thank you for your son Jesus. I believe that he died for my sins and was raised from the dead so that I may have new life through him. I welcome you into my heart and into my life. It is in Jesus name I pray, Amen.

Welcome to the family! All of heaven is rejoicing over your step of faith unto salvation (Luke 15:7). Salvation is the first step of your faith, you now have to keep your faith on the right things. The only way to do this is by transforming your mind.

Transform Your Mind

In order to change your faith of the negative and your surrounding circumstances, your mind has to be transformed. There is no other way. Right thinking leads to right believing.

Romans 12:2 Amp.

“Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the things which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].”

We as human beings are naturally negative. It does not take any effort on our part to think negatively about the things that we go through in our daily lives. What does take effort is aligning our thoughts with the word of God so that our life can reflect the life of abundance that Christ came to give.

The only way to renew (transform) your mind is to open up your Bible and begin reading it. Reading the Bible can be difficult for some people. There are many Christians who do not read the Bible because they do not understand it.

How else will you find out how something works if you do not read the manufacturer's manual. The Bible is our manufacturer's manual. It tells us who we are, why we are, and whose we are. The Bible is not meant to be

some mysterious book that no one can understand. If that was the case then it would be of no use to us and God leaving it here for us would have been in vain. What many people attempt to do, is understand the Bible with their brain. To rationalize it, try to get it to make sense to their natural logic. That is not going to happen, the word of God is Spirit because He is a spirit. Therefore, the words are spiritually discerned.

1 Corinthians 2:14

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

John 6:63

“The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.”

There are two things that I recommend when trying to study the Bible:
1. Ask God to give you understanding of His word and 2. Seek out a ministry that you trust and listen to their resources in order to gain clarity. As you begin to study the Bible, God will begin to show you who He created you to be. Once you put your faith to that, it will manifest in your life.

Believing with Your Mouth

As we have already discussed, faith is not just some contemporary ideal or some form of positive thinking. Positive thinking only takes place in one part of your body and that is your mind. Faith is something that has to take place not only in your mind and heart, it also has to take place in your mouth.

Matthew 12:34

“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

The words that we speak out of our mouth are a reflection of the way that we feel in our heart. A great way to test if you are standing in faith regarding a situation is to listen to the words coming out of your mouth. If you are still speaking the opposite of what you desire then you are not in faith. Your words must line up with your faith. When your mind is transformed your words will naturally fall in line.

Proverbs 18:21

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”

According to that Scripture, there is power in your tongue. That power produces fruit in your life. Which can either be good or rotten fruit. The Scripture only list two things that are fueled by the power of your tongue, life and death. Everything that you speak is either creating life or death to your finances, your relationships, your job, your happiness, or your life. Life and death will always be your options, but the choice is yours.

Deuteronomy 30:19

“I have set before your life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that both you and thy seed may live.”

Contrary to popular belief, God cannot make you do anything. You must choose.

Labor to Rest

If you talk to anyone who has stood in faith for anything and received it. They will tell you that it was work. It is something that you must actively do.

Hebrews 4:11

“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest.”

Rest is a state of peace. That state of peace is only brought about by your faith. The Scripture says that we must labor to stay in that place of peace. The Israelites found out the hard way. God had delivered them from Egypt with signs and wonders and held their hand as he brought them into the promised land (Exodus 6-13). Not everyone made it into the promised land because they lacked the faith needed to remain in rest and their bodies fell in the wilderness.

Hebrews 4:2

“For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them (the Israelites): but the word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”

You may find all kinds of wonderful things in the word of God regarding health, prosperity, and life. According to this scripture, it will not profit you anything if you do not receive it with faith. Once your faith is rooted and established on the Word of God, you will find rest (peace).

I am sure we all know that when your faith is only on your adverse circumstances, rest and peace are as far as the east is from the west. The only way to rest is to have faith in who Jesus is and who you are in him.

Hebrews4:6

“They to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief.”

That statement couldn't be any clearer if it was water. The Israelites did not enter into rest because of their unbelief. They did not believe the word of God concerning their situation, therefore they were unable to enter into his rest. You and me have the same choice to make my friend. I do not know about you, but I choose to have faith and rest in Christ Jesus.

You are now and always have been, equipped with everything you need to change any and every situation around you. You were born to be an overcomer and it is only by your faith that you can overcome.

1 John 5:4

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

Say this prayer with me as we go on this journey of faith together:

Father, thank you that you have given me the measure of faith. That I am not lacking in anything and am whole and complete in Christ. Help me to transform my mind so that I may know what your perfect will is concerning me. Give me understanding and revelation of your word. Father you said that if I would seek you, I would find you. Thank you for the free gift of salvation

and that you have equipped me with the faith I need in order to see your will come to pass in my life. May I no longer be comfortable with settling for less. May I no longer be satisfied with speaking death and walking in unbelief. I believe Father, help my unbelief. May my desire be for you and to see your will be done in my life. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

Exercise Questions

1. Is there anything stopping you from having faith? _____
2. Did God give you less faith than others? _____
3. What/who is the most important thing to put your faith in?

4. How do you transform your mind?

5. How do you find rest and peace?

Put your faith to work

1. Take a moment and think about 2 changes that you want to see take place in your life. It can be anything. Nothing is too big or small for God.

1. _____

2. _____

2. Take the first change that you want to see and find 2 scriptures to help renew your mind (you can use several resources to locate scripture; your Bible concordance, google, or ask a trusted friend)

1. _____

2. _____

3. Meditate on those 2 scriptures until your faith is rooted in their truth.

Watch your words as they begin to change and come in line with your new way of thinking.

4. Continue the steps with the next change you want to see and everyone from here on out.

I am confident that as you stand on faith you will see your world transform to all you have believed it to be.

Some Scriptures to Get You Started

Health

Exodus 15:26 – The Lord that heals you

Deuteronomy 7:14-15 – The Lord will take all sickness away from you

Psalms 103:1-5 – He heals you of all diseases

Psalm 118:17 - You shall not die, but live

Proverbs 4:24 – The word of God is health to all your flesh

Isaiah 53:4-5 – By his stripes you were are healed

Jeremiah 30:17 – The Lord will restore health to you

The new testament starting in Matthew is full of miracles and healings

Prosperity

3 John 1:2 – I wish above all that you would prosperity

Psalm 35:27 – The Lord has pleasure in your prosperity

Duet. 8:18 – The Lord gives you power to get wealth

2 Corinthians 8:9 – Jesus was made poor so that you can be rich

Ephesians 3:20 – God is able to do more than you can ask or think

Psalm 34:9 -10 – Those who seek the Lord do not lack any good thing

Matthew 6:31-33 – Seek the Lord and he will provide all you need

Philippians 4:19 – God shall supply all your needs

Marriage

Genesis 2:22 -24 - One flesh

Proverbs 5:18- 19 - Rejoice with the wife of your youth

Proverb 12:4 – A wife of character

Proverbs 18:22 - He who finds a wife

Proverbs 19:14- A prudent wife is from the Lord

Proverbs 31:10 - A noble wife is better than rubies

Ephesians 5:22 – 33 - Submission

Ephesians 5:25 – Husbands love your wives

Mark 10:9 – Let no man separate

1Corinthian 13:4 -5 Definition of love

Peace

Colossians 3:15 - Let peace rule in your heart

Galatians 5:22 - The fruit of the spirit is peace

Hebrews 12:14 - Make every effort to live in peace

1 Peter 5:7 - Cast all anxiety on God

Philippians 4:7 - The peace of God will guard your heart and mind

Psalm 29:11 - The Lord blesses his people with peace

Isaiah 9:6 - The prince of peace

1 Corinthians 14:33 - God of peace

Faith

Galatians 2: 20 – Live by the faith of Jesus

James 1:6 – Believe and don't doubt

Mark 10:52 – Your faith has healed you

Mark 11:24 – Believe when you pray and it shall be yours

Romans 10:9 – Believe in your heart and you will be saved

Matthew 17:20 – Faith as a mustard seed

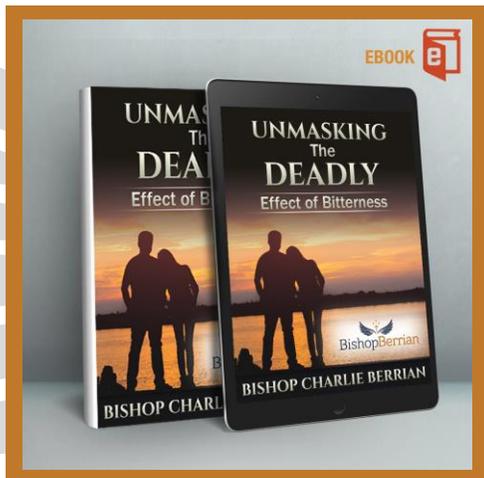
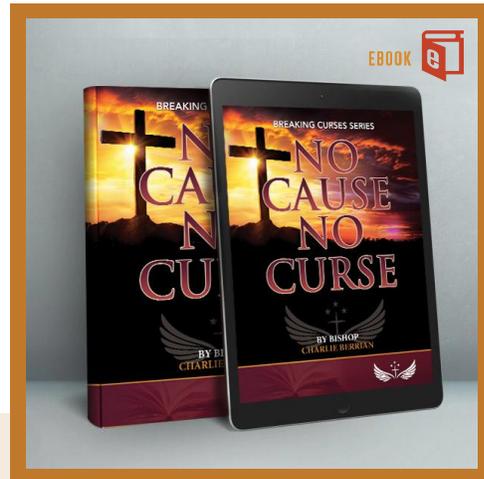
2 Corinthians 5:7 – We live by faith

Mark 9:23 – Anything is possible when you believe.

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