

Thanksgiving and Faith

Chapter 17

17.1 How does God build our faith?

God uses various methods to build faith depending on the person and how will they are to decide to believe God and that He is really doing what is best for them, or what is necessary for them to be able to live, to obey and to do what they are called to do.

All three of these are hard to do, to trust an invisible God to prosper them in their life so that they and their family will have everything they need to live. We know what the bible says about this:

MT 6:24 "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

MT 6:25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? [26] Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? [27] Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

MT 6:28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. [29] Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. [30] If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? [31] So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' [32] For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. [33] **But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.** [34] Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Then there is the faith for obedience. But there are times when we cannot hear God, then what? How do we know what do obey? How do we go? Well God has given us the bible for His standing commandments, such as:

MK 11:22 "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. [23] "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not **doubt in his heart** but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. [24] Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, **believe that you**

have received it, and it will be yours. [25] And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. "

So this is hard but it says that believing that you have received it and it will be your. It does not say, feeling that you have received, or that after getting confirmation that you have received, or after you get a dream or vision or that some else prophesies over you for it. No it just says, **believe that you have received it**. This is faith, making the decision to believe God and trust Him for Matthew 6, that He care for you.

He also does not say to keep praying and praying and praying. What is God deaf? He cannot hear us. He does say:

RO 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when His righteous judgment will be revealed. [6] **God "will give to each person according to what he has done."** [7] **To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.** [8] But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. [9] There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; [10] but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. [11] For God does not show favoritism."

But is this persistence in saying the same prayer over and over again or pushing God to do what they want? No.

This persistence is never giving up on yourself or on God, it is in being not doubtful or it is being persistence in your faith in God. It is resting in God, resting in your faith in Him to do far greater than we requested. This persistence is to persevere in faith, not pray. To be joyful ways, to do all things in thanksgiving and worship/praise:

COL 4:2 "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. [3] And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. [4] Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. [5] Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. [6] Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

The key here is that the devotion of prayer is not to pray our troubles and worries, those are handled by faith, but this is prayer of watching and thanksgiving. This watchful is to be on guard, to watch if anyone or thing or evil spirit is trying to steal your request seed. It is to be ready to battle out of obedience to battle or to rest out of obedience and let God battle for you, and as He battles for you, you believe that He is, which is believing that you have received it, for you cannot see God battling for you, you just have to decide (faith) that He is doing it. Even if you cannot feel it or since it or get confirmation on it.

You know when you ask some one to do some thing for you and after awhile you the enemy starts talking to you that it the person is not doing it, or that they cannot do it or that they really do not want to do it, which if you believe the lie, makes you to open the window of worry. So you call the person to get conformation on it being done, but you cannot get a hold of them, which causes you to worry more. So you call and call and call.

Now what you do not see is that they are very busy doing the request, and so they do not have time to answer the call or to return the call or message, or many messages.

So then once they finish the request, they call you and tell you it is done. But now they are upset because you kept bothering them with all of the calls and messages. They are hurt because you did not trust them to do the job you requested, and because you have not trusted them, then next time you ask for a request they will say no, because you did not trust them last time and all of you worry and panic is not worth for them to have to worry about if they did the next one.

Well so it is with God. He says “I am willing to help you, but I cannot do it if I have to be constantly interrupted by you calls and messages, your worry and lack of faith in His ability and His care and His love for you, His child.”

Also

DT 28:45 “All these curses will come upon you. They will pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the LORD your God and observe the commands and decrees he gave you. [46] They will be a sign and a wonder to you and your descendants forever. [47] **Because you did not serve the LORD your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity,** [48] therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, you will serve the enemies the LORD sends against you. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you.”

17.2 Thanksgiving

Connector to Christian victory that releases God’s grace and mercy is thanksgiving.

RO 7:14 “We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. [15] I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. [16] And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. [17] As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. [18] I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. [19] For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing. [20] Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.”

RO 7:21 “So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. [22] For in my inner being I delight in God's law; [23] but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. [24] What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? [25] **Thanks be** to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”

RO 8:1 “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, [2] because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. [3] For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, [4] in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.”

1CO 9:7 “Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk? [8] Do I say this merely from a human point of view? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? [9] For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? [10] Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. [11] If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? [12] If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. [13] Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? [14] In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

2CO 9:6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. [7] Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. [8] And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. [9] As it is written:

"He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever."

2CO 9:10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. [11] You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in **thanksgiving** to God.

2CO 9:12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. [13] Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. [14] And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. [15] Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

COL 2:1 I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. [2] My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, [3] in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. [4] I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. [5] For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

COL 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, [7] rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Rest in your destiny. Rest in the belief that He cares so much for you and your life that Rest in your thanksgiving and praise for God. He died for you so that we might have life and have life more abundantly. But for Him to do this we must have faith in Him and just let Him do it.

He often sends us out to what is called the wilderness. He does this to build faith and character. In the wilderness we must live by faith like the Israelites did for 40 years.

DT 8:1 "Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the LORD promised on oath to your forefathers. [2] Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, **to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.** [3] He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, **to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.** [4] Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not

swell during these forty years. [5] Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you.”

DT 8:6 “Observe the commands of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and revering him. [7] For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land--a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; [8] a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; [9] a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills.”

DT 8:10 “When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. [11] Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. [12] **Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, [13] and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, [14] then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.** [15] He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. [16] He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you. [17] You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." [18] But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.”

DT 8:19 “If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. [20] Like the nations the LORD destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the LORD your God.”

This is the time to build your faith. It is the time of controlled teaching and testing, for if you cannot be faithful and thankful for God in this time, how can you be faithful and thankful on the time of chaos, when the time is short and everything is hectic and in disorder.

17.3 Little Lamb

Do you remember seeing a Shepard carrying a lamb on his shoulders? I always wondered why. Well the story is that the lamb would not stay with the flock, it always ran off and got lost. So the Shepard would break its leg(s) so it would not run off. But then it would cause the Shepard to have to carry it, which is fine because the result is that the lamb learned to trust the Shepard for its food, water and security. It learned to depend on the Shepard. Then when its leg(s) were healed, it would never run off again, for it found that the Shepard had everything it needed in life.

So the Lord placing us in the wilderness is breaking our legs and putting us in the place where we have to have faith in Him for everything we need in life, or else we die.

One of the things the Lord has shown us the being thankful releases our faith. For ask yourself "Why do you say thank you?" Well I say thank you so show my appreciation for what someone has done for me. I say it usually after they had done something, but if I see that I might not be able to say "Thank you" for what they are going to do, I say it before they do it. That shows my faith in them to do what they promised they would do for me.

Well the same with God. Telling Him thank you even when you do not see, hear, feel or know He has done it, shows my faith in Him to do what I had requested.

MK 11:22 "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. [23] "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not **doubt in his heart** but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. [24] Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, **believe that you have received it**, and it will be yours. [25] And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. "

If you believe that He has done it for you, then you need to act your faith and not act your disbelief. Whenever we talk with uncertainty in God that is not having faith. Every time you say, "I do not know" when asked if God will do it or not, is not believing that you have received it.

JN 16:12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. [13] But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. [14] He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. [15] All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."

So what do we have? All things. It takes faith to receive it all. So you need to you're your faith. If nothing else you have the bible and you know what God says there. If the bible supports what is happening, then without any other special confirmation, or prophesy or feeling from God, you know he will fulfill the words of the bible. So say it. Speak your faith.

Giving thanks shows that you believe and do not doubt, regardless what you see, hear or feel from the enemy. He is training us to be grateful when we have. If you are grateful, you will seek God for who He is and not for what He can do for you.

One easy example is about money. God cares about our attitude of money not whether we have it or not. And God does not need our money but He is testing us as to whether we believe Him or not or whether we are obedient or not. So He cares about our attitude with and without money. Seek well really seek God when we are without money, but we will be just as perseverant to seek Him and thank Him or will we even forget him when they get it.

If we learn the lesson of seeking Him just as hard after we have money as we did when we were without money, then He will be more than glad to give us the money so that we can prosper and give Him glory for His mercy and grace.

So perseverance in prayer is to not give up and always stay in faith. You do not need to know everything to put your faith in Him to do for you, whether you ask Him for it or not. Trust in Him like that lamb sitting on the Shepard's shoulders that he will care for. God says If you keep all of My commandments, then I will do things for you. But seek Me for me, not for the things I can do.

17.4 Rest in God

God asks us to remember the past, so that you can remember what He has done to provoke gratefulness, thanksgiving and faith.

Price we pay to be a victorious Christian in our time. God is not in a hurry, no matter what you think or feel or hear from the enemy. Remember, God stopped the sun to give enough time for them to defeat the enemy. So God wants our time to pray, read, study Him, to be a blessing in a regular basis to others, to allow faith to grow in us. He is the master of time. It is easier to give money to some one than to give our time.

Finally the more God wants to give us the more we need to go into the wilderness. For every time our faith gets full, God sends us to the wilderness. Because in the wilderness He breaks us down, it is like removing the old wine skin, so that He can put us in a new wine skin that will now hold more new wine, in this case new faith. To build the new faith, He has to get our attention, He has to humble us, because at this point we start to think that we know everything, and we can do everything when we cannot, and then he has to rebuild us in the new addition of faith.

Remember why they ended up in the wilderness. They had faith to leave Egypt. They had faith to follow the fire and smoke through the desert, but they did not have faith to fight the giants, to fight the mighty armies of those in the promised land. In the wilderness their faith grew, they became stronger and more dependant on God, like the lamb on the Shepard's shoulders.

Appendix A

A Thanksgiving Lesson

One day as a friend was going about her daily business, all of a sudden a deep, black, dark feeling came over her. At first she was taken by surprised by the suddenness and the strength that it over took her.

As she looked around it seemed like a pitch black cloud had covered her head for she could not see anything or feel anything but dread and misery. But worse of all, she lost her connection to God. It seems like He disappeared. She was used to feeling God and His presence and His love; but now nothing. She wanted to cry.

She being a Christian realized that she needed God to help her. So she prayed and prayed. But nothing really happened.

She then thought of worship and so she put on Christian music and started to sing and worshipped God; but nothing happened.

So she went back into prayer and praised God and praised God, but this really did not happen.

Next she tried to read the bible. So she read and read, but she neither understood what she read nor did this black cloud go away.

So finally in desperation to reconnect back to God, gave up. She stopped trying to force and she stopped striving to reconnection to God and gave up. And in doing so, she started to thank God for all of the things He has done for her: His grace, His love, His mercy, His kindness and His faithfulness. It was during this time of surrender and thanksgiving that the black bleak cloud over her lifted and all sadness, depression, dreadfulness left her. Her faith in the Lord increased.

The Lord removed the black cloud and filled her with Him and His anointing of the Holy Spirit. Then the fruits of the Holy Spirit came out, in that she now felt happy, joy, peace and mostly the love of God in and on her.

Appendix B

Thanksgiving Weapon of WARFARE

Ching Co

Mar 16, 2004

Preface:

This is confirmation of something the Lord taught me through Merlin Carothers...and that was to THANK HIM for all situations and all things, no matter whether good or bad to our circumstances. Like if you can't pay your bills.... Thank You Father that I can't pay my bills now, but that YOU are bringing all I need through Your riches in Glory! Thank YOU God that I don't have this or that... This way you fight against the enemy who is trying to get you into discouragement and hopelessness. It is putting an arrow through the plans of the enemy! Love, Priscilla

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Thanksgiving... Our Weapon of Warfare

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This message is for God's people who are waiting on the Lord this season.

#### ELIJAH'S JOURNEY

From the moment Elijah gave the prophetic word to King Ahab (1 Kings 17:1), to the time where we find him on top of Mount Carmel bent down to the ground between his knees (1 Kings 18:41), His journey had taken many years. He had faced many challenges and difficulties. He had to wait, to hide, to run, to trust God for his provisions, to come face to face with his enemy, to stand alone.

#### SPIRITUAL PARALLEL

Many of God's people, in their quest to follow and pursue God's call in their lives have had to walk the same path that Elijah took. Your journey too has been long and filled with many obstacles. Like Elijah, these past years you have had to learn to wait, to trust God, to wrestle with your enemy, to die to yourself, to face persecution. You have felt like everything within you has been sucked out from you, and there is no more energy left that you can give out.

#### "DONT GIVE UP"

Today as you stand on top of your own Mount Carmel, down on your knees, waiting for God to give you a sign, like Elijah who had to command his servant seven times before he saw a cloud as small as a man's hand rising from the sea, so the Lord is saying to you, "Do not give up."

#### SHIFTING TO A DIFFERENT GEAR

I felt the Holy Spirit challenging us that this is the season to shift to the gear of THANKSGIVING.

#### "DONT BE DISTRACTED"

No matter how things look outwardly. Even when the vision you've been waiting for seems farthest from you, even if everything around you is in turmoil, even when your own loved ones don't believe in you anymore, even when all things seem lost, God's message to you this day, "Don't be distracted by them."

#### FOCUS ON GOD NOT THE CIRCUMSTANCES

Let us use THANKSGIVING as a weapon of warfare. Let us continue to press in with a thankful heart as we wait for God to move on our behalf. Let us set our heart and mind on God, on His nature and His character, on His Power, His Glory and His Might, on His love and His

compassion, on His heart towards us which is for good and not for evil.

THE BATTLE IS HIS NOT OURS

You've done your part. Now allow the Lord to do His part for you.

THANK HIM, THANK HIM FOR OUR GOD IS WORTHY

Like Job, let our heart's cry today be "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.(Job 1:21) Though He slay me, yet will I hope in Him (Job 13:15)"

"He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God." (Psalm 50:23)

Blessings,

Sis. Ching Co  
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