

GOD'S ECONOMY IN FAITH, Week 2

The Intrinsic Significance of Faith

Scripture Reading: Heb. 11:1, 5-6; 3:7-8a, 12-13, 15a; 4:7

Hebrews 11:1	Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
Hebrews 11:5	By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.
Hebrews 11:6	But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
Hebrews 3:7	Therefore, even as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you hear His voice,
Hebrews 3:8	Do not harden your hearts as in the provocation, in the day of trial in the wilderness,
Hebrews 3:12	Beware, brothers, lest perhaps there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God.
Hebrews 3:13	But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called "today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin —
Hebrews 3:15	While it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the provocation."
Hebrews 4:7	He again designates a certain day, today, saying in David after so long a time, even as was said before, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."

Day 1

Hebrews 11:1	Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
2 Corinthians 4:13	And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

I. Faith is the **substantiation of God's facts**:

- A. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"; the word substantiation means the **capacity to make something real** (colors are substantiated by our eyes, sounds by our ears, etc.); thus, it is one thing for objects to exist, and it is another thing for these things to be substantiated.
- B. All of **God's facts** recorded in the Bible are real; however, these facts can be **substantiated only by faith**, because faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
- C. We need faith to substantiate a spiritual, divine fact, just as we need eyes, ears, and hands to substantiate physical objects; faith is not a mental understanding of a truth; it is the **seeing of a divine fact and the substantiation of it**; the accomplished facts of Christ's person, living, and work must be substantiated by us; that is, they **must be made real to us**.
- D. **Believing is exercising our spirit of faith** (2 Cor. 4:13) to substantiate the divine facts; once we believe by saying Amen to God's word, we substantiate the divine facts, and we have them; Amen does not mean a wish for something to be accomplished, but a **declaration that it will surely be accomplished**, and that there is no doubt about it; when we believe, we are accepting what the Lord has already promised to do.

II. **Faith is the substantiation of the substance of the truth** (Heb. 11:1), which is the reality of the contents of God's New Testament economy:

- A. Such a faith is **allotted to all the believers in Christ as their portion**, which is equally precious to all who have received it—2 Pet. 1:1; cf. Col. 1:12.
- B. As such a portion from God, this faith is objective to us in the divine truth, but it brings all the contents of its substantiation into us, thus making them all, with itself (faith), **subjective to us in our experience**.
- C. It is like the scenery (truth) and the seeing (faith) being objective to the camera (us); but when the light (the Spirit) brings the scenery to the film (our spirit) within the camera, both the seeing and the scenery become subjective to the camera.

We have a sister here who can play the piano very well. Those who have ears and understand music can appreciate the music that she plays. However, those who are deaf or do not understand music cannot testify to the beauty of the music. The same is true of our faith. **All of God's facts are real**. However, these **facts of God can only be substantiated by faith**, because faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

A nice painting may have beautiful scenery, but a blind man cannot see it. However, one cannot say that the painting does not exist because he has not seen it. The painting exists as a fact. Whether or not one sees, it is still a painting, and the beautiful colors are still present. The question is whether or not you have received the benefit from the painting. Those with sight will find enjoyment from the painting; they will receive the benefit from it. The Lord has died and shed His blood on the cross for all men. This is a fact. But **some have the faith to substantiate** this fact of the Lord's death, and they receive the benefit from it. **Some do not have the faith**. The death of the Lord on the cross is still a fact, but they are unable to experience it. (*The Overcoming Life, chapter 7*)

Day 2

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Luke 9:23 And He said to them all, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

III. Faith means that we believe that **God is** and **we are not**—Heb. 11:5-6, 1-2; 2 Cor. 4:13, 18:

- A. **Without faith** it is impossible to be well pleasing to God, to make God happy—Heb. 11:6a.
- B. To believe that God is, is to **believe that He is everything** to us and that we are nothing—John 8:58; Eccl. 1:2.
- C. To believe that God is implies that **we are not**; He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything—Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5.
- D. To believe that God is, is to deny our self; **in the whole universe He is**, and **all of us are nothing**—Luke 9:23.
- E. I should not be anything; I should not exist; only He should exist—"it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ"—Gal. 2:20.
- F. Before Enoch's translation, he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God (Heb. 11:5-6); Enoch continually walked upward with God day and night for three centuries, **exercising his faith to believe that God is**, becoming closer to God and more one with God each day until "he was not, for God took him"—Gen. 5:22-24; cf. S. S. 8:5a.

IV. Faith means that we believe that **God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him**—Heb. 11:6; Gen. 15:1; Phil. 3:8, 14:

- A. Enoch's reward was the highest degree of life—escape from death—Heb. 11:5a; 2 Cor. 5:4; Rom. 8:6, 10-11; 5:17.
- B. The Lord is a rewarder, and **we need to be His seekers**—Psa. 27:4, 8; 42:1-2; 43:4; 73:25; 119:2, 10.
- C. We are those who **live by faith**, looking away to the reward of the uttermost enjoyment of Christ in the millennial kingdom and, like Moses, persevering as one seeing the unseen One—Phil. 3:14; Heb. 11:26-27.

Revelation 1:4 and 5 say, “*John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth.*” In these verses we see the three of the Divine Trinity. God the Father is called by John in Revelation 1:4 “Him who Is and who was and who is coming.” The One who is coming is the One who will be. **This means that in the whole universe, nothing else is. Only One is. He is, because He is real.** All other things created by Him are not real. This is why Solomon, the wise king, said that all things are vanity. You think you are, but you are vanity. **Everything is vanity.** The sun, the moon, the living creatures, the heavens, and the earth are all vanities. **Only One is.** This is, the verb to be, implies existing. He is the One who was existing, who is existing, and who is to be existing. No human language can adequately express what this title I Am means. (Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans, chapter 7)

Day 3

Colossians 2:10 And you have been made full in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority.

1 Peter 5:8-9 Be sober; watch. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking someone to devour. Him withstand, being firm in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being accomplished among your brotherhood in the world.

V. Faith is rooted in God’s great, eternal, and divine facts covenanted to us in His holy Word; **the believers’ subjective faith is in their spirit**, which makes their mingled spirit a spirit of faith—2 Cor. 4:13 and footnote 2:

- A. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that **God is love**—1 John 4:8.
- B. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that **God’s grace is sufficient**—2 Cor. 12:9.
- C. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that **Christ is able to save us to the uttermost**—Heb. 7:25.
- D. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that **we are in Christ, that Christ is in us, and that we and Christ are one**—1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 1:27; John 14:20; 15:5.
- E. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that **we are God’s children and heirs**—Rom. 8:16-17.
- F. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that **we have been made full in Christ**—Col. 2:10.
- G. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that **we are the temple of the living God and that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within us**—1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16.
- H. We withstand the devil by **being firm in our subjective faith** in God’s protecting power and loving concern—1 Pet. 5:8-9:
 1. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that **the Lord was manifested** for the purpose of destroying the works of the devil—1 John 3:8.
 2. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that **the Lord’s death has destroyed him** who has the might of death, the devil—Heb. 2:14.
 3. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the **Lord’s resurrection has put Satan to shame**; the resurrection life is a life that cannot be touched by death, that transcends death, that is beyond the boundary of death, that comes out of death, and that death cannot hold—Acts 2:23-24; Phil. 3:10; Col. 2:12-15, 20; 3:1; John 14:30.

Ephesians 6:11 and 13 say, “*Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil...and having done all, to stand.*” Chapter two shows us that we are **seated** together with the Lord in the heavenlies. Chapter six shows us that we need to **stand firm**. Chapter two says that we need to sit, while chapter six says that we need to stand. What does it mean to sit? To sit means to **rest**. It means that the **Lord has overcome and that we can now rest in His victory**. This is what it means to depend on the Lord’s victory. What does it mean to stand? To stand means that spiritual warfare is not a matter of assault but of **defense**. To stand does not mean to attack; it means to defend. **Because the Lord has overcome completely, we have no need to attack again.** The victory of the cross is complete, and there is no further need to attack. Here we see two attitudes: One is to sit, and the other is to stand. To sit is to rest in the Lord’s victory, while to stand is to withstand Satan and to stop him from taking away our victory.

Christian warfare is a matter of **warding off defeat**; it is not a matter of fighting for victory. **We have already overcome.** We fight from the position of victory, and we fight to maintain our victory. We are not fighting to win a victory. We fight from victory; victory is something that is in our hands. The warfare spoken of in Ephesians is the warfare of the overcomers. We do not become overcomers through fighting. We need to distinguish between these two things.

Day 4

Ephesians 1:20-22 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

4. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that **the ascension of the Lord has put Him far above** the power of Satan—Eph. 1:20-22; 2:6; 6:11, 13.
5. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that **the victory of the Lord is complete and that our whole life is included in this victory**; we must see that we have already overcome and that we fight from a position of victory in order to maintain our victory; we can overcome because we are all included in the Lord as the leading Overcomer; He is the Head, center, reality, life, and nature of the man-child, and the man-child as the following overcomers is the Lord's Body—Rev. 3:21; 12:5.

Day 5

Romans 5:2 Through whom also we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and boast because of the hope of the glory of God.

2 Timothy 3:15 And that from a babe you have known the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

VI. All our spiritual possessions in Christ are **realized and actualized by faith:**

- A. Faith **opens the door** to every blessing that is ours in Christ—2 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 1:3.
- B. Faith **cuts off the flesh** with its natural energy and effort and **gives us access into God's grace** and a solid standing in grace, which is the Triune God processed so that we may enter into Him and enjoy Him—Rom. 5:2.
- C. We are all "**sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus**"—Gal. 3:26.
- D. The righteousness that is God Himself lived out of us is through faith in Christ; Christ Himself infused into us through our appreciation of Him becomes our faith, the **faith of Christ that brings us into an organic union with Him**—Phil. 3:9.
- E. We are sanctified dispositionally, which is to be **saturated with God** as our possession for our enjoyment today and to be **transformed by and with the holy nature of God**—Acts 26:18; Rom. 6:19, 22; 2 Cor. 3:18.
- F. The inward cleansing of man's heart can be accomplished only by the **Holy Spirit with the divine life by faith**.
- G. Christ **makes His home deep down in our hearts through faith**; Christ's indwelling is mysterious and abstract, and we apprehend it not by our physical senses but by the sense of faith—Eph. 3:17.
- H. At the time of our regeneration, we believed into Christ and received the Spirit by faith as the ultimate blessing of the gospel; after this, God is supplying the Spirit to us continually, and **our receiving the Spirit is a lifelong, continuous matter by the hearing of faith**—Gal. 3:2-5, 14.
- I. We are **inheriting the promises of God through faith**—Heb. 6:12.
- J. **We have victory over the world through faith**, by which we are enabled to overcome the Satan-organized-and-usurped world.
- K. **We have victory over the evil one by taking up the shield of faith**, which is able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one, which are Satan's temptations, proposals, doubts, questions, lies, and attacks—Eph. 6:16.
- L. Through faith we are able to **overcome** in the midst of all our circumstances of suffering and difficulties—Heb. 11:33-34.
- M. We are **kept** by the power of God through faith, and **we have power through faith**—1 Pet. 1:5; Matt. 17:19-20; 21:21-22.

What is the nature of faith? What should we believe? When we see something spiritual and reach for it, how should we believe? I am not here dealing with the necessity of faith—this is apparent. The question is about how to believe, and this is the only verse which answers this question. “Believe that you have received them, and you will have them.” How should we believe? “Believe that you have received.” The way to believe is not that we will receive or can receive or that we are able to receive or are going to receive, but that we already have received. **Faith is that we have received**, not that we will receive one day. There is nothing so wrong as believing with all our heart that we can receive or that we are going to receive. This is hope, not faith. **Faith refers to the past**, it has nothing to do with the future. What is in the future is always hope, not faith. Our Lord did not say, “You must believe that you are going to receive.” On the contrary, He said, “You must believe that you have already received.” **It is something already done by God, something given to us by God**. Whenever our faith is in the future, it is not faith but hope...(*CWWN*, vol. 46, chapter 180)

Day 6

Acts 13:52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 3:12-13 Beware, brothers, lest perhaps there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God. But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called “today,” lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin —

VII. “Beware, brothers, lest perhaps there be in any one of you an **evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God. But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called ‘today,’ lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin...‘Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts’”—Heb. 3:12-13, 15a:**

- A. Falling away also means “turning away”; **when we exercise our spirit of faith and keep our heart turned to the Lord**, the veil is taken away, and we can behold Him as the God of glory with an unveiled face, so that we may be continually transfused with Him, with His believing element, so that we can live by Him as our faith and remain in the process of being transformed from one degree of glory to another degree of glory into the same image of the resurrected and glorified Christ—2 Cor. 4:13; 3:16-18; cf. Gen. 1:26; Isa. 43:7.
- B. We need to see that **unbelief is the greatest sin**; we are believers who walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7); a believer is one who does not trust in things that can be seen, but he takes certain unseen things, confesses them, and realizes them by faith.
- C. We **overcome** the devil, the accuser of the brothers, by our **declaration of the divine facts, which is the word of our testimony** (Rev. 12:10-11); we follow the Lord as the One who confronted the enemy not by His own word but by repeatedly saying, “It is written...”—Matt. 4:4, 7, 10.
- D. We should not believe in our feelings but **believe in the divine facts in God’s holy Word**; we must learn to declare the divine, mystical, and eternal facts of what the Lord has done, is doing, and will do in us, for us, and through us for the accomplishment of His eternal economy; when God says a certain thing, we should also speak that thing simply because the Bible tells us so.

VIII. As **people of faith, we are people of “**today**”; the first point of the up-to-date way to practice the Lord’s present move is to be filled with the Spirit inwardly and outwardly, essentially and economically, for our life and our work “today”—Acts 2:4; 13:52; Heb. 3:7-8a, 13, 15; 4:7:**

“Forget about yesterday’s enjoyment of Christ. You need a **fresh enjoyment**. You need something **up to date**. The Lord was there in Elden hall, but He is not there now. He is here presently moving in His recovery, and He is in you. Wherever you are, He is in you, and **He is in you right now**. Do you believe He is repeating all the things He did in the past? He is not repeating anything. He is always **going on and on and on**. The **Lord is working. He is moving**.

“Are you a person of yesterday? All of us should be **people of today**. Every day is a today. With some people every day is tomorrow, and with others every day is yesterday...Do not look ahead to the future, and do not look back to the past. **We are people of today**. Do not talk about your old experiences in the past. Talk about your **experience today**...Every day is a today. We do not have yesterday. We had yesterday, but we do not have it now. We will never have tomorrow. **All the time we have is today**. Every day is a today. When we enter into the New Jerusalem, we will have today since every day in eternity is today. **The only day we have is today**. Be filled inwardly [with the Spirit] **today**. Be filled outwardly [with the Spirit] **today**. **Be filled today**” (The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” pp. 484-485).