



LET'S GO DEEPER

Increase of Faith: February 18th 2024 – Pastor Peter

Key Verse

Acts 16:16-26

“One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, ‘These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved.’ This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, ‘I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.’ And instantly it left her. Her masters’ hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. ‘The whole city is in an uproar because of these Jews!’ they shouted to the city officials. ‘They are teaching customs that are illegal for us Romans to practice.’ A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn’t escape. So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off!”

Who wrote the book of Acts?

What are the main points of this verse?

☐☐

How can I apply this to my life?

☐☐☐☐

1. What is Faith?

Hebrews 11:1 “Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.”

Faith is absolute confidence and trust in God even though, at that moment, we may not have proof or evidence.

Faith knows that God is real. Faith knows that God is good. Faith knows that Jesus died for us. Faith knows that God has a beautiful plan. Faith knows that God is working in our lives. Faith knows that God can use anyone.

Joshua 2:4,5 “Rahab had hidden the two men, but she replied, ‘Yes, the men were here earlier, but I didn’t know where they were from. They left the town at dusk, as the gates were about to close. I don’t know where they went. If you hurry, you can probably catch up with them.’”

Define faith in your own words

Where does Rahab appear in the New Testament?



LET'S GO DEEPER

Rahab

The spies are actually in her home. God uses a prostitute who lies to forward the purpose of His Kingdom.

Rahab also shows up in the great chapter on faith, Heb. 11

Hebrews 11:31

"It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute was not destroyed with the people in her city who refused to obey God. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies."

If God can use somebody like Rahab by faith, He can use us.

Questions:

1. How did Rahab's faith save her?

2. When you have faith do you need to have physical proof in front of you in order to believe?

2. Faith Brings Peace

Acts 16:25 "Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening."

Instead of being in despair, Paul and Silas still have devotion.

Instead of being overwhelmed by what's around them, they look upward to Who's above them.

The Bible describes two basic kinds of peace.

i. Peace With God

Romans 5:1 "Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us."

Because of the beautiful sacrifice of Jesus, we're forgiven, we're redeemed, we're restored, we're set apart and we're made new.

ii. Peace of God

Philippians 4:7 "Then you will experience the peace of God, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."

What are your thoughts about what Paul and Silas were doing while they were in chains?

Have you experienced a time in your life when you had to fight for peace? What did you do?

☐☐☐



LET'S GO DEEPER

Here's what happens before the 'then you'll experience the peace of God.

Phil 4:6 "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done."

Matt. 11:28 "Then Jesus said, 'Come to Me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.'"

QUOTE

"Faith isn't some vague, empty-headed, optimistic, unrealistic view of reality.

Faith isn't wishful thinking. Faith isn't unsubstantiated hope.

Faith is anchored in God. Faith is believing what God says.

Faith is doing what God asks. Faith is a posture of trust.

Faith knows that God is real. Faith knows that God is good.

Faith knows that Jesus died for me. Faith knows that God has a beautiful plan.

Faith knows that God is working in my life.

Faith knows that, even though I've messed up, I'm still loved.

Faith knows that, even though I'm afraid and confused, I'm still blessed.

Faith knows that, even though life doesn't make sense, I'm still anointed.

Faith knows that, even though I feel broken, I'm still embraced.

Faith knows that God will turn it around and that the breakthrough is coming.

Faith knows that He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it."

- Pastor Peter

QUESTIONS:

1. How can we experience the peace of God through faith?

☐

2. How do we come to peace with God according to Romans 5:1?

☐

3. What is the peace of God that we can experience when we put our faith in him?

☐

4. Have you experienced the peace of God in your life? Describe.

3. Faith Brings Power

Acts 16:26 "Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off!

There's a power that comes from faith. And that power is supernatural because it comes from our all-powerful, supernatural God.

Have you seen the results of faith do something powerful?

☐☐☐



LET'S GO DEEPER

Acts 16:6 “Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time.”

Acts 16:6 “Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time.”

The Holy Spirit stops them. And then it happens again in the next verse.

Acts 16:7 “Then coming to the borders of Mysia, they headed north for the province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there.”

Paul describes what he calls a ‘thorn in his flesh.’ Here’s how that turns out.

2 Cor. 12:8,9 “Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time He said, ‘My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.’

Each time God says ‘no’ and then God says ‘My grace is all you need, My power works best in weakness.’ Faith knows that God is still good even when the answer is ‘no.’ Faith knows that God is still good even when things don’t go the way I want.

Acts 12:5-7 “But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him. The night before Peter was to be placed on trial, he was asleep, fastened with two chains between two soldiers. Others stood guard at the prison gate. Suddenly, there was a bright light in the cell, and an angel of the Lord stood before Peter. The angel struck him on the side to awaken him and said, ‘Quick! Get up!’ And the chains fell off his wrists.”

Acts 12:13-16 “Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. When she recognized Peter’s voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, ‘Peter is at the door!’ ‘You’re out of your mind,’ they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, ‘It must be his angel.’ But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished.

Has the Holy Spirit told you not to do something? How did you respond and what was the result?

QUESTIONS:

1. Why does power comes from faith?

☐

2. What happens when God says no?

☐

3. What is your attitude when God says no or responds not in the way you expect?

☐

4. What is Peter doing the night before he is to be executed?

☐

HOW CAN I APPLY THIS TO MY LIFE THIS WEEK?

☐☐☐☐