

Real Faith For the Real World

Message Notes
By Melanie Stone

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NOTE TO TEACHER:

Words in blue are on the outlines.

If you choose to use a theme to promote this series, we suggest the theme of a reality show. The focus for this series is what authentic faith is and how faith can be applied in our daily lives.

Part 1 What Is Real Faith?

We live in a real world. Real things can happen to real people, both good and bad. There are real issues we face concerning relationships, careers, finances, politics, wars, sickness, addictions, etc. We have a real need for God.

God is real. His love for us is real. His desire to meet our needs is real. Miracles are real. We need real faith for a real world.

What is real faith?

I Timothy 1:5 “Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.”

Charity means love.

Unfeigned: “genuine, sincere, true, real.” (Dictionary.com)

If there is a real faith, then it must also be possible for a fake faith to exist.

Feigned: “pretended, counterfeit, disguised, to give a false appearance of, to imitate.” Dictionary.com

What is REAL faith?

1. Real faith is more than just believing.

Faith is more than just believing in God. It is more than believing that He exists, that He loves us, that Jesus died for us. You can believe:

God is the Almighty God.
God is a healing God.
God is a delivering God.
God is a God who provides more than enough.
...and still not be in faith.

James 2:19 “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe-and tremble.”

Demons believe that there is a God. Demons believe that God loves you, that Jesus died and rose again. Demons believe that God can and will heal, save and deliver, but demons are not in faith.

Fake faith puts its trust in its own ability to believe.

2. **Real faith is positioned in dependency**

The difference between believing in God and having actual faith is dependency.

If its not complete surrender, its not real faith. Fake faith can obey the Word, confess the Word, do all the right motions, but not be surrendered to God in every area of their life. Going through the motions and doing all the right things is not real faith.

Matthew 18:3 "...Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

This Greek word for little children is describing a nursing infant. Think about a newborn baby – does that child try to be independent of its mother? Does it try to feed itself, change itself, put itself in its crib, give itself a bath? No, its life is sustained by its parents or caregiver.

How is Jesus using a baby to describe our relationship with God? An infant is in a position of dependency. They have needs that they know they cannot meet. They are attached to the one who supplies their need.

God created us. God is our need-meeter. He is our source of life. Our faith is in dependency. To have a relationship with God, to be in faith, we have to make Jesus our Lord and rely upon Him for our life.

Does a demon submit to God? Does a demon make Jesus the Lord of their life? No – demons believe in God, but demons are not in faith because they cannot yielded their life to God.

God isn't just looking for your ability to believe that He exists, He is looking for you to trust Him with the lordship of your life. Real faith is based on dependency.

So real faith doesn't just believe that God is a healing God, but ...

God is My God, MY Lord.
He is MY Savior who has saved me.
He is MY healer who has healed me.
He is MY provider who provides for me.
He is MY refuge, MY strong tower, MY deliver.
He is MY peace, MY joy, MY righteousness.

3. Real faith is built on a real relationship.

Revelation 3:20 “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with Him, and he with Me.”

To really have faith in God you have to have a personal relationship with Him.

My relationship with God is MY relationship – based on me and Jesus. I can’t build my faith on someone else’s faith –

Not my Daddy’s faith, my Momma’s faith, not a preacher’s faith, not a president’s faith, not a friend’s faith...this is between ME and HIM. Your relationship with God is based on YOU and HIM.

My faith is based my RELATIONSHIP with God, not on what I receive from Him. What pleases God is when I come to Him in love, wanting to know Him.

Hebrews 11:6 “But without faith it is impossible to please God...”

His blessings are benefits, but benefits do not make up the substance of a relationship. Blessings are not always indicators of someone who is spiritually mature in their faith.

- The rich young ruler had a lot of riches, but he had very little faith.
- The Pharisees had a lot of knowledge of the scriptures, but they had very little faith.
- The Israelites experienced the power of God with signs and wonders, but they had very little faith.

The disciples were excited that the power of God was flowing through them – devils were obeying them. That’s pretty cool. But Jesus said, “Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” Luke 10:20 Don’t get caught up in the power – get enraptured in His person, and His Person will be strong in you.

How many preachers who have experienced some power have gotten off into pride, a domineering arrogance, controlling self-serving influence where they have used and abused people, hurt and victimized people, fed their bellies with gifts and money and other pleasures?

We have to KEEP IT REAL. We have to put our faith in the only one who had the nails put in His hands and feet for my salvation. I serve Him, and only Him do I serve. I care what HE thinks of me more than anyone else. I care that I am obeying HIM, loving HIM, spending time with HIM. If someone falls on my right, I am not moved. If someone falls on my left, I am not moved. If the whole world falls around me, I will not be shaken because I know the One that made me, the One who saved me, the One who bought me, the One who healed me, the One who delivered me, the One who provided for me. I KNOW HIM. And I know that He knows me. That is my faith.

Faith is so shallow when it focuses on the benefits rather than the benefactor. It's like looking at the moon rather than the sun. The sun is what holds the earth in place. The sun is what keeps us in season. It's the sun that provides warm and light. What is the moon? The moon is only a reflection of the sun. Get our eyes on the sun, on God, and the benefits will come.

Keep your eyes on God and He will keep you from being moved. Changes in your job will not shake your faith. Changes in your human relationships will not shake you from your faith. Changes in your country will not shake your faith. Changes in the Middle East will not shake your faith. Changes in the economy will not shake your faith. You are held by Him. You are established by HIM. You are loved so dearly and so deeply by HIM. Draw close to HIM. Yield to HIM. Let Him be your sun, let Him hold you in your place.

Do you think if the earth went a few degrees closer to the sun we would all burn up? Do you know that if the earth went a few degrees away from the sun we would all freeze? God is able to hold you, to keep you.

Do you think YOUR God is able to keep YOUR marriage together?
Do you think YOUR God is able to heal that cancer in YOUR body?
Do you think YOUR God is able to care for YOUR children?

This is personal. This is between you and your God, between me and my God.

- Don't look to a wealthy person to be your source for income.
- Don't look to a preacher to be your source for deliverance.
- Don't look to a healing evangelist to be your source for healing.
- Don't look to a spouse to be your source for love and security.
- Don't look to a friend to be your source for acceptance.
- Look to GOD, look to GOD.

Don't be deceived by fake faith.

- Don't ever look at a prosperous person and think that person is in faith just because he is prosperous.
- Don't ever look at a healthy person and think that person is in faith just because he is healthy.
- Don't ever look at a successful person and think that person is in faith because of their success.
- Don't ever look at a preacher and think that preacher is in faith because he has a good preach.

What do you look for? Look for relationship with God. Look for dependency. Look for the character of God being formed in that person. Look at their humility. Look at their love. Look at their obedience to God. Look at their honor for the Word of God.

A real faith is based on real relationship.

You can't truly trust someone unless you know them. If you are going to depend on God, you need to be able to abandon yourself completely to Him – your abilities, resources, dreams; but not only your best, also your worst. Give Him your failures, your struggles, your past.

Your faith in God can increase as your relationship with God develops. I know Him better today than I did ten years ago, twenty years ago. Phil 3:10, I want to know You – I want to know Your glory, I want to know your sufferings – I want to come to an end of me so that I can know YOU.

Faith is not about “working the Word” like you would work a machine. Faith is not about following a formula so that you can get the blessings to work for you. Jesus demonstrated this for us through His ministry. He didn't follow one method for healing the sick. One time He made clay and put it on the eyes of a blind person, one time He told the lepers to go show themselves to the priest, other times He laid His hands on the sick, other times He spoke commands... follow the Spirit of God through faith, don't try to work the Word like a formula.

We've seen some who think that if they work the Word that God owes them a blessing. This is fake faith. God honors real faith. God will not be manipulated or controlled by someone who thinks they can move the hand of God simply by following a method found in the Word of God. That's not faith, dependency. That's pride and control.

4. Real faith is not based on works.

Real faith has never relied on our ability to please God by our works.

[Galatians 3:11](#) the just shall live by faith

“But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.”

This is a quote from the Old Testament. It refers to faith for salvation or righteousness not being found in our works, but in His love and grace. Even under the Law, the message of faith was evident, pointing people to God's grace rather than to our attempts at earning His approval.

It's easy for us to say that we're not basing our faith on works because we know that the Law was impossible to keep and that salvation comes through Jesus Christ. We're on this side of the cross. However, people can still attempt to get something from God based on their performance rather than their relationship. They focus on doing what they think God wants them to do in order to please Him. They focus on earning God's approval. They do the right things, say the right things, and then wonder why they don't get what they think they deserve.

You don't have to put on a song and dance to get God to move.

5. **Real faith will not act on its own**

Galatians 2:20

Faith begins where the will of God is known. “ Some people stop there. I know what God wants for me so I’m going to act on it. But real faith will not go in its own strength or wisdom or time table.

Real Faith will wait on not just the WHAT, but WHEN, WHERE, HOW, WHO, TO WHAT EXTENT

Sometimes God will ask you to step out without knowing all the details, take that leap of faith off a cliff, but others jump ahead of God and try to make something happen. Usually there are consequences with getting out ahead of God. It best not to get ahead or lag behind, walk together with God.

There are a lot of scriptures in the Bible on faith. There are also a lot of scriptures in the Bible on wisdom. Some people think they are in faith, but then they throw common sense out the window. No plan. No preparation. No knowledge. No wisdom. No counting the cost.

Fake faith can’t wait on God. If they know the next step they want to immediately jump and take it.

Luke 14:28 count the cost – natural wisdom to prepare

There might be times when you don’t have the whole picture and God asks you to take one step at a time; however, each step should be made with wisdom. Some people get an idea and then jump on it not knowing how they’re going to land. God is merciful. We’ve seen Him bail people out over and over again. But they don’t have God’s best. It would be better if they waited on Him. God being a safety net when you act stupid is not God’s best for you.

It’s important to hear the voice of God. Some have thought they heard the voice of God and stepped out to act on what they thought God was saying, but it wasn’t God. We have to learn to discern between what is God speaking, what is our own head speaking, and even what the devil might be speaking.

6. **Real faith responds with obedient action**

James 2:20b “...faith without works is dead.”

Now, wait a minute. We said that faith is not based on works, but on God’s grace. So how does our faith become useless without works? Here is the difference. Real faith is not based on works or our performance. However, out of our position in dependency upon God, we act in God’s grace and power.

Chair illustration. Let's say I have faith in this chair. I believe that the chair exists. I believe that the chair can and will hold my weight. When I go from just believing in the chair, to dependency on the chair, I do something to rely on the chair. My action is the completion of my faith or my dependency.

God works together with us. Moses stretched out his staff before the Red Sea parted. The little boy offered his lunch before Jesus fed the multitude. Why? Because the way to know God is through faith, or dependency.

When you are in faith, you are obedient with the specific things God has for you to do, but you also are pursuing Him with the things you know you are to do: praying, studying the Word, going to church, paying your tithes, maintaining your home responsibilities, honoring your marriage and family, etc. If a person stops obeying God in the day-to-day things, it is an indicator that the person is not surrendered in faith.

7. [Real faith has joy and peace](#)

[Romans 15:13](#) “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

When someone is in faith, then they know something that might contradict their current situation. They have joy and peace, not based on their circumstances, but based on the promise of God. Therefore, they have a steadfast, unwavering joy and an unshakeable peace.

8. [Real faith has results.](#)

[John 15:5](#) “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

Real faith gets results like a tree bears fruit. When we are positioned in Christ and acting in obedient reliance, fruit is the results. When we are in Christ, we don't have to TRY to do it, we TRUST and God helps us do it. We stop trying to GET and we start being able to RECEIVE. See the difference?

Part 2 The Position of Real Faith

Last week we began to look at what real faith is. In the real world that we live in, we need to come to God with real faith. If we want to have a relationship with God, we need to have real faith. If we want to receive God's power to change our circumstances to line up with God's will for us, then we need to have real faith. If we want to minister to others with the anointing of God to see results, we need to have real faith.

Last week we took a look at real faith being more than just believing. We saw that real faith is our approach to God in dependency upon Him. Today we are going to look a little closer at the position of dependency that real faith has.

A. Real faith is reliant upon God in a personal relationship with Him.

In the REAL WORLD that we grow up in, we are taught to work hard to take care of ourselves, to be independent. We are raised to be self-reliant, self-sufficient, in control of our own destiny. We are taught to watch out for number one because it's a dog-eat-dog world. We are raised to work in a rat race, striving to be the best, climbing the ladder of success so that we can achieve happiness.

There is nothing wrong with doing our best and working hard, being independent and meeting the needs of our family. However, there is something wrong if we think we can be independent of God, to rule our own lives independently of God, not willing to let Him take the reigns of our life.

- **Real faith will surrender to God in every area.**

Real faith has turned from self-sufficiency to reliance upon the Lord. Fake faith is someone who believes in God, but not necessarily completely surrendered to Him.

Real faith is yielded to God, not just in the area of need, but in every area, yielded to the hand of God – giving Him control over our lives, our past, present, and future. Over our good stuff, over our bad stuff – it is in His hand. We give Him our children, our parents, our spouse, our possessions. We obey Him, we serve Him, we give Him tithes and offerings, we worship Him. We don't have to be perfect, but we do have to be surrendered.

If we are not surrendered in every area of our life, we are not in real faith.

Fake faith is dependent on self and one's own ability to believe or cause results. Real faith is dependent upon God and His ability to cause results.

- **Real faith will wait on God**

Abraham and Sarah didn't wait on the promise.
Hagar and Ishmael illustrate the difference between faith and works.
They are always in opposition to one another.

- **Real faith will endure hardness**

God will not test you by putting sickness or poverty on you because these are areas that He redeemed you from. However, God will allow you to go through times of difficulty for the purpose of making you stronger.

- **Real faith will act on God's Word**

Real faith isn't passive. When real faith knows the leading of the Holy Spirit, real faith will jump into action.

Fake faith won't go to action because they really are not trusting God enough to put themselves in a place of obedience. They might hope and pray that God would go to action, but God works together with us, expecting us to do something. One purpose for God working together with us is because the way for us to have a relationship with God is with us acknowledging and embracing His Lordship. He is God and we are not. We cannot have a relationship with God without our compliance to who He is. James 2:20b "...faith without works is dead."

Four Examples of Real Faith

1. [The Centurion](#)

[Matthew 8:5-13](#) The centurion – Jesus had not seen such great faith. Did the centurion think that he could heal his servant? Was the centurion's focus on his ability to believe? What impressed Jesus about the centurion's faith was his dependency upon God, bringing himself under the authority of Christ.

2. [The Ruler Jairus](#)

[Matthew 9:18-19](#) "My daughter has just died, but come and lay YOUR hand on her and she will live."

See his dependency? I need YOU Jesus. If YOU do this, SHE WILL LIVE.

3. [The Woman with the Issue of Blood](#)

[Matthew 9:20-22](#) If only I may touch the hem of His garment, I SHALL BE MADE WELL.

See her dependency? If I touch HIM, I SHALL BE MADE WELL.

[Matthew 9:23-25](#) Jesus saw the grief and said make room, I'm coming through. Put the grieving crowd outside.

4. [The Canaanite woman](#)

[Matthew 15:21-28](#) Jesus said no to this woman. He said his mission was to reach the Jews. This woman knew that answer was in God, not her own ability. She positioned herself in dependency upon God. Jesus said she had great faith.

When we work together with God,

B. Real faith [positions](#) a person to receive from God.

- His anointing gives us [power for what we need](#)
- His anointing gives us [power for what others need](#)

[Examples of Disconnected Faith](#)

1. [Hometown familiarity](#)

[Mark 6:5,6](#)

Miracles could not be done. Even Jesus could not do miracles there.

2. [Peter's distraction](#)

[Matthew 14:27-31](#)

If it is You, command me to come. Jesus said, come. Peter did not act on his own. He waited to hear the command from Jesus. If Jesus said to do it, he knew he could do it. He was in faith. He walked on water. That's more than any of us have done.

Have you ever stepped out and done something that no one has ever done? Have you ever said we're going to believe God to do something wild, something extraordinary? Something way beyond what makes sense? People may tell you that you can't do it – it doesn't make sense – it isn't possible?

Yes, we need to do what makes sense. God has wisdom. God has knowledge. But when God says, come. Do it.

Foolishness to do something crazy just for crazy sake.

But then he noticed the wind was boisterous. He got his eyes off of Jesus. He probably thought I can't do this. He began to sink. He cried out, "Lord save me!" He did, and said, you have little faith, not no faith, but little faith. Weak faith. Why did you doubt? Why did you turn from trusting in Me? Why did you stop depending on Me?

Like a pipe, we have to position ourselves in line with God in order to receive from Him. We have to be dependent. Once we are, we can receive from Him.

Principles for Operating Together with God in Faith

1. Yield [every area of your life](#)

Don't act on your own.

2. Develop [your relationship with God](#).

A close relationship with God doesn't just happen overnight. As you learn about Him, as you experience Him, as you become more sensitive to the things of the spirit, you mature in your relationship with God.

Give yourself to prayer, to study of the Word, to serving in your church, to Spirit-led teaching, etc. You can grow stronger or weaker in your relationship with God.

3. Discern [the voice of God](#).

This is where many people miss it. They act on something that they are convinced is God speaking to them. But in some cases God didn't speak to them.

4. Act on the [Holy Spirit's leading](#).

This is another area where people miss it. They may have a piece to the puzzle that they are supposed to do something, but they jump out ahead of God. They don't follow the Holy Spirit's leading. They move before they are supposed to move. They sign a contract before the money has come in.

It's like jumping off a tightrope and expecting God to be their safety net. Many times out of His mercy, God is the safety net, but its not God's best to get ahead of Him.

Faith is like taking a walk with God. Take one step at a time. Don't get ahead, and don't lag behind. When you are walking together with Him, there is peace.

Part 3 Real Faith Knows Real Love

Galatians 5:6 "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love."

Today we are going to look at the motivation for real faith. [When real faith is in operation, real love is the motivation.](#)

Circumcision was a sign of the covenant God had with the Jews under the old covenant. As Christianity was spreading, some Jews thought that the Gentiles should have to follow this old covenant practice of circumcision. Paul was writing to say that it was not necessary for Gentiles to be circumcised under the new covenant. He said that circumcision nor uncircumcision availed anything, or accomplished anything, but what did matter was a person's faith operating through love. Paul focused on the inner man, the heart of a person – their faith and their love.

Circumcision did not "avail anything," meaning it did not bring any results. But faith does bring results. Things do happen because of our faith. Our faith does accomplish God's will on the earth.

Real faith avails something; it accomplishes God's will with results.

The verse says that faith is working. This word "working" means that faith is activating, energizing, using, and operating. (energeo, 1754). **Faith is energizing, activating, or working love.** In context with the verses following Galatians 5:6 we read that **our faith causes us to love our neighbor (5:14)**. Real faith shows real love.

Faith and love go hand-in-hand.

You cannot operate in real faith without knowing, experiencing, and demonstrating real love.

Jesus had real faith in God, and the result of all that Jesus did was showing people that God loved them.

- When Jesus taught people, they heard love.
- When Jesus had fellowship with people, even sinners, they experienced love and acceptance.
- When Jesus healed people from suffering and limitations, they knew love.
- When Jesus fed the hungry, meeting their needs, they knew love.

- When Jesus died on the cross to save us from eternal separation and the torment of hell, we knew love.

Real faith has real love. A fake faith doesn't operate by love for others with the heart of a servant.

- A fake faith will pursue faith simply because they want to be blessed.
- A fake faith will pursue faith because they want power, attention, influence, approval, and admiration.

People who have died to self and are motivated by love for God and people can understand and experience real faith in a greater measure.

Do you want to have real faith with real results? Apply that faith with real love and reach out to someone else. Then you will begin to experience the mountain moving power of God.

Real faith loves God

1. Relationships require trust

You cannot have a relationship with God without knowing and experiencing His love.

Trust is a control issue.

Who will we let into our heart? People who have been hurt or damaged by others sometimes are challenged in the love area and in the trust area. They keep guarded and distant from love. Fear keeps them a prisoner.

Sometimes you see hurting people attracting other hurting people. It's like a hurting clique. They trust one another because they have hurt in common. They talk about their wounds with one another. They are guarded toward a type of person. The sad thing is, they can't know God in His fullness without first recognizing their issues, and then letting go of their issues. Fear has to be overcome.

You cannot trust someone if you do not know their motives.

We can have faith in God because we trust His love for us.

- You cannot trust someone that you fear may not accept you.
- You cannot trust someone that you fear might use you.
- You cannot trust someone that you fear might hurt you.
- You cannot trust someone that you fear might control you.
- You cannot trust someone that you fear might shame you.
- You cannot trust someone that you fear will disappoint you.
- You cannot trust someone that you fear is focused on themselves.

The enemy works hard to get people to doubt the character of God.

- In times of difficulty, our faith in God can be tested.
- In times of waiting, our faith in God can be tested.

- In times of hurt, our faith in God can be tested.
- In times of disappointment, our faith in God can be tested.

[1 John 4:18](#) “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.”

Does this affect their ability to operate in faith? YES. Always waiting for the other shoe to drop – anticipation that something bad is going to happen. It makes us pull back from trusting our heart to God completely.

Faith is so much more than how we can receive a healing or a blessing. Mature faith is a relationship – a relationship with the God who loves me, saves me, heals me, takes care of me, comforts me, lifts me, rescues me – He is MY God, My Lord, My King, My Healer, My restorer, My friend, My Abba- Daddy.

The relationship that He wants to have with me is personal, intimate, close. He wants to get so close to me that He sent His Spirit to live INSIDE of me, to lead me into His presence. God is not far away. He is IN us. He wants us to be completely surrounded and engulfed in His presence.

Fear is the enemy of faith. We all struggle with the human condition and feelings of insecurity, anxiety, and doubt. We all are susceptible to fear, but God wants us to KNOW HIM so that we can OVERCOME FEAR and rise up in faith.

Matthew 9:37-31 “Son of David, have mercy on us.”

First of all, calling Jesus the Son of David was an acknowledgment of their belief that Jesus was the promised Jewish Messiah. They were positioning themselves under His kingship.

Secondly, they cried out for mercy. Mercy is a word that describes a parental love that comes from a person’s deepest and innermost being, a compassion. They asked for Jesus to help them because of the love that He had.

Jesus replied, according to your faith let it be to you. Their faith was in His compassion, His love.

2. [God’s love is a love that can be trusted.](#)

You cannot compare human love to God’s love.

The English language does not have a word that distinguishes God’s love from human love, but the Greek language does – agape.

[1 Corinthians 13:4-8](#) (amplified version)

Real faith will not try to earn God’s approval.
Real faith understands that God loves me.

Real faith will not try to earn God's blessings.

Just like our human relationships can either become stronger or weaker, our relationship with God can either grow tighter or become more distant.

- The more you grow in your knowledge and experience of God's love, the more you can grow in your faith.
- The more you grow in your faith, the more you can open up your heart to receive from God and His Spirit.
- The more you grow in your faith, the more you can operate in the fullness of God's power and anointing.

Your faith in God is the most important thing in your life. I'm going to give you a challenge for this week. I want you to go online to www.biblegateway.com or your favorite Bible search website, and look up the word "faith" in the Gospels. Read about the instances where people received from God based on their faith. Read about the people that didn't receive from God because of their little faith or lack of faith. Ask God to show you the importance of your faith when it comes to receiving all He has for you and when it comes to you being an effective vessel for God to use to reach others.

What is the measure of a person of great faith?

- Is it a large following of people?
- Is it their connection with well-known people?
- Is it a large bank account or material possessions?
- Is it their physical appearance?
- Is it the supernatural manifestations that take place?

There are many people that give the appearance of living a powerful life of faith that later are exposed to sin or fraud. Do not be deceived. True faith has true humility and true love.

Jesus knew God's love. Jesus had faith. Jesus operated in a great anointing. We can do the same. Jesus said we would do greater works than He did. It takes faith.

3. [When we trust, we can also act in reliance.](#)

[Matthew 14:28](#)

4. [When we have a relationship, we have results.](#)

[John 15:4-5](#)

Real faith loves others

Galatians 5:14 "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

1. God's nature is on the inside of us
II Peter 1:4; II Corinthians 5:17; Romans 5:5

2. We can know real power when we serve someone else

II Corinthians 5:14

3. Real faith reveals the love of God
II Corinthians 13:2b, John 9:3

4. If we do not know love, we do not know God.
I John 4:8; I John 4:20

Part 4 Real Faith and Wisdom

Real Faith is Reliance

Real faith is reliance upon God. There have been times in the Bible when God asked a person to obey Him based on very little information...

- God told Gideon to use 300 men to break clay jars and blow in a ram's horn. God did the rest.
- God told Joshua to march his armies around Jericho for six days and on the seventh day for seven priests to blow seven horns and for the people to give a shout. God did the rest.
- God told Noah to build an ark. God did the rest.
- God told Moses to hold up his staff over the Red Sea. God did the rest.

There have been times in my life and probably in your life when God asked you to step out in obedience and your knowledge of the situation was limited.

God wants us to trust Him to take one step at a time. Faith relies on God and obeys when God says to obey. However, the subject that God has laid on my heart this morning is to talk to you about the subject of faith in regards to WISDOM.

Real Faith is not Foolishness

Because we know that faith sometimes steps out on partial information, some have gotten that idea that faith isn't faith unless you are doing something outside of knowledge, outside of understanding, outside of wisdom. I'm here to tell you this morning that faith is NOT FOOLISHNESS. Real faith does not throw wisdom out the window. Fake faith can seem like real faith. Real faith is not foolishness. Real faith is reliance upon God.

This is why it is so important to grow in our faith and in our relationship with God. We need to learn to identify His voice and His leading. Faith begins where the will of God is known. If you don't know His voice AND know to follow His leading, you could very well fall flat on your face. Then people question God..."God, why did you do this to me? I was just trying to obey you!" All the while, God has been standing at the crossroads, trying to get your attention and steer you in the right way, but you decided to take matters into your own hands based on what you knew rather than seeking Him along the way.

Real Faith and Wisdom Work Together

Hebrews 11:1 “Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.” NTL

Hebrews 11:3 “By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God’s command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.” NLT

God created the world out of nothing. He knew what He wanted, He spoke it, and it was created. In Hebrews 11 the writer is telling us that faith causes the things that are not seen, or not in existence yet, to become seen, to become a reality, when we act on God’s will in faith, believing and relying upon God to bring it to pass. God is an example of how to operate in faith. Romans 4:17.

Faith also operates with wisdom. God created the world by faith, and God created the world with wisdom. Real faith and wisdom work together.

Proverbs 3:19, 20 *“The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens; (20) By His knowledge the depths were broken up, and clouds drop down the dew.”*

Faith without wisdom can cause failure

You may have a dream from God for ministry, business, relationships, or an endeavor; yet never attain it because you didn’t apply WISDOM. You live, you die, but you never achieve your dreams because of foolishness. God wants us to seek wisdom.

- **Faith without wisdom can abort God’s plan.**
- **Faith without wisdom can get off track in doctrine**
- **Faith without wisdom can end up in sin**
- **Faith without wisdom can cause heartache.**

Two Types of Wisdom

1. [Natural Wisdom](#)

Proverbs 8:36a “Those who miss me injure themselves.” NLT

2. [Spiritual Wisdom](#)

Ephesians 1:17-19a

How to Find Wisdom

1. [Ask for it](#)

James 1:5 ‘If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.’

2. [Seek to know the Word of God.](#)

This may seem simple, but sometimes people miss it BIG in the simple things.

Many times people will be struggling financially. They don't understand why they might lose a job or never seem to get ahead. One of the first questions they should ask themselves, “Am I obeying God's Word? Am I tithing? If not, you are stealing from God and the devourer will have access to come in. You can't expect God's blessings if you aren't obeying the Bible.

Are you honoring your authority? Are you giving God first place? Are you serving Him with your whole heart? Are you keeping your commitments? Those who study and apply the Word of God to their lives will be successful.

Psalm 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

Knowing God's Word is wisdom.

3. [Seek to know the will of God.](#)

Faith begins where the will of God is known.

Proverbs 3:6 “Seek His will in all you do and He will show you which path to take.”
NTL

Sometimes all He reveals to you is the first step; sometimes God reveals more to you.

His will isn't just the what. Seek God for the where, the who, the when, the how. Seek Him about the finances. Seek Him about location. Seek Him about counsel and advisors. Seek Him about partners. Seek Him.

Know the Word of God. We have purpose in reading through the One Year Bible. If you know the Word of God, you will better know the will of God. God's word is God's will.

Knowing God's will is wisdom.

4. Seek to know the leading of the Holy Spirit

It's not enough just to pursue knowledge of God's will; we also need to seek Him for wisdom on how to carry His will out. Faith is a journey that we are walking together with God. God is with us every moment, whether or not we hear Him or feel Him. Sometimes He is quiet because He wants us to trust Him, to act on what we know. But He's there.

God wants to guide us in our decisions. God wants to strengthen us for difficulty. God wants to comfort us after a battle. God wants to celebrate our victories. God wants to carry us through criticisms, accusations, and betrayal.

Timing is vital in carrying out God's plan for your life. God doesn't want you to jump ahead and abort His plan for you.

- Don't skip your training. It prepares you for the future. Get educated. Get trained.
- Don't skip His refining. Preparation time is never wasted time. God knows what you have need of. Maybe you need to learn how to work together with your wife and family. Maybe you need to learn how to wait on God. Maybe you need to learn what not to do.
- Don't skip a connection. God may want you to develop a relationship or meet someone that is going to be a key person in accomplishing His purpose for your life. No man is an island. We are to work together.

Act on what you know and trust God with what you don't know. Stay reliant on His leading.

[James 4:13-17](#) "... whatever is not of faith is sin."

Knowing the leading of the Holy Spirit is wisdom.