

# Faith Developing

By Joe Chesser

In Mark 9 there is a story about a man's son who was brutally afflicted by an evil spirit. The man had taken his son to Jesus' disciples, but they couldn't do anything to help the boy. So the father pleaded with Jesus, "If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." It seems as if Jesus was somewhat shocked by this statement when he responded, "If you can? Everything is possible for him who believes." The man's reaction is what I want us to consider for a few minutes. He said, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief."

Not all faith is the same. Not everyone who believes has the same degree of faith. Some have strong faith (like Abraham); some have weak faith (like this man). Some have faith that never grows; some have faith that ever grows. Some have active faith; some have dead faith. The man in the story above realized that, though he did believe, his faith wasn't perfected. There was still some unbelief that had to be overcome. We all know that without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). This verse goes on to say that more than just belief in the existence of God is necessary to please him; the faith that pleases God must also develop to the point of believing that God rewards those who earnestly seek him. Abraham, the father of the faithful, serves as an illustration of this.

In Hebrews 11:8 we are told that Abraham had sufficient faith to begin his journey with God. When God called him to pack up and move to some unknown place, he "obeyed and went." We say, "Wow! What great faith!" And we are right. To just pack up and go wherever God led him was an awesome demonstration of the kind of faith we need to have. Like Abraham, it takes great faith just to begin our journey with Jesus, to take up our cross daily and follow him (Luke 9:23). But obedient faith is just the beginning of our walk with God.

In Hebrews 11:9-10 we learn that Abraham also developed a long-term faith in God based on promises, not commands. It's one thing to have faith to obey a command; it's another thing to have faith that waits patiently on God to fulfill his promises, never knowing when (or even if they will be fulfilled in your lifetime. If "obeying" faith doesn't develop into "staying" faith, our walk with God will be a constant struggle.

And then in Hebrews 11:17-19 we see evidence of an even deeper faith, a faith willing to sacrifice everything for God, a faith that will hold nothing back, even his one and only son. Now we can truly say, "WOW!!" Right before our eyes we witness faith developing from obeying a command to patiently waiting on the promise to a willingness to sacrifice the most important thing in life.

It's great to have enough faith to obey God's commands. It's greater to develop a faith that trusts God to fulfill his future promises when he chooses. But it's the greatest faith of all to be willing to sacrifice everything you have because you trust God so much.



That meets at 701 South Wilbur, Sayre, PA 18840

(570) 886-1838

Arthur Barry, Evangelist- (607) 280-1732

August 13, 2023

**All the Churches of Christ greet you.**

Romans 16:16

---

## WELCOME!

Sunday

Bible Class- 9:30 a.m.

Worship- 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30 p.m.

**Today's Sermon: God's Steadfast Love**

**Scripture Reading: Revelation 2:1-7**

Sermons are recorded and are available for listening on the church website.

Bulletins are archived on the website.

Notes for Sunday morning and Wednesday evening classes are available on the website.

**[valleycitieschurchofchrist.org](http://valleycitieschurchofchrist.org)**

Find us on Facebook:

**[www.facebook.com/valleycitiescoc](https://www.facebook.com/valleycitiescoc)**

**Headphones are available for the hearing impaired.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS...

- ❖ **Wednesday Evening Bible Class:** 6:30pm August 16, on Zoom, Arthur will be continuing a study from G.R.O.W. We will be in the 5th chapter on G (giving).
- ❖ **Next Potluck and Bring-a-Friend Sunday** – August 20.
- ❖ **Ladies' Class** –Tuesday, August 15. Amos pt.5
- ❖ **Next 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Singing** – October 29, at Wellsboro.



The men's prayer breakfast at Wellsboro yesterday was attended by around 15 men from here in Sayre, Horseheads and Wellsboro. Arthur led the devotional with the theme of Yearning. The next breakfast will probably take place at Horseheads, but the day hasn't been determined yet.

Our Bring-a-Friend Sunday next week will be followed by our usual 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Potluck Meal after worship. Please plan to bring friends, something to share, and stay for food and fellowship.

## PRAYERS

- **Thanks for success with the House to House** and Heart to Heart outreach effort. Pray for continued response.
- **Kathy** lost her younger sister Cheryl last week to complications of Alzheimer's. Please pray for comfort and peace as she deals with the loss.
- **Darlene** has been suffering from severe inflammation of the esophagus. On Friday she will have an upper endoscopy with Bravo chip to see what is wrong. Pray that she can find the correct medicine to remedy this.
- Darlene has asked for prayers for her **Aunt Nancy**, Jackie's sister, who is dealing with some health issues. Also, prayers for her **Uncle Joe**, age 90, who is dealing with the effects of dehydration.
- **The Elsbree homestead is a disaster area following a tornado passing through yesterday.** There are power lines down, trees down, one on Doug's truck, others blocking the door to Jackie's apartment. Please pray that they can get this cleaned up soon and recover their losses in a timely manner.
- **The minister at the South Valley Church of Christ in Las Vegas** has promised to contact two churches that are actually closer to where **our brother Jerry Lowe** lives in a quest to help him establish contact and perhaps get a ride to worship. He said if that doesn't help, he will arrange for a ride to South Valley. This truly is an answer to prayer.

### Pray for these people:

- **Bob** (Steve Burger's brother-in-law)- lung and rectal cancers
- **Greg (Bonnie's brother)**- long recovery from cancer surgery
- **Monique (Miki's friend)**- withdrawal from Morphine, effective pain relief.
- **Pat Guthrie**- lung cancer, stage 4 chemo treatment
- **Sue Barry**- pray that she stays in remission.
- **Mike Walls**, frontal lobe dementia
- **Amy**- pray that her stomach discomfort will stop soon.
- **Jim Sexton**, esophageal cancer, back on chemo.
- **Tresa Shirrell's mom, April**, terminal cancer, salvation
- **Brian**, who was injured by a falling tree and is now in rehab near Albany, NY.

If you have any PRAYERS or NEWS that you would like included in the bulletin, please contact Sandy at [barncat7237@gmail.com](mailto:barncat7237@gmail.com) or text or call (607) 261-0911.