

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 9- Luke 9:37-42**

179- The Nature of Biblical Faith Part 1

September 23, 2012

Luke 9:37-42

37 On the next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him.

38 And a man from the crowd shouted, saying, "Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only *boy*,

39 and a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming *at the mouth*; and only with difficulty does it leave him, mauling him *as it leaves*.

40 "I begged Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not."

41 And Jesus answered and said, "**You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here.**"

42 While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him *to the ground* and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father.

To the Glory of God

Now over the last several years- there have been some people who have listened to me preach- especially on the radio- who have criticized me for not emphasizing what are called, "practical matters" in my preaching. And they think that this is an oversight and something that I should correct and that should take up a majority of my preaching. And let me say that discussing practical matters is the single most popular style of preaching today in the modern Church and these people – who mean well- want me to get in line with the overwhelming majority of preachers.

But these kind souls don't realize that this is not something that I forget to do- it is a very firm conviction of my own heart that the responsibility that I have- the responsibility of the teacher and the man of God- and the preacher- is *not* to talk about the details of our daily lives- but to make the Word of God clear and to be very careful not to go where the Word doesn't go while going everywhere that the Word does go.

And that is much harder than you could ever imagine- which is why the modern church is filled with practical issues from losing weight to balancing your checkbook- but is way short of Eternal, Biblical and Theological issues which is all that really matters.

You see, if through preaching line upon line and precept upon precept- verse by verse- lingering in a passage when we need to in order to grasp the eternal and spiritual implications of what Jesus said and did and taught- if by doing that- you come to know and to think biblically- then what will automatically happen is that the Spirit of God will take over the day by day practical details of your life and lead you into doing and saying what you ought to do and say- so that God is honored and your joy is full.

But to concentrate primarily on the practical matters in the hope that people will automatically come into the spiritual and eternal implications of what the Bible actually says- is a *false* hope- it doesn't work- it will never happen in a million years. And the proof of that is to see the general worldliness that dominates the lives of the people who go to church today and to see that true genuine Biblical Holiness is a distant memory in far too many cases.

The method of preaching that is so popular today that doesn't require any deep thought; that doesn't challenge people; or bring conviction into their lives – the style that is filled with clever phrases and cute slogans and that simply hits the high points and then moves on to the next topic; the style that is shallow and filled with worldly and temporal examples- *does not* and *cannot* and *will never* produce people who are broken and contrite before God- and people who literally tremble at God's Word. It *does not* and *cannot* produce people who are in awe of the Glory of God; it does not engender a passionate pursuit of purity and humble and joyful submission to the authority of the sacred Scriptures that will automatically produce husbands who lead and order their homes; and wives who live in humble submission to their

husbands; and children who honor their parents and people who do unto others as they would have others do unto them.

But serious, deep, adult; expositional preaching does produce those things and it always has done that- all through the centuries ever since Ezra exemplified it way back in **Nehemiah 9** and that is precisely why this style of preaching- that once dominated nearly every Church in North American- is looked down on today and why it is condemned and why it is scarcer than chicken's teeth. Truly we are living in the day that the Apostle Paul prophesied about in **2Timothy 4:3&4**:

3For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,
4and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

This is why the Scripture says in **Colossians 3:16**:

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

... because when people begin to think biblically- when your thought processes are dominated by an understanding of eternal absolute Divine Truth- it automatically becomes manifest and visible in every practical realm- so that almost your involuntary responses are biblical- your knee-jerk reactions tend to be conformed to Truth and your normal and natural inclinations all become Biblical and thus pleasing to God.

So it is absolutely critical that God's people are *not* simply given "how to" lessons in Church on Sunday Mornings- but that they understand the breadth and the length and the depth and the height of Divine Truth- to the extent that it so dominates their mind- that whether they act voluntarily or involuntarily, instinctively or by duty- they will always act and do in response to Divine Truth.

So this is not an oversight on my part. This is not a mistake that needs to be corrected. This is not something that I need to change. I am doing this on purpose and it is already working in your individual lives. This is exactly what the Apostle Paul meant when he wrote this in **Romans 12:2**:

... be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

And there really is no richer realm of Truth; no deeper Sound Doctrine; no more profound Theology than what is recorded in the Gospels- which profile the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so we find ourselves moving slowly and deeply through the wonderful Story of Salvation given to us by a Gentile medical doctor named Luke who was commissioned by the Apostle Paul to write two amazing Books of the Bible that will allow us to understand and possess the Mind of Jesus Christ- to the end that we might think the way Jesus thinks and therefore conduct our lives in response to that kind of godly thinking.

And nowhere is this more important than right here in verses 37-42 of Chapter 9.

Now a casual observer living at the time of Jesus would have identified the Jewish people of Jesus' day as being very religious. He would have identified them as being extremely religious- religious to the max- actually consumed as a nation and as a people with religious laws and religious duties and religious ceremonies and religious rites and religious rituals and religious celebrations and religious festivals.

It would be hard to imagine any society anywhere on earth and at any point in history that was or that could be more religious than Israel during the days of Jesus. The general sort of prevailing attitude was one of meticulous morality. Their religion and how they understood it dominated how they lived their individual lives. There were clear rules and standards by which they were to conduct their lives. And to fail to do so was to expose themselves to ridicule and to social disgrace and even alienation and severe punishment.

So any honest Gentile observer would have seen these 1st Century Jews completely dominated by religion and dominated by the morality that this religion produced.

And from an outward visible perspective- they would have been right. And it would also have to be said that these Jews were involved in worshiping the one true living God of the Old Testament. So they were not only religious but they also had their religion directed toward the right God- the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of

Jacob- the God Who had given the Covenant to Abraham. And these Jews supposedly were the people of that Covenant worshipping the single God Who gave that Covenant.

The Jews were offended every day by the presence of the Roman occupiers for a number of reasons and perhaps one of the most important reasons was that the Romans were blatant idolaters. And the majority of the Jews were very careful to have nothing to do with those pagan Romans and so they expected that when the Messiah came- that He would offer them congratulations and reward them because in their minds- they were exactly where they ought to be- and they had worked hard to reject the idols of Rome and they had struggled hard to attain the righteousness that the Law required and so they fully expected to be praised because they had labored so hard to earn the Kingdom of God through their own self -righteous morality.

And they fully expected that Messiah would immediately side with them as being victims and abused people and that in His Righteous Might- the Messiah would wage war against and utterly annihilate those idolatrous Romans and forcefully throw them out of the country and then march right down main street of Jerusalem in his white stallion and walk boldly into the Temple of God and sit down on the Throne of King David and establish His Kingdom in Israel and from there- he would rule the world with a rod of iron.

But Jesus didn't do any of that. Not only didn't He wage war against the pagan Romans- He actually commanded the Jews to love them and to forgive them and to pray for them and to preach the Gospel to them. Jesus didn't march down main street in absolute victory- He rode down the center of the city on the young colt of a donkey with His Feet dragging on each side in a ridiculously awkward demonstration of humility that brought ridicule and scorn by the religious elite.

Jesus didn't march into the Temple of God either- He said that God was going to tear it all down and end animal sacrifices forever and end the Levitical and all human priesthood forever and bring in a superior Covenant made on superior Promises made through a superior Sacrifice offered by a superior High Priest.

And what was more shocking and more disturbing than all of this- Jesus also did not come and congratulate the Jews on their religiosity. He didn't embrace any of the religious leaders; He never one time agreed with or applauded any of them. In fact- Jesus went out of His

way to confront and condemn every single one of them to their face. He came and indicted them and everything they believed and everything they were doing. He told them that their religion was bankrupt; that it was godless; that it was entirely empty and unable to lead a single soul to Salvation. And Jesus said that the first requirement for any of them to be saved was to admit that they were lost.

Jesus went to great lengths to tell them that the self-righteousness that they were so proud of- was disgusting to Him and to God. He told them that they were not a part of the Kingdom of God at all. In fact, it was more likely that filthy tax gatherers and prostitutes and street riff-raff would enter into the Kingdom before they would. He told them that they were spiritually poor; that they were imprisoned by their sins and their lusts; that their eyes were blind to spiritual Truth; and that they were under a massive burden of guilt that would bring nothing but Divine Judgment upon their heads.

In fact in a frightening diatribe against them- the worst verbal condemnation against a people found anywhere in the Bible- in **Matthew 23**- Jesus summarizes His complete rejection and condemnation of them and everything they believed and everything they were doing with these words in **Matthew 23:33**:

You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

And for some reason- they didn't like Jesus or His Message and so they killed Him. That's the simple story of what happened. They didn't like Him and they certainly didn't like His Message. They wanted and they expected congratulations- not an indictment. They wanted affirmation of the validity of their religion- but Jesus refused to give it. Here was the Messiah indicting them and telling them they needed to repent from their self-righteousness; that they needed to repent from their empty man-made worthless religion; that they needed to repent from their own sort of idolatry in which they had made little gods out of themselves.

So in **Luke 9:41**- Jesus sums up His perspective on all of Israel.

You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you and put up with you?

Here we can see a glimpse that it was hard for Jesus to even bear them. It was wearying and insulting for Him to even endure these people because they were patently unbelieving and had strayed so far from the simple Truth put forth in the Old Testament.

And yet they were absolutely convinced- right up to the moment that they hung Jesus on that tree- that the Messiah was going to congratulate them on being a people of great faith. And they were convinced with every fiber of their being that Messiah was going to applaud them for walking so straight. But Jesus told them very clearly that they were both:

“faithless and twisted.”

On other occasions- Jesus used powerful and insulting terms to describe the people who would have bet their lives that they were holy and righteous and pure and godly and faithful. But Jesus said they were:

- ✓ Serpents and a brood of vipers
- ✓ An evil and wicked and adulterous generation
- ✓ A perverse generation
- ✓ An adulterous and sinful generation

The Apostle Peter- in his sermon in **The Acts 2:40** called the Jews, **“crooked,”** and there he used the Greek word, *skolios* from where we get our word- scoliosis which is a crookedness or a curvature of the spine. Peter called them

This crooked generation.

So what was the indictment on them? That they were snakes and vipers and evil and adulterers and wicked and perverse and sinful and crooked and twisted. Other than that- they were just fine. And that is an absolutely horrifying kind of description for a Jew to cope with because they didn’t see that at all. And it was this extreme almost violent condemnation by Jesus that fueled their hatred of Him. Jesus said some very hard and very harsh words- in fact- Jesus never said a single kind or good word toward the religious elite. Not once. Ever.

And what is amazing and utterly frightening is that every single word of condemnation that Jesus said about these people was true.

And so this statement here in **Luke 9:41** fits right in to those hard and harsh words of Jesus. So much so- that when Jesus said to them,

O unbelieving and perverted generation

... they knew exactly what He meant. And I'll show you why. Please turn with me to **Deuteronomy 32**. Now remember, these Jews were people of the Scriptures. They prided themselves on that, on their familiarity with the existing Scriptures at that time which would be our 39 Books that we call The Old Testament. They read and studied and heard them taught their entire lives. They taught them to their children. Illiterate people- who could not read a single word knew more about the Old Testament than college educated people do today. And so when Jesus called them a faithless and perverted generation, they knew exactly what He was talking about. It stung them and that sting ran deep because they all knew **Deuteronomy 32**- the familiar song of Moses. Now look back to **Deuteronomy 31:28**, where Moses says,

Deuteronomy 31:28-30

28"Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call the heavens and the earth to witness against them.

29"For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands."

Moses says, *"I know where you're going, I know what you're going to do. I've seen evidence of it in the wilderness wandering. I've seen it all. I know exactly what's going to happen when I'm gone."* Now look at verse 30:

Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete:

So Moses made this indictment and this condemnation against

them into a song so that it would be memorable- like a poem- and easy for them to memorize and remember. And I can't read all of it this morning- but let's look at enough of it so you can understand how it relates to our text over in **Luke 9**.

Let's start at the beginning in verse **Deuteronomy 32:1-4**

1 Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth.

2"Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As the droplets on the fresh grass And as the showers on the herb.

3"For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God!

4"The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.

Now look at **Deuteronomy 32:5&6**:

5 They have acted corruptly toward Him, *They are* not His children, because of their defect; *But are* a perverse and crooked generation.

6 Do you thus repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you.

There is the indictment. God said that the Jews are a “**perverse and crooked generation**”. And down in verse 16 it says they made God jealous with strange gods, with abominations, provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed to demons who were not god to gods whom they had not known, new gods who came lately, whom your fathers didn't dread. You neglected the Rock Who begot you and forgot the God Who gave you birth. And the Lord saw this and spurned them because of the provocation of His sons and daughters. Then look what God said in **Deuteronomy 32:20-25**:

20... 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end *shall be*; For they are a perverse generation, Sons in whom is no faithfulness.

21'They have made Me jealous with *what* is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with *those who* are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation,

22For a fire is kindled in My anger, And burns to the lowest part of Sheol, And consumes the earth with its yield, And sets on fire the foundations of the

mountains.

23' I will heap misfortunes on them; I will use My arrows on them.

24' *They will be* wasted by famine, and consumed by plague And bitter destruction; And the teeth of beasts I will send upon them, With the venom of crawling things of the dust.

25' Outside the sword will bereave, And inside terror — Both young man and virgin, The nursling with the man of gray hair.

So where is all this Judgment coming from? From an entirely faithless and an entirely perverse generation. God said:

They have made Me jealous with *what* is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with *those who* are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation,

Now all the Jews who were alive in Jesus' day knew this song of Moses. Most of them would have been able to repeat verbatim because they had memorized it and had sung it from a child.

Now there is a lot more that could be said about this passage in **Deuteronomy 32-** but I hope you get the point. What Jesus tells these people here in **Luke 9** is the fulfillment of what Moses sang to them 1400 years earlier. And that is the correct context of this Passage here in **Luke 9**. Jesus is condemning these Jews as being both faithless and perverse with the very same condemnation that Moses sang about before they ever entered into the Promised Land.

And that is what the average Jew of the 1st Century would have thought as he heard Jesus use these words here in **Luke 9**. And so right off the bat- you can see just how far off the mark most of the preaching is today that seeks to link what Jesus says here with faith to be healed or faith to be blessed with material blessings. Jesus is quoting Moses here and the Jews knew it.

And make sure you understand what Jesus is saying here. Jesus is saying to these people who prided themselves on their religiosity and who prided themselves on having shunned idolatry and who prided themselves on worshiping the one true living God and who prided themselves on being faithful above and beyond anyone else on earth- Jesus is telling them,

"You're not any different from the unsaved people of Moses' day who were indicted about being both faithless and perverse. You are no different today than that crooked perverse and faithless generation back then. You are just the same. You have a defected and twisted knowledge of the Lord and you lack true faith in Him."

And we can see that what Jesus is telling them is true because here the Lord Himself is in their midst- the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is incarnate and standing right in front of them and talking to them and manifestly they did not love Him; they did not believe in Him; they did not embrace Him; they did not obey Him; they did not agree with Him; they were not convicted by Him; they did not fall on their faces and beg forgiveness from Him; they did not worship Him; they utterly rejected Him and everything He said; they patently despised His words; they completely hated what He said; and they absolutely and categorically disdained everything about Him.

So by their undeniable rejection of Jesus- they are proving that they are indeed exactly what Jesus says they are:

Faithless and Perverse

So here is Jesus- God Almighty in human flesh; the Messiah; God the Son come into the world and these people- who above all the people of the world should have embraced Him and worshipped Him and obey Him- and yet here they are manifesting just how perverse and how twisted and how faithless they really are- in the way they deal with Him.

So in reality- they really didn't know the one true and living God at all- in any capacity- or they would have recognized Jesus when He came. Obviously they didn't have a correct view of their Lord or a correct view of themselves or a correct understanding of the Old Testament or they would have responded to Jesus differently. And that proves my point.

You must have a right and a correct theology to understand the true Lord. You must understand the Word of God if you ever hope to know and understand and love and serve and follow and obey and please Jesus. You must believe in Jesus and you must believe that

Jesus is God and you must believe that God the Father raised God the Son from the dead or you can't be saved.

So faith is crucial to Salvation and faith is crucial to Sanctification. And so faith is not some mystical or esoteric aspect; nor is faith a commodity like a muscle that needs to be exercised. And neither is faith some kind of tool where you can twist God's Arm to get something out of God if your tool is big enough or strong enough. That is a false and unbiblical understanding of faith. Faith is a precious and gracious gift from God and faith is defined as:

Believing and trusting and having confidence in what God said

Let me make it very simple without dealing with all of the possibilities and say this, faith, true faith, legitimate faith, what is biblically defined as faith is simply this:

Believing what God said simply because He said it

That's faith. And not because it has necessarily been proven to you. Not because you've necessarily experienced something. But simply because God said it you believe it and you believe it to the point that you're willing and eager to base your life on it. It is in that sense that we are people of faith. So it is in that sense that we believe. It isn't that we just believe in believing. It isn't that we think we can somehow activate some reality by believing hard enough. We cannot create matter or create life or alter reality by believing. That Power is reserved solely to God and for anyone to teach that human beings can do that is blasphemy pure and simple.

It isn't that we believe we can make things happen by our faith. It is that we believe that what God said is what is true. That is what our faith is. It is faith in the revealed Word of God.

For example- many people teach today that somebody who has an illness can say, *"I have faith to believe I am going to be well."* But that is not an appropriate kind of faith because you do not know what God's Will is concerning that particular situation and because you do not know what God's purpose is and because God has not revealed to you the future- you cannot trust in what God has said because God hasn't said anything about that.

And so what you are left with is trusting that even though you don't know what God is doing- you know that God knows what God is doing and that is fine with you. So in those circumstances- you trust in God- that whatever happens God will do what is right and best to His Honor and to His Glory and ultimately to our joy.

So Jesus wants to teach us about true genuine and Biblical faith here in this passage in **Luke 9**. So what is faith? What kind of faith are we talking about? When we talk about faith in a biblical context, this is what we mean.

Faith is believing what God has said- simply because He said it.

When Christians say they have faith in God- it doesn't mean some generic "god" of their own making who doesn't exist anywhere but in their own imagination and in their own heads. What it means is we believe that what the Bible says about God is true. You cannot separate our faith in God from the Divine Revelation of God in Scripture.

So faith is not built on things that I have experienced. Faith is not in some kind of generic "god" that I have manufactured. Faith is not in a "god" that I have created either out of my own intuition or out of my own personal experiences. True Faith is always in and is only based in and rests upon the one single God of Scripture and what He said.

So those of us who are saved are saved- not because of some feeling we got or some mystical experience we had or some dream or some angelic visitation- but we who are truly saved are saved only because we believe and we trust and we have confidence in what the Scripture says about God and about Jesus Christ and about His finished Work and about Us and about our Sins and about Forgiveness and about Salvation.

We who are being sanctified are being sanctified because we believe the Truth of God's Word. And so we live by faith. And what that means is that we believe what God has said for no other reason other than He said it. We don't believe so that we can get something out of God- we believe because by believing and trusting in what God said- we honor and glorify God and that makes us to be faithful.

And that is why the view you have of Scripture is so critical. All our access to God's Power in our lives and to understand and obey God

is by means of faith. For example- you can't have the Power of Salvation unless it is by faith. You can't have the Power of Sanctification unless it is by faith. Believing God will save you. Believing God will sanctify you. So what we need to know is what God has said and then learn to trust in that. So that is my introduction to this portion of God's Word.

Now let's get into the text of what Dr. Luke wrote. The prior passage we just spent five weeks on- was about the Transfiguration. Jesus went up into the mountain with Peter, James and John to pray. And He was transfigured there. And those three men saw Christ's Glory. They were literally taken into the eternal Kingdom. They saw Moses and Elijah there too- talking with Jesus about His departure and about His Death and His Resurrection and His Ascension back into Heaven. And we saw how this was an incredibly wonderful experience. This was a glimpse of the eternal Kingdom; a glimpse of Christ in His Glory; and a glimpse of the glorified saints, Moses and Elijah and hearing the audible voice of God there as well. That was an experience of sight, we could say.

But now Luke tells us that these men and Jesus come back down from that mountain and return back into the world of faith- back into the realm where you don't see- but you believe anyway. And how important it is as long as we are living in this world to learn to walk by faith and not by sight.

So down here in the normal earthly and fallen world- we have to believe the Word of God. For example- I'm going to Heaven and I believe that. But have I been to Heaven? Have I seen Heaven with my eyes? No, but Scripture gives me insight into what Heaven is and how to get there and I'm banking my entire eternity on the fact that what the Bible says about Heaven is true. I believe the Gospel and I believe the Holy Scriptures and so I have laid down my entire eternal destiny on what the Gospel says. I am fixed in believing that Gospel because I believe that it will provide for me eternal life. But how do I know that? Because that's what the Bible says and I believe the Word of God.

So my faith is not in my own ability to do great things or to be healed or to be blessed with financial or material possessions- but my faith is firm in what God has said simply because it is God Who has said it.

And over the years- my ability and my success in trusting in what The Bible says about Heaven has grown and it has become much

stronger and my ability to trust what God has said in Scripture has become easier and it has become more deep and more full precisely because of the accumulated time I have spent in God's Word and of what I have learned about the trustworthiness and the reliability of the God Who initially saved my soul.

In other words, now that I have come to Salvation by faith- I now go through Sanctification by that same faith. Well, what does that mean? Well, it means that my progressive separation from sin; my progressive conformity to the likeness of Jesus Christ; my ongoing spiritual progress towards holiness is directly related to my obedience to God's revealed Word.

So Sanctification is a process of learning how to obey God's Word and of receiving both the desire and the Power to obey the Word of God- and to live a life that is defined by Scripture as pleasing to God and laid out in specifics in the Scriptures. So faith is at the very heart of spiritual life- but it is not a nebulous faith- it is not some kind of self-controlled energy that makes things happen. Faith is simply trusting that what the Lord has said is true simply because He said it. It speaks of things I hope for that haven't yet been realized. It speaks of things that I cannot see but I believe them. I have basically banked my entire time and eternity on what the Bible says. That's why it's so important to protect the Word of God.

Faith then which is crucial to spiritual life is faith that is placed in the Revelation of God. Those people in **Hebrews 11** are the heroes of the faith because they believed God. And they believed God when it didn't appear on the surface to be reasonable to do so- to those on the outside. But to us who are saved- it's always reasonable to believe the Revelation of God because our God is Good and He is Faithful and Powerful and Wise.

And that's why **Hebrews 12** begins with these words:

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

So our walk with God is a faith race. Our life is like a race- ever moving onward toward a goal. And the character of this race is that we act in faith. We can't see the end of it- we can't even see the Lord. We

can't see spiritual blessings. So we are assured of things that we hope for. We are convinced of things we can't see. And so we run the race- fully convinced of the end. And it makes sense to run this race because we have so great a cloud of witnesses. We have all these people in the past who witnessed to the benefit and the blessing of running the faith race. And they are giving testimony by the history of their lives to the validity of living a life of faith.

So anything that encumbers you- anything that militates against that faith- the writer of Hebrews says, get rid of it and the sin which entangles us and diminishes our faith- just get rid of it. Live a life of faith. So it's just a matter of believing God. I believe that whatever God said is absolutely so. It is just that way. I believe everything in the Bible is a true representation of what God wanted and said. And so my responsibility is to place my faith in His Word- which is His Revelation.

So the more time you spend in God's Word and the more preaching you listen to and the more Bible Study you are a part of and the more godly fellowship that you engage in- the easier it is to believe and the easier it is to trust and the easier it is to have confidence in what God has said because my faith is not built up by personal experiences and faith is not made strong because of my dreams or my visions or by the angelic appearances that I see- but **Romans 10:17** says that:

... faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

And so the more you hold out of Prayer meetings- the more you don't attend Bible Studies; the more you fail to assemble together with brethren of like precious faith- the more you refuse to fellowship with other believers- the harder it is for you to trust in what God said and the harder it will be for you to walk by faith and not by sight.

So genuine believers live in this world by faith. We pray by faith. We preach by faith. We believe the Word of God has the Power to transform souls. And we believe that because that's what the Scripture says. I believe God hears and answers prayers- so I pray. I believe God sanctifies me through understanding and applying and obeying the Word and so I study the Word and seek to obey it. I put my faith in what is revealed by Scripture and that's what the Lord wants to teach the disciples in this Passage here in **Luke 9**- to believe and to trust and

depend on everything He has said. And that is where we have to leave this until next week.

Let's pray.