

Today is the weekly Sabbath. It started at sundown last night, and it ends tonight at sundown. We know that God gave or instructed Moses specific appointed times that we are to keep, and they are recorded in the book of Leviticus in chapter 23. The first appointed time listed in Leviticus 23 is the weekly Sabbath. We are to observe the weekly Sabbath, and we read in Exodus 31:16 that God told Moses that this is a perpetual or an everlasting covenant between God and us. In other words, the Sabbath is forever.

We are not to work on the Sabbath, and we are to have a holy convocation with those of like mind. This holy convocation can be one with God and Christ, or it can be in an assembly with a congregation. We believe that God gave us the Sabbath to rest and to learn more about Him and how we can change.

At some point prior to coming before God in a holy convocation today, most, if not all, went before Almighty God in prayer. As we started our prayer, we believed we'd entered into the Holy of Holies, because we know and believe our elder brother Joshua, as our Passover, made way for us to do so. We had a personal communication or conversation with our Father, Yahweh Elohim.

Because this is the most important time of the day and we are about to come before God in a holy convocation, and we know that if we want to be fed spiritual food, guided in the correct way of life, and show God honor, we had something we had to do at the very beginning of our prayer. Based on the prayer outline given by our elder brother, Joshua, to the disciples, found in Matthew 6, we asked to be forgiven of our sins. We confessed to God our error and our weakness, and we asked God to forgive us of our sins because we understand that sin cuts us off from God, and we need to repent so we can have a personal conversation with Him.

By doing this, we know that God understood that we were saying He is right, and we are wrong. We are letting God know, we know that because of our sins we stopped the flow of His holy spirit, the very spirit that we need to sustain us and help us grow to full maturity in our journey to become Elohim, the very spirit that opens our minds so we understand God's word spoken to us on the Sabbath.

When we confessed our sins, we did so with boldness and confidence that God Almighty was listening, and He forgave us, and the flow of His spirit started to flow into us again, giving us the strength and power to come before Him in a holy convocation on His weekly Sabbath learning more of His mercy and truth.

The two things that I just talked about, the keeping of the Sabbath and prayer, is an example of how faith works in our lives. It is through faith in what God Almighty has revealed to us, we come before Him in a

holy convocation on the Sabbath, and we go to Him in prayer. We believe in both the power of the Sabbath and the power of prayer by faith.

We are told via the scriptures in the Bible that we are to live by faith. We read of faith throughout the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. Joshua talked of those who had faith and those of little faith. Paul talked about faith in his letters recorded in the New Testament. We have several examples of individuals who lived by faith. The book of Hebrews, chapter 11, lists some of those individuals and circumstances.

One of the fruits of God's holy spirit that we received upon repentance and baptism, and the laying on of hands by God's ministry, listed in Galatians 5, is faithfulness. We are told to grow in faithfulness. Part of the armor of God that we are to wear to help in our fight against the evils of this world and our fight against Satan, the prince of the power of the air, is a shield of faith.

Today, we will talk about the subject of faith. We will read about what God has recorded in scripture about faith, and we will review some of those who lived by faith. We will look at faith in our daily lives. The title of today's sermon is *Faith*.

Let's start today by turning over to Hebrews 11:1, and we'll read about what God inspired to be said about what faith is. **Hebrews 11:1—Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.** Faith is the confidence or the absolute belief that we have for the anticipation of the things we do not see yet but know is coming. Faith is the assurance of what keeps us from doubting for one second what is coming.

And what is coming? What are we waiting for that we do not see yet? We are waiting on the return of Joshua the Christ and God's Kingdom to be established on the earth and His government of equality to be administered by Joshua and the 144,000.

It is by faith, or confidence, we believe that God has eternally existed and only He has self-existence. God tells us in scriptures that He is the Eternal and there is no other. We believe this.

There are so many areas that deal with faith that we have confidence or belief in of something. These areas are what help us to grow to full maturity so we can be there at the return of Joshua.

It is by faith, or confidence, that we believe that all of creation was created by God. That God willed it into being, and it became. Not by anything that we can see but by the power of God.

It is by faith that we look at the vast universe, and then we too can say what king David said, "What is man that you are mindful of him?"

It is by faith, or confidence, that we believe that God is the Father of Joshua the Christ and that Christ's purpose was to become the Passover Lamb, dying for the sins of all mankind and making a way for us to be able to have a personal communication with God.

It is by faith, or confidence, that we believe that God called us individually to Christ so that we might have the opportunity to overcome self and our selfish nature, and to move forward with the plan of God and to become Elohim.

It is by faith, or confidence, that we received the flow of God's holy spirit at baptism upon the repentance of our sins and the laying on of hands by one of God's ministers that we can then tap the power, and it will guide us and give us direction so that we can please our Great God.

It is by faith, or confidence, we believe that God requires us to tithe and give offerings, and those who do not rob God will receive His blessings. Not necessarily in monetary form, but a blessing of a peace of mind.

We can now leave a blank paragraph and finish "it is by faith" based on our own personal experiences. We all have one or more stories we can share on how something we personally went through helped us to grow. Our faith must be genuine and sincere. Faith is not something that you can just work up, but it is something that we hold on to that we were given. It makes me to think of "dress and keep," and we know exactly what that means.

Faith is all we know and all we know we are to do. Faith is what keeps us going and focused to finish our fight, to finish our race.

**Verse 2—This is what the ancients were commended for.** Following these scriptures in Hebrews 11, many individuals are listed, and what they did is recorded and accounted to them for faith. We know that it goes back to Abel, Adam and Eve's son, who lived and who pleased God, all the way up to and including the early Church.

**By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.** As stated before, it is by faith that we believe that God brought the entire universe into existence for His Family, the Family of Elohim.

We believe that God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. We believe that God separated the light from the dark and made day and night. He then separated the land and water and created all living things. We believe that He created Adam from the soil, and then He created Eve from Adam's rib. We believe that God did this in six days and then rested on the seventh, thereby establishing the Sabbath Day.

We believe or have faith in the knowledge only God has the power to command all to be as He wants it to be, and it will. We have faith one way, and that is because God, through His holy spirit, gives it to us. The only way that we can have God's holy spirit is because it starts with the Passover.

All things begin with the Passover, and without the Passover, God's plan of salvation would not follow. We must have faith in the Passover, our elder brother, Joshua, who laid down his life to become our Passover willingly.

In the book of Exodus, we read of the institution of Passover. The original Passover was physical, and it was kept by order of God. He told the Israelites to put blood of a lamb or goat without blemish on the doorpost of their homes so that when the plague of death to all the firstborn in Egypt came, their firstborn would be spared.

When Moses told the Israelites this is what they were to do, it was by faith in what God had told them they did exactly as they were instructed. Following this, God then brought them out of their slavery in Egypt, and it was by faith they followed Moses into the desert in search of the promise that God had made.

The Passover was kept this way until the time of Christ. Christ then changed the symbols for keeping the Passover as God had given it to him to do. It was now to be kept by washing of one another's feet, showing a sign of humility, the eating of unleavened bread, and the drinking of wine. Christ was born knowing that he was to be the Passover Lamb. It was Christ's faith in God and all God revealed to his mind about the Passover that he was willing to lay down his life for mankind.

Let's turn over to **Matthew 26:26—And as they were eating, Joshua took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, Take, eat; this is my body.** Christ and the disciples were together to take the Passover as instructed from God to Moses. The eating of unleavened bread now was to represent the body of Christ, because unleavened bread was used, because leavening represents sin, and Christ was without sin. He was the Lamb without blemish; he was perfect.

**Then he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink from it, all of you.** The drinking of the wine represented Christ's blood. Just as the lamb without blemish was sacrificed, Christ's blood too was to be spilled to the earth. **For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.** Through the sacrifice of Christ, we are able to be forgiven of our sins. By Christ's sacrifice for all mankind, we can now be forgiven of our sins and have a closer relationship with God. Christ had now instituted the symbols of the new covenant between us and God.

As Christ said this to his disciples, they did not fully understand what he meant at this time, but because of the faith that they had in who Christ was, believing he was the Son of God, they did as he instructed. Joshua was giving the disciples truth they did not have prior to this.

It was because of Christ's faith in all that the Father had given him that on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib, Joshua was sacrificed as the Passover Lamb. Joshua willingly laid down his life for all mankind.

The latter part of **1 Corinthians 5:7** states, **For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed.** Joshua was the Lamb without blemish.

Dropping down now to verse 39. Christ knew what was about to happen to him because he faithfully believed in what God had given to him to do – to die on a pole for all mankind. Joshua needed to talk to his Father because he knew God would listen and help. As he prayed, he knew God would give him what he needed to do what he was about to do.

**Matthew 26:39—He went a little farther and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.** This was a prayer of faith. He knew that if it was possible that God would change what he was about to endure, but he also knew that if it was not possible, then God’s will would be done.

This is an example to us that as we pray in faith to God for something, we need to remember it must always be according to God’s will.

As all things start with the Passover that is kept on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib, so does our faith. If we do not have faith in what the Passover is, who the Passover lamb is, and when exactly we are to keep Passover, then everything else is in vain. We faithfully, without question, keep the Passover every year as we have been told to do by God and instituted by Christ. We do so without reservation. We know that if Joshua had not died as our Passover Lamb, the rest of the plan of salvation would not be.

Joshua did all he did without question. He was the revelatory word of God, born for the purpose of being the Passover Lamb to make way so that we could all cry out to God personally and be heard. Joshua’s faith in what he knew was perfect. He knew what he was to suffer, and he did it. He was a human being when he knew he was to be beaten beyond recognition and hung on a pole to die, but he did it without wavering. He is an example set for us. He is an example of perfect faith in what God has established, and he is now the first to be born into Elohim.

At some point in our lives, God Himself called us. We know that **John 6:44** states, **No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them.** Our calling is personal to us. Once we were called by God, we started our journey. We must have faith in our calling, and that is personal to us. God begins to mold and fashion us for where we are to be in His Family.

We just talked about that the journey is coming to understand our Passover, Joshua, and that he died for us. As we started our journey or process, we came to understand to truly live God’s way of life and to do all He asks of us, we need help. That help is the holy spirit.

Joshua told the disciples that God would send them a helper that would dwell with them forever, and he was referring to the holy spirit. Only those with God’s holy spirit can truly know who Christ is. It is through the faith we have in baptism that we know that we will receive God’s holy spirit once the hands are laid upon us. This is something we cannot see, but we believe it.

Once we came to see that we needed the help of the holy spirit, we knew that our next step was baptism. We are to go down into a watery grave to bury the old man and to come up as a new man.

After this, God's ministry laid hands upon us, and we received God's holy spirit. This is the only way that this can happen.

Let's turn over now to Galatians 5:22. Remembering, if we yield to the power of the holy spirit and obey God, then we are not then under the death penalty anymore. "The wages of sin is death," eternal death. But just having the holy spirit is not enough. We must also use God's holy spirit and grow in the fruits of the holy spirit. We must live a life of one transforming our mind to become more like God.

**Galatians 5:22—But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things, there is no law.** God's holy spirit will produce fruit, and one of the fruits of the holy spirit is faithfulness, so we are to grow in faith. We should pray to God and ask that He helps us to grow in faith.

If you reflect on when you were first called and what you believed in and what your conviction was, then you should be able to say your belief and conviction has grown. With each truth that God has revealed to us, we should understand believing in that our belief and conviction has grown.

God's holy spirit cannot be stagnant. That is what lukewarm is. God does not accept what is lukewarm; therefore, we must cry out to God to stir up the holy spirit and the fruits of the holy spirit and ask that our faith grow to full maturity.

Turn over to **2 Thessalonians 1:3—We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other.** Paul was commending the Thessalonians that their faith was growing, and because of that then their love was growing for one another. Both are fruits of the holy spirit that we should be growing in our whole lives.

Not only are we to grow in faithfulness, we are told that we are to live by faith. We know that we have a fight on our hands because we do not fight against anything physical. But our fight is spiritual; we are in the fight of our life for our life, our spiritual life. God does not leave us alone in this fight. We have the armor of God we can put on, and part of that armor is faith.

Let's turn over to **Ephesians 6:10** to look at the armor of God. **Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.** The armor that Paul is telling the Ephesians to put on is God's, because all of the armor or what we need to fight with comes from God. God knows Satan, and He knew we would need help to conquer whatever schemes or trials Satan may try to throw our way.

Satan is the master deceiver and the father of lies. He was able to convince a third of the angels to turn against their creator, God. Satan started his lies with Adam and Eve. We are no match against Satan without the help of God and the protection of His armor.

**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.** The war or battle is with Satan and the demons influence all around us in our daily lives. But our battle is also with self and our human nature, a nature that is exactly like Satan, selfish.

We have to fight the influences of “the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” We fight our selfishness daily all day. You do not have to look far to see the evil influences everywhere. Paul understood this, and that is why he told the Ephesians they needed the full armor of God. And brethren, so do we.

**Therefore, put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.** We want to stand our ground against all that fights us, and what we believe and what we are longing for – the return of Joshua and God’s government. We want to stand against anything that would take away our opportunity to see the ushering in of God’s government on this earth at the beginning of the Millennium. We want to stand against anything that would take Elohim from us.

**Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.** Without God’s truth, there is nothing, and we are told to wear the truth as a belt buckled around our waist. We need the truths of God encircled around us like a wall of protection. We are to be ready, prepared to move forward. As we enter this battle with Satan and his demons, we are to be moving forward with confidence, understanding that the Kingdom of God will bring peace.

**In addition to this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.** Paul tells the Ephesians that there is something more we need. Our shield of faith will help us put down the fiery darts of Satan. And we know fiery darts can be anything that would keep us from putting God first, anything that might put doubt in our minds.

We understand it is through faith that we know our lives are in God’s hands if we are yielding to a process. It is because of faith we can be thankful, grateful for all we have. To believe is to live by faith. Our faith in what God has promised is our shield against anything Satan might shoot our way.

If you think of being faced with a trial or something that may tempt you to not put God first in our life, one of the first things that we should do is go to our knees in prayer to God for His help. This is us exercising faith in prayer, and that we believe God can and will help and protect us. It is a time personally to discuss something with God, and if we are in a repentant state of mind, the flow of His spirit will be there to help us, just like God promised.

We have put up the shield of faith that will stop Satan's influence and give us a sound mind. One of the best shields of faith are all 57 truths that God has given to us. We need to go over the 57 Truths frequently so that we may stay grounded in what we know.

Continuing to finish the armor of God: **Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.** Spiritually, we need to protect what goes into our mind through our eyes and our ears, staying sober-minded at all times. Salvation is the knowledge, the knowing. This is why we need to use the shield of faith so we can be watchful and ensure that there are no distractions to take our minds off of God.

Our faith grows by our hearing, the hearing of the word of God. We hear what God gives us in sermons, publications, or posts. We understand what we hear because God gives it to our mind – then faith is understanding what is revealed to us, what God has given to Christ to give to us, the logos, the word of God, the revelatory word of God.

Again, we are to live by faith. Faith is everything God has revealed to us through His inspired word and truths.

Let's turn over to **Hebrews 10:22—Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart, with the full assurance that faith brings.** We can have confidence or faith that we are able to enter the Holy of Holies and speak directly to God. By living a new way of life in complete agreement with God, we have faith in our calling.

There can be nothing fake or insincere about our faith. We are either all in or out. There, again, is no lukewarm faith. God will not accept anything that is lukewarm. Some of us hearing this should know that better than anyone.

**...having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.** We must believe completely because of Joshua and his sacrifice that we are able to be baptized and forgiven of our sins and live a life that honors God. It is only through baptism and the forgiveness of our sins that we can be cleansed and no longer feel guilty. We have faith in what God says, and we know once forgiven, it is forgotten by God. We have been made clean and we can grow to the fullness that God wants us to be.

**Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful.** We cannot waver in our belief at all. Again, this is all or nothing. We know that we serve the Eternal Existing God who is faithful in all He says He will do. We can serve Him without doubting anything. God's word is true, and what He has promised will be. God is faithful to what He has given us. This is why we can live by faith.

**And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the day approaching.** We should be living a life of love towards each other and encouraging one another. We should want to see each other succeed and make it to the end. We are so close to the

return of Christ. We need to love and encourage each other more and more. In doing so, we may be helping someone else's faith. Sometimes we can get into a great trial, and as strong as we want to think we are, we are still human, and we become down and discouraged. The love one from another may be what spurs someone on, reminding them of what this is all about and helping to restore one's faith.

Dropping down to **verse 32—Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times, you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.**

This message was to the early Church in the Ephesus era. They were asked by Paul to remember when they were called and to remember they suffered because of their calling. They had to deal with those who did not have the knowledge that they were blessed with. The early Church suffered a lot more than can ever be compared to.

In the book of Acts, we read of the apostles being arrested for teaching as Christ taught them before and after his death. All of the apostles, with the exception of John, lost their lives early because they believed what Christ told them and feared God more than man. Paul was beaten so badly he was left for dead, but he was not deterred to do what he was commissioned to do.

The early Church lived by faith. They lived by the same faith as we do. They thought that Christ was going to return in their lifetimes, and we believe Christ will return in ours. The difference is we know that he will return in our lifetime. They did not have all the truths that we have, and that is why. But regardless, they died in the faith that he would return.

As I stated before, the early Church suffered much and we cannot compare to it; however, a lot of those called into God's Church during Philadelphia and then into the remnant Church have suffered too and have remained faithful to God and to God's truths.

Those who are the only members in their families can suffer persecution by other family members, whether it is because they are keeping God's Holy Days or not keeping the holidays such as Easter and Christmas.

You must choose to put God first in your life, regardless of what you may go through. If you think it is hard, do exactly what Paul instructed the early Church and remember, we have "better and lasting possessions." What we are to receive for being faithful to God is so much more than anything we can ever imagine.

Other things that some have suffered are at the hands of their employer by losing jobs for obeying God and not working on the Sabbath and the Holy Days. Young members have been made fun of by

classmates as being different, or parents have had to fight with school systems to make sure that their children attend the Feast.

**So do not throw away your confidence** (your faith); **it will be richly rewarded.** We will be richly rewarded by what God has told us. If we endure and obey God, we have the opportunity to be born into God's Family, Elohim. Once born into the Family of God, then through the power of the holy spirit, we will have Almighty God dwell in us into everlasting life. This will be perpetual and continuing process forever. This is the richest reward we can ever receive. **You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised.** We persevere because we have faith in what God promised the early Church and what He has promised to us. And what did God promise the early Church and us?

**For in a very little while the one who is coming will return, and he will not delay; but my righteous one will live by faith, and if he turns back, my soul will take no pleasure in him.** The righteous will live by faith. And remember, faith is the confidence we have for the anticipation of the things we do not see yet but know is coming.

As stated in verse 37, "he will not delay." Joshua is what we anticipate, the return of Joshua. He does not delay his coming; he will return exactly when he is supposed to. He will return when God states it is time. All timing is in God's hands, and it is perfect, and we faithfully live by that.

**But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.** Those who shrink back or turn back to what they were called out of and return to a life separate from God will not receive the promise of God. Only those who fight the fight and move forward in faith, in confidence of what they know without seeing it, will receive the promises, the rewards of God. We never want to turn back and displease God.

Another area that we live our lives in faith is that of healing. We know that God can heal us according to His will.

Let's turn over to **Matthew 8:5—When Joshua had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him asking for help.** A centurion was a commander of a century, or a specific number of soldiers, for the Roman army. This man would have heard stories or may have even personally seen some of the healings that were taking place in Jerusalem by Joshua. It appears that he believed or had faith in what he was witnessing, and that is why he asked Joshua to heal his servant.

**Lord, he said, My servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly. Joshua said to him, Shall I come and heal him? The centurion replied, Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, Go, and he goes; and that one, Come, and he comes. I say to my servant, Do this, and he does it.**

**When Joshua heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.** This was an incredible thing to happen. You have a Roman soldier who understands how government works on a physical level, being able to apply it on a spiritual level that I am sure he did not understand, yet the principle is there. Joshua wanted those that followed to understand just how profound this was.

This is how it works in the Church today. God's ministry is who God has given authority to petition Him to heal someone according to His will. Turn over to **James 5:14—Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.** When we are sick, we are to call upon the ministry in God's Church for anointing. This is an understanding that we know how the government of God, the first truth God gave to Mr. Armstrong to restore to His Church, works. Only an ordained minister of God can pray and anoint with oil.

**And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up.** We covered earlier in the sermon that when we pray, we do so in faith. We believe that God Almighty is listening to us. When the ministry prays on our behalf to God, we too believe that God is listening. But faith did not start with the prayer being asked. The second that we knew we were sick, and we knew we needed God's help, and we did as He commanded, we showed faith. The rest shows that we understand where the government of God is.

And when we are not able to have a minister directly anoint us, we ask for an anointing cloth from the ministry. The first part of the letter says, "Thank you for requesting anointing and prayer for your healing. It is an exercise of faith to call for a minister in God's Church to anoint us. It is an exercise of obedience to God and of placing Him first in our lives."

The exercise of faith is that we believe what James 5 says: we are to call upon the ministry when we are sick. We know that only an ordained minister of God can do this. By obeying God and doing as instructed, we are placing God first in our lives. We understand that if we never get the letter, our part was done. If God chooses not to heal at this time because God knows what is best for us, we accept that. The part of asking God is us exercising faith.

And if we become ill and are sick, based on the guidelines given in many sermons, and we do not call upon the ministry for anointing, we are showing God we do not believe Him, we are not in agreement with Him, and we are demonstrating a lack of faith.

Another area where we should be exercising faith every day in our lives is prayer. Every day, we should be going to God, our Father, in prayer. We know that we have an outline of prayer that Joshua gave us in Matthew 6. When we pray, we have faith that God is listening.

**Matthew 6:10** it states, **Your Kingdom come.** When we pray this, we believe this. We are not confused like the world. We understand that one of God's truths is that His Son, our elder brother, is going to

return to this earth on a Pentecost. He is going to return with the 144,000 to set up God's government for the entire world. Just like the early Church, we are in anticipation and complete agreement with this. This is living by faith.

In **verse 11**, it states, **Give us this, our daily bread**. This is not just talking about physical bread but spiritual bread as well. We have complete confidence if we go to God and seek His help in matters in our lives that God's will will be done. It may not be the answer we necessarily want or expect, but it will be what is best for us.

We know that if we are not cut off from the flow of God's holy spirit, we can know and understand the spiritual food we need. God will continue to give us His Holy Days that cover His plan of salvation for mankind, and He will continue to allow us to know all His truths and His progressive revelation. This is living by faith.

In **verse 12**, it states, **And forgive us our debts** – our sins. Part of our prayer daily should be repenting of our sins. Again, we know that God forgives us of our sins when we ask for forgiveness and we change. We also know that God forgets the sin once forgiven. This is living by faith.

The latter part of **verse 13** states, **For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever**. We live for the Kingdom of God, the government of God to be here on this earth. We know that all power and glory belong to God Almighty. This is living by faith.

We are also encouraged to fast throughout the year, other than just on the Day of Atonement. We know that when we humble ourselves before God, going without food and water, that we are asking God to help us to stay on track and help us to grow closer to Him. The result of the fast is to have a meek and contrite spirit, one that can be worked with so that we can become as king David. This is living by faith.

We are commanded by God to give ten percent of our net income. We do this by sending money to God's Church to be used by God's apostle however God directs it. We are commanded to keep ten percent of our net income to use for God's Holy Days, especially the Feast time. We are to give Holy Day offerings on the Holy Days as commanded. This is an area where some's faith can be tested.

I can remember when the Church sent in a third tithe every third year, and many more times than not, on paper, this was not going to work; however, we did it in faith that God would take care of us, and He did. Many of us can tell of stories of blessings in a third tithe year that could have only come from God.

We believe what it states in Malachi, and if you do not do this faithfully, you are robbing God, and when you do it faithfully, you are blessed. When we do as we are commanded, we are living by faith.

God blessed His Church with 57 truths. We have brought 3 forward from the Sardis era, 18 restored during the Philadelphia era, and 36 new truths have been revealed since the Laodicean era ended. Some truths tested the faith of many, and they are no longer here. The truths are the mind of God, and we

must believe that. We want to transform our minds to become like God in all things. As each truth has been revealed and we have believed it, our faith has grown. Our belief and conviction in all 57 truths is an act of living by faith.

Let's now turn over to Hebrews 11. In Hebrews 11, we find individuals by name and specific examples of times of those who lived by faith and gave an example to follow.

**Hebrews 11:4—By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith, he was commended as righteous when God spoke well of his offerings.** Abel was the second son of Adam and Eve and was the first human being to choose God first. Abel was found righteous before God because he put God first in his life. We are given this example to follow.

**By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: He could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.** Enoch walked faithfully with God for over three hundred years, putting God first and pleasing Him.

**And without faith, it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.** The only way that we can have faith is to believe that God, whom we have not seen, exists and that He has a plan for mankind, a plan of salvation revealed through His Holy Days.

**By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.** There was great wickedness on the earth during the time of Noah. The Bible references this "as in the days of Noah." Mankind had become profoundly immoral and wicked because they became slaves to their own human nature and became disgustingly evil.

God pronounced He would bring a great flood on the earth and destroy mankind, but Noah, who was faithful in God's eyes, would be spared. God instructed him to build the ark, and he did it. It took Noah over a hundred years to build the ark, and we know that all the time that he and his sons would have been made fun of, mocked. Noah stayed strong and did as God had told him.

**By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.** Abraham, like Noah, was given a task to do, and did it without hesitation. God told Abraham to leave his home and to go to a place he was not familiar with. Abraham did as he was instructed, picked up all his belongings and possessions, and left.

**Verse 11—By faith, Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.** Sarah had Isaac at an age that she should not have been able to conceive. But God told her she would have a child, and she did, and through him, Abraham's descendants were born into a great nation.

**Verse 13—These all died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.** They died believing all God told them would be, would be, and did not care to be different from others. What God promised was much more rewarding than anything that any human being can offer.

**Verse 17—By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.** God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son as a burnt offering. Abraham so trusted God that he did exactly what he was instructed to do and took Isaac into the wilderness to sacrifice him to God. Abraham knew that if God had purpose in Isaac, He would resurrect him. But before Abraham sacrificed his only son, God stopped him. In Abraham's heart, he had already done what God had asked him to do.

**Verse 20— By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith, Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.** Isaac was taught by Abraham, and he continued to believe what Abraham had taught him. Joseph went through many trials while in Egypt, but he never lost faith in God or that God would take care of him. We see God working in Abraham's lineage as Isaac blesses and teaches his own sons, then Jacob, who received the birthright promise from his father, now blessed Joseph's sons while still in Egypt.

**Verse 23—By faith, Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw that he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. By faith, Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.**

**By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. By faith, he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith, they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.** From the time that Moses talked with God through the burning bush until the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt, Moses continued to be faithful to all God would have him to do, which included the symbols of the first Passover.

Moses instructed the Israelites to put the blood of a lamb with no blemish on the doorway, and the plague of death to the firstborn would pass over them. They did it trusting in God's word through Moses, and God kept His promise. As God promised Moses this He also promised to free the Israelites, as they were spared from the wrath of Egypt.

**Verse 30—By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. By faith, the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.** The Israelites under the leadership of Joshua did as God told them to do and marched around Jericho for seven days. Then, with the blast of the horns and the shout of the people, the walls of Jericho

fell, and the city was destroyed with the exception of where Rahab had stayed. She was granted favor for her generosity and helping the spies because she believed all she had heard of what the Eternal God had done for the Israelites.

**And what more shall I say?** There have been so many who have lived before us from the beginning who have lived by faith. They have stepped out and been different because they believed in all that God told them, and they believed that their physical life was a temporary vessel.

What truly matters is what God has placed in our minds. We are given the opportunity to live in faith if we choose so.

**For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets. Who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong.** We are nothing without God and His truths. God called the weak of the world, and through His calling and the Passover, we are made strong. The truth in our minds can conquer anything as long as we remember, it is not the fleshly body we are concerned with, it is a spiritual body.

Going on... **became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trials of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world is not worthy.**

Those that Paul was referencing were willing to be tortured, mocked, scourged, and put in prison for doing what God told them to do. God's end-time apostle was put into prison for doing nothing wrong. The systems of this world cannot understand God or God's government that we live under in God's Church. They apply the laws of man that are so twisted and evil because they are from Satan. The world is not worthy of those who put Almighty God first.

**They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.** Starting with Abel to the time of the early Church, many exercised faith, and we have their examples to help encourage us. Many believed in all they were told.

What we have just read is an example of progressive truth. What Abraham knew about God through the time of the early Church, truth grew. They did not all completely understand until God gave it to them. It is the same for us today. Regardless, each individual or each situation shows that they believed in God and what He told them up to that point.

I want to move forward a bit and talk about one of God's end-time apostles, Mr. Armstrong, and how he showed his faith in God. Mr. Armstrong knew of the commission that God had given to him. Mr. Armstrong, during the era of Philadelphia, was to take the news of God's coming Kingdom and His Son, Joshua, coming with the 144,000 and setting up God's government to the world.

When God called Mr. Armstrong out of the Sardis era, there was much work that needed done. It started with restoring 18 truths back to God's Church. Mr. Armstrong, along with Loma Armstrong, his wife, had to step out on faith many, many times during the beginning. I want to share a few comments from Mr. Armstrong's autobiography.

"All self-important vanity had been knocked out of me by the successive business reverses..."

This is referencing Mr. Armstrong's businesses that he had a part of prior to God calling him.

"...being knocked down repeatedly, and made for years to bite the dust of poverty and humiliation. But I had come to receive a new confidence. It was based on faith in CHRIST -- not in self. It was the faith of Christ, which God had given as one of the gifts of His Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Armstrong very early on knew that the gift of faithfulness he received at baptism was a gift and that he needed to stir it up and grow in it. The very work that God had given him would depend on this. And as we know, Mr. Armstrong did this over and over again.

Mr. Armstrong stated, "This work always has been a work of FAITH -- relying on GOD." Mr. Armstrong stepped out numerous times, not knowing where the money would come from to support His Church, God's Church, but doors opened. Time and time again, God provided His Church, and there was a plan.

Mr. Armstrong, living a work of faith, by God's guidance, accomplished much. During the Philadelphia era, there were three colleges teaching future ministry along with others, *The Plain Truth* magazine that went out to millions, *The Good News* magazine, booklets, books, and so much more. All done with faith in the living God that it would be done.

One of the hardest times of Mr. Armstrong's life was when Loma died. She had been working by his side with him from the beginning of the Philadelphia Era. He wrote a letter to the Church April 17, 1967, to tell of her death. I want to share a couple of comments from that letter.

"God has PROMISED to HEAL the sick, upon real repentance and FAITH. But God has not promised HOW, or WHEN! That, we must leave to Him IN FAITH." (*Armstrong, 236*)

This was an incredible example to the Church. Mr. Armstrong had prayed in faith that God would heal Loma because he knew of His promise to do so; however, he prayed in faith that God's will be done. He

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<sup>1</sup> Armstrong, Herbert W. The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong. Volume 2. Worldwide Church of God, 1987. PDF file. Biblical Truth, [www.biblical-truth.com/books/herbert\\_w\\_armstrong\\_autobiography2.pdf](http://www.biblical-truth.com/books/herbert_w_armstrong_autobiography2.pdf).

believed that God would do what was best, and we too must have faith in God in all things that He does in His timing, knowing it is always what is best. Mr. Armstrong revealed his faith in God was strong as ever. Mr. Armstrong knew that he was to continue now without Loma at his side, but he knew he had to finish what God had given him to do.

This was also stated:

“This greater power is opening more and more important doors for finishing the Work for this age. I am walking through them in faith and confidence. My life is dedicated to this Work, and doing my part diligently. But it takes your part, too -- and the whole Work can go only as far and as fast as you do yours.” (*Armstrong, 255*)

I do hope we can all hear him saying, “We need to get behind this thing.” This is how we exercise our part of faith – by getting behind this thing and moving forward with what God has given us to do. We sitting here should know this. As we have gone through the Laodicea era and have continued moving forward, we should know better than anybody our faith must be strong.

God’s remnant Church, the Church of God-PKG, has been given a commission and a purpose, too. We know it is in our name, Preparing for the Kingdom of God. God’s other end-time apostle, Ron Weinland, leads God’s remnant Church living by faith that God instructs Christ, then Christ instructs his apostle, and the Church learns.

After being vomited out of God’s Church as the result of being lukewarm, which was very much exhibited during the Laodicea era, some were blessed to be awakened from their sleep. As we were awakened and God’s spirit began to flow in us again, we knew that God’s Church had to be somewhere. God’s Church would not end. It is our faith in the Passover, the Sabbath, the Holy Days, and in all the truths of God up to that point, we knew this had to be.

Once the Church of God-PKG was established, we faithfully started our journey forward again. We got behind this thing in prayers, tithes, and offerings. There have been occasions where we have lived by faith in a very profound way. One of those times we can all agree upon was the revelation of the present truth that we lived in 2012.

From the time that we knew the date, May 27, 2012, we as a whole lived our lives with complete faith that this was the date that Joshua the Christ was going to return. We did not waver until we were told it was not. This may have been a time when many of us grew stronger in our determination that we were going to run this race until it was finished. Our faith increased in a measure we may never truly understand until later.

On May 26, 2012, we were given a post titled, *The Present Truth*. This was stated by God’s apostle:

“We have indeed gone through many mixed feelings over the past few weeks as we have approached this Pentecost of 2012. The anticipation of such an event right up to the last minute reminds me of Abraham when he was about to follow through with the sacrifice of his own son. The feelings and emotion of such a time cannot be understood nor appreciated until having experienced something similar in faith. We now relate more to Noah than we ever did in the past. Such is pleasing to God that people remain faithful to the end when God intervenes to fulfill His word or to reveal another way.”<sup>2</sup>

Following this time of our life, God’s apostle was falsely accused and put into prison for a crime he did not commit. We watched a corrupt court system not allow truth to be told. But regardless, we moved forward in support of God's apostle and God’s Church during this time because we knew where it came from, and we knew that God’s apostle was in God’s hands.

This was a trial for some of God’s people, and they stopped having faith and are no longer with us. Those sitting here did not lose faith and knew that this was part of God’s plan or would not be happening. Those sitting here got behind this thing and moved forward. We understood it was for a purpose, and so we lived by faith.

God’s end-time Church, Church of God - PKG, has stood up and faithfully followed God in many more situations. Just remember, our faith must continue to grow because our job is not over yet, and we must be ready for whatever comes our way.

Our faith must always be increasing. In God’s Church, we can never become stagnant. We are told to grow in the fruits of the holy spirit, and as discussed earlier, faithfulness is among the fruits. We must fight two main obstacles, ourselves and our selfish human nature, and the other is Satan, the prince of the power of the air.

Let’s turn over to **1 Peter 5:8—Be alert and of sober mind**. We want to be on guard, watching and examining ourselves. We are to be sober-minded, not allowing anything to cloud our judgment by allowing things in our mind that should not be there.

**Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.** It would give Satan great pleasure to take your opportunity to be a part of Elohim. We know the examples of the roaring lion. We cannot take our eyes off of it for one second or let our guard down, for if we stumble, we become its prey. Once we stumble, it can become deadly and very hard to get back up.

**Resist him, standing firm in the faith.** We can resist Satan if we are living by faith and never faltering. We must live our lives having faith in the Passover, for again, all things in God’s plan start here. We must live in faith that God will provide and take care of us as long as we are doing our part.

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<sup>2</sup> Weinland, Ronald. “The Present Truth.” Ronald Weinland, 26 May 2012, [www.ronaldweinland.com/2012/05/26/the-present-truth](http://www.ronaldweinland.com/2012/05/26/the-present-truth).

**...because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.** Always remembering we are not in this alone. Every member of God's Church is facing the same things. We all have weaknesses and sins, and we all have Christ, our Passover, there leading us to the end. We must stand fast against self and Satan. We must be able to say what Paul said.

Let's turn over to **2 Timothy 4:7—I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.** Paul is telling Timothy he fought a good fight, and he finished the race.

We are reminded that we are in a fight. We are fighting ourselves first and foremost. We are fighting our human nature – again, the same nature that Satan has, filled with selfishness. Our fight is against Satan, too. We know that he broadcast things into the air. We know that he is the prince of the power of the air. This comes through many things – things we see, things we hear, temptations against our weaknesses. This is why we are fighting. We understand that our fight is for our salvation. A fight against keeping the faith.

We, like Paul, must finish the race, and a race is not easy. When you train for a race, you build your distance as you train. You start out small and build to a greater distance, and then on race day, you finish the race when you cross the finish line. You may have to give yourself a pep talk along the way if you notice you've slowed your pace; you then pick it back up. When we run our race and finish, we can say what Paul said – we kept the faith.

**Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.** We are all longing for the day of Christ's return. This is what faith is all about. Paul knew that he was not alone in this fight and in his race to keep the faith. He was encouraging Timothy at this time, and his words encourage us today.

Let's turn over now to **Hebrews 12:1—Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witness...** Many have lived and died before us in the faith. We covered several individuals and circumstances today to show and remind us we are not alone in the fight. When we feel that we are letting down, we need to remind ourselves of those listed in Hebrews 11 and those in the early Church, like Paul, who worked tirelessly teaching the truth. We need to remember how tirelessly Mr. Armstrong and Loma worked during the Philadelphia era. They worked tirelessly and faithfully for things they did not see. They were a witness to us to never give up the fight.

**...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.** We must fight our human nature, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" every second of every day in our lives. We understand what takes us astray. We know what happens if we stumble in front of the lion.

We must stand firm and upright and keep putting one foot in front of the other, bearing all things, and win the race we are in. We can see the finish line, and we must cross it. And the only way we can do this is to have faith that God is there with us.

**...looking unto Joshua, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the pole, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.** We have faith in our Passover, Joshua, the beginning of God's plan of salvation for man.

Prayer is where we can ask for God to help us to continue in our faith so that our faith can grow. As we approach the end time, we know that we are going to see many horrible things. We have lived a life of faith up to this moment, and that is why we are sitting here, but we are going to need to have faith in God like we've never had before, soon.

We have looked at several areas of faith today. We live our lives with confidence in what we hope for, the return of Joshua, living under the government of God with one religion, one belief that brings peace and equality. We have the promise from God, and even though we cannot see it yet, we know it is because God said so, and His word is true. God does not change.

Joshua, our Passover, is the beginning, and nothing would be without him. He lived a life that we are to live. He was the perfect example of someone living by faith. He never faltered; he never sinned. He was the revelatory word of God, and he knew what God promised, and he believed. He died for us willingly and felt no shame in doing so. He fulfilled the word of God, and he now sits at the right hand of the throne of God Almighty, awaiting for the time his Father, our Father, will say it is time. Then those before us, with us, will see what we have faithfully endured to see – God's Kingdom in all its glory.