

The Imprint of Faith

Hebrews 11:1-2 says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.” These are two very familiar verses, but we must be careful as believers not to let scriptures become so familiar to us that we forget the impact that they are to have on our lives. You can change your life by the word of God. Listen, faith is the substance of things hoped for. *We have to have an expectation.*

If you don't have an expectation, you are not really in faith. If you don't expect God to do something, if you don't expect something to change, then you are not really in faith. Some people will tell you what they believe, and their doctrine is right. However, where they falter is in expectation. For some reason or another, they have a right set of beliefs but have lost expectation of their doctrine being manifested in their own lives.

Faith is the substance of things I expect. It is the evidence of things I can not see. Faith is what gives me ownership to something I can not see but believe exists. Even though I can't see it, doesn't mean it doesn't exist. Even though I can't see it, doesn't mean it doesn't belong to me. Faith brings ownership of what I can not see but believe exists.

For example, I have never personally been to heaven, but I believe it exists. To my knowledge, I have never seen an angel, but I believe they exist. There are things we believe and do not need to see in order to believe. Now, not only do I believe heaven exists, but I believe it exists *for me*. I expect it. We must concentrate on having an expectation.

A big problem that exists today is that many are living on a day to day basis without expectation, and it creates despair and discouragement. People begin to put up with the status quo and begin to just go through the motions. If you let it, your routine can steal your expectation. You begin to think, “Today is just like yesterday, and tomorrow will probably be like today.” You lose your expectation. Expectation is a part of faith that the Body of Christ many times is missing. This is the reason that many pray, “if it be Your will.” Now, there are times that phrase is needful, but not when you know the will of God. It is God's will that we are healed and walk in health. It is God's will that we prosper. If you say, “If it be Your will, heal me.”, you are already in unbelief because you are doubting that He wants you healed. You are doubting the very scripture, “By His stripes, you were healed.” Expect healing and health.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, but it is also the evidence of things not seen. The principle is this: if you can not see it, you can not receive it. You don't have to see it with your physical eye, but you certainly have to see it with the eye of faith. If we are walking and living by faith, it will cause us to have an eye that sees things that can't be seen. If you can not see something that can not be seen by the physical eye, then you will have a hard time receiving it. We need to have an imprint of faith.

Faith brings ownership, or a title deed, to what you can not see but is yours just the same. We have to get so convinced of what belongs to us and have it so indelibly imprinted on our minds and in our hearts that no one and nothing can talk us out of it. The problem we have today is that many don't know what belongs to them. They seem to assume that whatever they are currently experiencing is theirs.

Many people believe that where they are currently in life or what they are currently experiencing is their lot in life. That is NOT what the Bible says. The Bible says that the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus came that we might have the life of God and have it more abundantly. This “more abundantly” is an ever-increasing principle. There is no finality to it. The Bible often talks of constant improvement, constant growth, and constant change. We go from “faith to faith”. We are changed from “glory to glory”. You can not assume that what you are going through (and it may even be better than it used to be) is your lot in life or that it is what belongs to you. This is dangerous and keeps us from what God has for us.

Many times, people let the word “how” hinder them from the life that God has for them. “How can this happen here?” They let geography impact their faith. Many let family heritage impact their faith. They have an image so impacted in their hearts of what has been, what is, so thus, what will be. “My family has always been poor. I don’t have much, so this is what belongs to me.” Do you see how dangerous that kind of thinking is? For many, geography or family heritage is the image they see; it is the imprint they have. We have to allow faith to imprint our minds and our hearts so that we can walk in and receive what God has for us. When you begin to look at your life and allow only what you can see naturally to be imprinted on your heart, then that is all you will ever have.

Faith gives me ownership to what is mine. Paul admonishes us in 2 Corinthians 4:17-18, “while we look not at the things which can be seen but at things which can not be seen.” How can we look at something that can not be seen? With the eye of faith.

I believe that we are being presented with an unprecedented opportunity to prosper in an environment in which we are not supposed to prosper. I believe God is wanting to do it, wanting to show Himself mighty, and wanting His glory on us to shine so that the world can look and say, “Wow! Maybe all this faith business does work.”

I do not ignore the fact that the economy of our nation and the world is not good. I simply know that there is only one economy that has stability and has stayed stable through the ages, and that is the economy of heaven. That is where our faith is to be. However, because many can’t see it, their confession has changed. Their works of faith have changed. Ministries around the world are cancelling services and ministry because they are agreeing with the ungodly of the land. We are finding out that a lot of people who proclaimed to have faith were just prospering in the economy of the world. We are finding out who is really walking by faith.

We have to imprint our minds and souls and hearts with faith. We have to have the imprint in us so that the image can not be taken from us. An example of an imprint of faith being stolen is found in 1 Kings 19. Here we find the most revered man of God of the day in one of the biggest victories of his day. He had just challenged and defeated the prophets of Baal. However, when Jezebel hears of it, she declares that Elijah will be just as the prophets (dead) by the following day. And in verse 3 we read, “And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life.” He *saw* it. He had an imprint in his mind of what Jezebel intended for his life. It was so real that it caused him to flee. And most theologians will tell you that he became suicidal. God had to speak to him and reaffirm the vision - give him a new imprint. God had to correct the imprint that had gotten into Elijah’s mind.

This is what happens to many people; they get a wrong imprint in their mind and never overcome it. Many have a “poor” imprint. They can’t ever see themselves prospering. Because they have this poverty image, they become hoarders. One guy I knew had shelves of canned goods in his basement that were over 30 years old! It makes no sense, but they have a wrong imprint so they can’t get rid of things. These people are often the worst givers. Why? Because they have this imprint on their mind and soul of poverty. What God wants us to do is to allow faith to imprint us. We need to begin to see with the eye of faith. If we begin to see with the eye of faith, we will begin to experience the supernatural life or the life of faith and the life that faith brings. Many talk of living by faith, but they have never allowed faith to enter their innermost being. Their life is more impacted by a natural image rather than a spiritual image.

Let’s look at a man who let faith change the imprint of his heart and mind. Look at Mark 10:46, “Now, they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’” The amazing thing here is that this is one of the few times in the Bible that someone refers to Jesus by His messianic name. And this is a blind man. I have to wonder if it was a little bit easier for this man to see that because he couldn’t see. He didn’t get caught up on Jesus’ looks or anything else in the natural. Instead, he was able to see something that many others of his day never saw.

The account goes on to say that the crowd told him to be quiet, but Bartimaeus cried out all the more. You have to like this guy! Then Jesus stood still and commanded the blind man to come. Bartimaeus threw off his garment, arose, and came to Jesus. Now, this garment was Bartimaeus’ license to beg. When he threw it off, I fully believe he was expecting never to need it again. Jesus then asks Bartimaeus, “What do you want Me to do for you?” And the blind man said, “Rabbi, that I might receive my sight.” Bartimaeus did not just ask to receive sight, but he asked that ‘I might receive *my* sight’. He had to have the fact that sight belonged to him imprinted in him. He was saying, “I want my sight. I want what *belongs* to me.” If it is just something you are wishing for, you would say, “I would like to see.” Bartimaeus said, I want *my* sight. And Jesus answered him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.”

Too many of the Body of Christ is wishing for something. When the truth is, it belongs to us. Every one of us has to get to that point where we get that imprint of faith on the inside of us and realize it is ours. My faith gives me an imprint of something I don’t see or possess, but just the same, exists and it exists for me.

For example, healing belongs to us. However, you have to get that imprint in you. You have to allow faith to imprint your mind so that no one can make you question it. There was a boldness about Bartimaeus because of the imprint that was in him.

Think about the woman with the issue of blood. She had bled for 12 years. You would think it would be easy to just settle that bleeding would just be her lot in life. However, when she heard about Jesus, she got a faith imprint. She said in her heart, “If I just touch the hem of His garment, I will be made well.” She allowed faith to imprint a life without an issue of blood. She allowed what she heard to impact her

and imprint her mind and heart. See, faith comes by hearing. And faith brought boldness to enter the crowd and go to Jesus. And Jesus' response was, "Go your way. Your faith has made you whole." Never, ever allow yourself to settle for less than what God's word says.

I believe that we can live our lives satisfied but not content. I can tell you that there is not one of us, myself included, that is experiencing everything that God has for us. I believe it is tantamount to sin and unbelief for us to settle and quit exercising our faith and allowing it to imprint our hearts and minds. We need to allow faith to imprint our minds. We need to see ourselves as God sees us.

We need to have God's imprint of faith strong on the inside of us and have it without any expiration date. Time can be your biggest ally or your biggest enemy. That is why I admire someone like the guy at the pool in John 5 or the guy at the Gate Beautiful. They were there everyday. You have to divorce time from your imprint. Just because it hasn't happened, doesn't mean it isn't going to happen, nor should you change the imprint that faith has brought you. There is no expiration date on it.

So, how do we get an imprint of faith? How do we make our imprint of faith more real than our circumstances or our past? One thing that is very important to having an imprint of faith is our words. Words are seeds. A seed will produce and produce after its kind. You can tell people what you believe, but your day-to-day words will either deny or confirm your faith. Have you brought yourself into agreement with the newscasters and politicians or have you brought yourself into agreement with what God's word says about you? We have to be careful about the words we listen to and the words we speak; they are both critical to the imprint that is on the inside of us.

David was a master at imprinting his soul with words. Confronted with some severe circumstances, he said, "By my God, I can run through a troop and leap over a wall." Joel 3:10 says, "Let the weak say, 'I am strong.'" You have to get an imprint within yourself of just how great your God is and how great He is in you.

There is a phrase that says, "A picture is worth a thousand words." I believe the reverse is also true - a thousand words can paint a picture. One way to imprint your mind and heart is with words. Nobody hears what you say more than you do. When you start speaking doubt and unbelief, the one it will impact the most is you. Many tend to speak what they have had or do have, and they continue that bad imprint and continue to live the life they have always had. One way to break that chain or that cycle is to begin to imprint your mind and heart with your words. We need to allow faith to imprint. As we speak faith-filled words, it releases the power of God into our circumstances. It also creates an imprint in our hearts and minds that reinforces to us what God says. We must see ourselves as God sees us, and until we do things won't change.

James 1:26 and James 3 have much to say about the tongue. It compares our tongue to a rudder on a ship. Well, a rudder directs the course of the ship. Our tongue directs the course of our lives. Begin to see by the eye of faith. Speak faith and imprint your mind with faith, then you will begin to experience a supernatural life. You will begin to experience the life that faith is meant to bring you.

Go to the Word and let it imprint your mind. Find out what is yours and who you are in Christ. Get the word coming out of your mouth and sit under the word, so the word of God can create an imprint of faith inside of you. And like Jairus, do not let

any other words mess with your imprint of faith. By it, you will obtain a good testimony.