

## OUR SOURCE & SHIELD

### Faith Grows By Exercise

#### I. Faith can be cultivated, faith can grow and you can go from being weak in faith to being strong in faith

- A. Faith can grow, faith can increase-In looking at scriptures we reach this spiritual truth-**2Th1:3**-We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith grows exceedingly (increase); **Lk17:4**-The apostles said Lord, increase our faith
1. Sarah went from weak faith to strong faith-**Gn18:12,13**-Therefore Sara laughed within herself...And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? **Hb11:11**-Through faith (11:1-Confident expectation, convince) Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed and was delivered a child when she was past age because she judged him faith who had promised
  2. Abraham went from weak faith to strong faith-He started off staggering in unbelief, but got to a place where he was strong in faith; **Gn16:4**-He went in unto Hagar and she conceived; **Rm4:20**-He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith
  3. You're not helpless under the thumb of unbelief, worry and fear-Your faith can grow, your faith can increase, you can have strong faith and walk free from unbelief, worry, fear, anxiety, stress
  4. Many just succumb to unbelief-They shrug shoulders, throw their hands in the air and accept unbelief as just part of the human existence and "I'm just a person who worries and is easily stressed."
  5. Strength of faith is connected to level of joy and peace you live in-The stronger your faith is the higher your joy is, the higher your peace is-**Rm15:13**-The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing
    - a. Ex: Bill Winston and Roger Federer-He looks so peaceful. That's because he knows he's going to win.
- B. You have faith, God has given it to you
1. God has given you a measure of faith-**Rm12:3**-God has dealt to every man the measure of faith
  2. Faith is a part of your recreated spirit-**Gal5:22**-The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness temperance
  3. You don't need faith, you need to develop the faith you have-Anymore than you need a bicep muscle; God give me a bicep muscle. You have a bicep muscle. But it's weak. Do something with it!
- C. Faith doesn't grow if you do nothing to cause it to grow-Many who are weak in faith make no spiritual effort to grow their faith and change and so they stay weak; If you do nothing to address weakness of faith or lack of faith, then faith will stay small
1. 2 reasons faith doesn't grow-Ignorance and laziness
- D. 2 ways faith doesn't grow-1) Asking 2) By reason of hard times
1. Faith doesn't grow by asking-Give me faith, give me faith increase my faith
  2. Faith doesn't grow by reason of hard times-If hard times increased faith everyone would be strong in faith;
- E. Strong faith doesn't come instantly or accidentally-It comes as the result of a conscious decision to exercise your faith and feed your faith, coupled with a determination to pay no attention to how you feel while in the process

#### II. Faith grows by reason of use or exercise

- A. Faith at it's core is a choice-**Ps56:3**-What time I am afraid I will trust in you; **Is12:2**-I will trust and not be afraid; **Ps91:2**-He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust; **Is7:9**-If you will not believe, surely you will not be established; **Mt27:42**-Let him come down from the cross and we will believe him; **Lk22:67**-Art you the

Christ? Tell us. And he said unto them, if I tell you, you will not believe; **Jn4:48**-Except you see signs and wonders you will not believe

1. Putting faith in will/will not category makes faith a choice-If you will not do something that means you could but you're choosing not to; If you cannot do something that means you don't have the ability to do it
- B. It's your choice what you believe-You can believe anything choose to believe
1. Who's deciding what you believe? According to Jesus you are-**Jn14:1**-*Let not your heart be troubled; You believe in God, believe in me also*
  2. They get corrected about being in unbelief because they are and don't have to be-**Mt14:31**-*Why did you doubt? **Mk16:14-TLB**-Their stubborn refusal to believe*
  3. Unbelief is a refusal to believe-He's choosing to not believe, to withhold belief until he sees-**Jn20:25**-*Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails and put my finger into the print of the nails and thrust my hand into his side I will not believe (no never not at all) 27 Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side and be not faithless (incredulous-withholding belief, stubborn refusal to believe, unwilling to believe) but believing*
  4. You're not a victim of unbelief, unbelief is a choice-It's not something you can't help or don't have control of
- C. Faith in God is making the choice to believe His word no matter what you see/feel-Unbelief is the choice to believe what you see or feel over His Word
1. Faith is not a feeling-You can feel like you don't believe and chose to anyway; You can be in faith when you feel like you have no faith
- D. You develop in spiritual things through practice/use-**Hb5:13**-*Everyone that uses milk is unskillful/inexperienced in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use (practice) have their senses exercised (trained) to discern both good and evil*
- E. If your faith is ever going to grow you must exercise it-You exercise your faith by choosing to believe what God says over what you see and how you feel; Every time you do that you just used your faith, you just exercised your faith and the more you do that the stronger your faith will get; **Ps56:3**-*What time I am afraid I will trust in you; **Ps23:4**-Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil*
1. Abraham's faith got strong by exercise-Every time he chose not to consider his body or her womb and instead chose to believe his seed would be as the sand on the seashore and as the stars in the sky his faith grew-**Rm4:18**-*Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall they seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God*
  2. Exercise is especially tough at first-Because you're not used to using your faith like this it can be tough out of the gate, but pay no attention to how you feel and keep exercising
  3. Development comes through training or practice-You will not develop in that which you never do; If you are never choose to believe God over what you see or feel that means you're never using your faith