

This year as a Church we've been on a journey of growing stronger. Through our teaching series we've covered **Praise Victoriously, Pray Continuously, Confess Powerfully, Love Passionately and Think Holistically**. Today we begin our new series, **Believe Faithfully**. As we activate and apply the principles we are learning through the Word of God we will get stronger.

Read Hebrews 11:1-3 and 11:6

God has given each of us faith, and it is this faith that pleases Him. Faith has nothing to do with the senses or our circumstances. It's not about what we see, taste, hear or even feel. Faith is an inner knowing that is based on what God has said. Faith does not ignore or deny the circumstances, but instead, it brings a solution to our problem by bringing God's infallible word into our situation. When we face a difficult circumstance we can continue to thank the Lord, despite what we might see in the natural world, because we believe and declare that what He has said will come to pass.

In this scripture we just read, the Bible says that faith is the substance, an assurance or confidence, of things hoped for. Faith starts with hope, something we are desiring or believing for. And the faith that comes from this hope causes us to stand strong despite what we might see in the natural.

What are some things in life that you are hoping for? Write them down or share them with the group.

Read Matthew 19:26, Mark 9:23 and Phillipians 4:13

God teaches us how to access the faith He has given us. These three verses are connected. Faith lives in what God has said. That's why we need to know what God has said and the only way we know what God has said is by being in His Word, the Bible. Charles Spurgeon said that we should '*visit many good books, but live in the Bible.*' Only the Bible has the true Word of God. Our faith won't go to the next level unless we are hearing from God, and we do this through His Word.

How do you make the word of God a regular part of your life? What verses are you memorising just now? Share some with the group.

Read Mark 11:22-24 and Romans 10:9-10

If we are going to start accessing the promises of God we need to start saying what God is saying. Salvation is accessed and sealed through believing in our heart and confessing with our mouth that Jesus is Lord. As we get God's Word coming out of our mouths, saying as He says, we access the power and promises of the Kingdom.

Share an experience where you chose to speak what God was saying, rather than what it might have looked like in the natural. How did you see your circumstances change to line up with the word of God you were speaking?

Read Matthew 4:4

Maturing in Christ means growing in the Word of God. The Bible says that we have everything we need to live a life of godliness, but too often we don't access it because we don't know His word and therefore are not accessing the faith He has given us. As we get into the word of God we start to discover that when we have access to healing, victory, blessing and the good gifts of God but we need faith to access these. The world we live in is full of darkness, but the church can bring light to this darkness when we have faith in Christ

What are some of the promises of the Kingdom we have access to because we are in Christ?

The Bible says in Romans 12:3 that He has given each person a measure of faith. That means that we all have faith, but what we need to do is learn how to access and use this gift that we have been given if we want to walk in the promises of God.

Read Romans 5:17

God has called you to reign as a king in life through Jesus, the King of kings. Jesus paid an incredible price so that we would live as kings, with access to all of the promises of God. However, we can often miss out on these promises through a lack of faith. When we are always tired, or complaining, when we aren't thankful or when we've always got excuses or lack, we aren't reigning in life as kings. But the good news is that God doesn't want to leave us in that place. Jesus already went to the cross to pay for our sin, sickness and poverty so we can live as kings. We already have the faith required, we just need to learn how to use it and grow in it.

What do you think it means to reign in life?

Read Romans 10:17

This verse explains how to access our faith. Faith is activated through hearing the Word of God. As we get hungry for the Word of God and dwell in it daily, we begin to grow in our understanding of all that God has given us and our faith is activated. Everytime we read the Bible we can ask God to bring illumination to His word and to open the eyes of our understanding. When this happens our faith is engaged and enlarges because we are growing in wisdom and understanding.

Why do you think the Bible says in Proverbs 4 that wisdom and understanding are so important? How can we grow in these areas?

Read Colossians 1:12-15

As we read and understand more of the Word of God we discover more and more of the promises God has spoken over us. Every single one of these promises are available to all believers through the redemptive work of Christ on the cross, however we need faith to access them.

What is one promise of God that you are familiar with from the Bible that you are declaring over your life?

Read Ephesians 1:19-23 and Luke 10:19

As kings we have authority over the enemy. As the Church, we are the body and Jesus is the head and that the enemy is under our feet. The authority that is on Christ is on you and the same power that raised Christ from the dead lives in you! It's important as believers we understand more and more of who Jesus is, and therefore who we are in Him as His body. As we grow in this knowledge we begin to understand the authority we have.

What is one name of God from the Bible that helps you to understand who you are in Him? (E.g. God is called 'Father' knowing Him as Father helps me to understand that I am loved by Him.)

Read 1 Corinthians 6:17, John 17:20-21 and John 15:9-17

God's desire is to see unity in His body; for us to be one with one another and one with Him. Too often in Christianity we separate the head (Jesus) from the body (the Church) by acknowledging that God is able to do something but doubting that we are, even though the same power is in us. However, to be one with Christ we must first be one with each other, not allowing division, gossip or slander to come between believers. Unity comes through abiding in Christ, staying in His love and staying obedient to His word.

Why do you think God is so big on unity? If we have had an issue with another person in the body of Christ, what practical things can we do to move into greater unity with them?