

The third challenge that ought to help fortify our faith is to ...

3. Focus on the Author of Faith

a. The Author of our faith is Jesus Christ

- 1) We learned this back in Hebrews 12:2 (Read).
- 2) Jesus is the Christ or the Messiah.
- 3) By faith, we believe that Jesus died, was buried and rose again to offer sinners forgiveness and eternal life in heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4) "*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*" (John 3:36) "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*" Without Christ, faith has no foundation.
- 4) Faith in Christ changes a person from the inside out. (2 Corinthians 5:17) "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*"

b. Jesus Christ is immutable.

- 1) In other words, it is impossible for Jesus Christ to change. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. **Of what does that assure us?** It assures us that the program and person of Jesus has not changed and never will.
- 2) Christ is the eternal foundation of our faith. He has always been God since eternity past. He is God today. He will be God throughout eternity future. He is unchangeable!
- 3) If you place your faith in a pastor, he may fail you. If your faith is in a church, it may fail you. If your faith is totally in Jesus Christ, you have nothing to fear. He will never fail you because He never changes. (Psalms 90:2) "*Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*"

Conclusion: If your faith needs fortifying, follow the three challenges we have found in our text this morning. (Review). If you do not know Jesus as your Saviour, you have no faith to fortify. That is where you must begin. I would be delighted to talk with you about that.

Song: Great is Thy Faithfulness 40

Fortifying Your Faith

26 January 2020 AM - Hebrews 13:7-8 - Heb19 - Scott Childs

Introduction: Faith is acting upon trusted information. On more than one occasion, Jesus rebuked his disciples for their lack of faith. I can relate to that. Perhaps you can too. Our faith often needs fortifying.

Transition: The apostle gives us three challenges that, if obeyed, ought to help fortify our faith.

The first challenge that ought to help fortify our faith is to ...

1. Remember the Pastors You Have Had

a. That's right, remember your spiritual leaders

- 1) Our God is a God of order.
 - a) At Creation, God placed man as the leader in the home (Ge 2:24).
 - b) God gave Israel leaders like Moses to guide the nation.
 - c) God planned that a local church be the spiritual family for Christians, and He placed the pastor as their leader. (1 Peter 5:2-3) "*Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*"
- 2) We are to remember our spiritual leaders.
 - a) To remember to be mindful of them, to hold them in your memory, and to think about them.
 - b) Do not just recall their names; remember that God has placed them in leadership over your spiritual life.
- 3) No spiritual leader is perfect. Yet God has ordained leadership. Think back on those who have mentored you spiritually. How has God used those pastors in your life?

b. We must remember what they preach.

- 1) The fact that they speak the word of God identifies the leader as pastors you have had.
- 2) In the first century, Christians could not watch a video replay or listen to an audio sermon. They had to pay close attention, take notes, and try to memorise. Remembering

what the preacher preached took effort.

- 3) As a Christian, you have a duty to read and study the Bible on your own; however, God has ordained that the pastor of your local church preach the Word of God to aid you.
- 4) The early church met daily to hear God's Word preached. (Acts 5:42) "*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*" We meet Sunday AM, Sunday PM, and Wednesday PM to listen to preaching.
- 5) It is my goal to explain God's Word in every sermon and to make practical applications. Over the years, I have preached through many books of the Bible and on many topics. I desire to give you a thorough understanding of God's Word. If you only attend on Sunday AM, you are missing 2/3 of the spiritual food I am preparing for you. You cannot possibly remember things you did not hear.
- 6) If a sermon challenges your heart, download it from our website and listen to it repeatedly. Let it soak into your mind and heart. This will strengthen you spiritually.
- 7) Remembering your pastors, and what they have preached, will help to fortify your faith.

The second challenge that ought to help fortify our faith is to ...

2. Imitate the Faith of the Faithful

a. Consider the end of their conversation

- 1) The word order in the original language is "*considering the end of their conversation, whose faith follow*".
- 2) It is a difficult phrase because the word "*end*" literally speaks of a way out, exit, or issue (pouring out).
- 3) There are two possible interpretations of this.
 - a) In the first century, many preachers gave their lives for the Gospel. Thus, the word end may refer to the preacher's conduct **at the end of his life**.
 - (1) Many preachers down through history have displayed great faith in God during persecution. Persecutors killed countless preachers by burning them at the stake, feeding them to wild

beasts, torturing them to death and countless other inhuman cruelties.

- (2) In the first century, Christians expected persecution. (Philippians 1:29) "*For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*" (2 Timothy 3:12) "*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*"
 - (3) Bravely facing death rather than renouncing faith in Christ, takes genuine faith.
- b) The second way we may interpret this is "considering the **result** of their conduct."
- (1) Consider or look attentively at what flows from their conduct.
 - (2) Preachers who faithfully preach the word of God, challenge listeners to apply God's Word and live by the Bible. Those who claim to be Christians yet do not live by the Bible need to examine their professed Christianity.
 - (3) Seeing the changed lives of those who obey the Bible ought to fortify our faith.

b. Follow their faith

- 1) The word "*follow*" means to mimic or to imitate.
- 2) We must follow or imitate the faith of faithful preachers. Mimic their faithful perseverance over the years. Follow the faith-building sermons they preached. We must also mimic the faith of Christians whose lives God transformed through the preaching of His Word.
- 3) Follow the faith that is alive and real. Many religious people today follow **a faith that makes them feel good on Sunday** but does nothing to change their lives. The NT Christian faith is a **life-changing faith**. It is a faith that is guided and governed by the Bible, not emotions.
- 4) **Illus:** Many live by feelings, place faith in their feelings, and facts on faith. Christians live by facts, place faith in facts, and let feelings rest on faith. (Bible, Song book, and cloth)
- 5) **Let the faith of others fortify your faith!**