

DR. YONGGI CHO: The Language of Faith

Faith is of central importance to solving life's problems, for you and I were created to be filled with faith. When we are filled with God's kith we are well on the way to becoming the people God intended us to be. However, when we block and hinder the flow and growth of faith in our lives, spiritual and personal frustration follow. This blockage enlarges any other problems we have.

Faith—confident, God-given assurance—functions three ways in the believer's life. Knowledge of Jesus and God's Word forms the basis for a commitment to Christ. But it is with faith that we begin our new life in Christ. This is the faith of entrance into the Christian walk.

But to simply walk through faith's doorway is not enough. We must also learn to develop our Christian lives. Immature Christians never dare to learn the adventure of deeper Christian living. The mature Christian life requires that faith develop, because a genuine depth in faith leads to a deeper walk with Christ. This is the second type of faith, the faith of development.

Thirdly, it is only through faith that we can receive miracles. One does not have to explore far before realizing that ours is a world filled with needs. Through faith we can release God's power to meet those needs. This is the faith for miracles.

Hundreds of people, sensing the importance of faith, have approached me with the question: "How do I increase my faith?"

This question is of concern to all thinking Christians, for genuine people of God are genuine people of faith. But we are impatient; we want our faith enlarged right now.

We are irresponsible; we want God to bring the increase, and not have to cooperate with Him in any changes that must result. We are ignorant; we desire to further enter the world of faith without learning its language.

The Importance of Language

Language allows us to communicate. It is a channel for thoughts, ideas and feelings. Language also shapes our lives, affecting the way we think and behave.

Faith and language are closely linked: "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10). The words of language confirm the validity of a man's faith.

Continuous confession of faith in God's Word is the basis for the language of faith a language that must be spoken daily in our lives. Practiced properly in sincerity this language can bring forth a miraculous change in our lives.

This language can prompt others to commit themselves to Christ, it can develop our own spiritual lives, and it can release God's power to bring forth miracles.

One of the clearest examples of the language of faith in operation can be seen in Psalm 23, a song of David, the shepherd-king. Through studying this psalm we can begin to better learn the language of faith, a language that is to be expressed during times of normalcy, during times of danger and in the sight of enemies.

During Times of Normalcy

There is a saying in the army that every soldier fighting in a foxhole believes in God. But faith in the Divine is needed by everyone, not only by those facing the threat of death.

We need faith in our day-to-day lives. We need to use the language of faith even when all around us is normal. David

exemplified this in the first portion of Psalm 23. “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want” (Ps. 23:1), he begins. David recognized God’s sovereignty and graciousness during times of normalcy.

You and I should do the same. Even today we should make continual confession of God’s abundance to us, giving Him the glory for it. Herein lies a key in the language of faith: it allows God’s glory to bum brightly.

The first portion of David’s psalm is relevant to three different spheres: the physical, the spiritual and the social.

The Physical Sphere

In the realm of his physical life David declared of God, “He makes me lie down in green pastures” (Ps. 23:2). When sheep lie down in green pastures it indicated that they have everything they need, that they are satisfied.

We are the sheep of our heavenly Shepherd-Father. He lets us lie down in green pastures of restoration. Here David uses the language of faith to paint a picture of peace, an expression of God’s goodness. Daily, you and I should make that same declaration.

Many people are prone to make negative declarations. They speak continually of how bad their business is, of how the economic situation is growing worse and worse. Those negative declarations, however, will not help them. By their negative declarations they bring a destructive power into their lives.

Instead of making negative declarations we must be determined to give affirmative confirmations—confessions of creation, victory, and abundance. Envision yourself resting in the green pastures of your business or job, and watch how satisfied you will become. Feed this language of faith into your soul, visualizing God’s daily provisions. Then, like David, sing out that you are satisfied every day in the green pastures of your

life.

The Spiritual Sphere

David next victoriously stated that God “leads me beside still waters” (Ps. 23:2). When reading this scriptural statement you can sense spiritual bliss, satisfaction, and peace in your heart. This phrase typifies the blessed fullness of the Holy Spirit, a fullness accurately symbolized by the picture of “waters of peace.”

When you confess your sins to God, you are cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Then the fountain of life, the precious Holy Spirit, moves into your heart and makes His dwelling there. If you continue to pray and seek God to be filled with the Holy Spirit, Christ will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fill your heart to overflowing.

If the language of faith is to be potent in your life you must let this verse become a reality. Spiritually, allow our Jehovah God to lead you beside the waters of peace, of fullness in the Holy Spirit. Then the thirst of your soul will be satisfied. You will receive power to serve God with mighty miracles and assurance, your ministry and service unto the Lord becoming richer and more fruitful.

The Social Sphere

When David affirmed, “He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake” (Ps. 23:3), he was directing the language of faith at his social life.

Amid the daily hubbub of life in our modern society our hearts are often vexed, and our souls feel withered. Sometimes we almost feel it is not worth the effort to wade through the torrential flood of wrongdoing, so strong is its influence.

It is at this juncture that the language of faith gives us the key to victory. We can say aloud with David, “He renews life

within me, guiding me in the right path.” As we affirm these words repeatedly we feel a strength and comfort rising up within us.

We often do feel powerless when we meet the challenge of a sinful world. Adverse circumstances and the trials of this life try to bind us. We begin to feel weak in our own flesh.

While we cannot live a victorious life by our own determination or by our own strength, the Bible states that God renews life within us. He helps us and guides us in the right path for His name’s sake. Declare and affirm that!

Speak the language of faith in your social circumstances. When you are lost in the swamp of sinfulness and wrongdoing, speak loudly that God guides you in the right path for His name’s sake. Say it over again and again, letting His Word go forth to fight for your victory. Use the language of faith to win your battles in the social sphere.

During Times of Danger

Our lives are not limited to periods of normalcy. We also have times of danger. Danger results for many reasons: sin, weakness, temptation a fear of death. But even during times of danger David exemplified the importance of the language of faith.

Affirm God’s Presence

Let us consider David’s language at his time of danger: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me” (Ps. 23:4). David proclaimed that he was not afraid of danger because God was with him. Instead of looking and talking about the “valley of the shadow of death,” David affirmed and talked about the presence of God.

When we pass through a valley dark as death we may neither see

nor feel the presence of God. But we do not have to. David created the presence of God with his language of faith. He affirmed, "The Lord is with me."

David did not see any sign of the Lord's presence, nor did he hear the still, small voice of the Lord. Yet even in that situation he refused to accept the onslaught of circumstantial threats of the dangers in the valley dark as death. He simply affirmed God's presence.

You and I can do the same during our times of danger. When you walk through a valley dark as death do not look at the situation and circumstances around you. They are misleading. If you listen to the language of fear that danger speaks, or are swayed by your feelings, you will be defeated.

Instead, speak the victorious language of faith. By your words affirm the presence of Jesus Christ in the valley dark as death. Declare that Christ is with you in spite of all surrounding danger. Through the spoken language of faith you will feel the presence of Jesus Christ.

Acknowledge God's Protection

David acknowledged God's protection with his words, "Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4). The shepherd in David's time used the staff to hit any animals that would threaten the safety of the flock. When wild animals tried to attack the sheep the shepherd used his strong and powerful staff to chase them away.

David used this analogy in his language of faith. He compared God to a shepherd, in effect saying, "God carries a staff to protect me." Instead of allowing an awareness of the danger around him to develop, he talked of the God who surrounded and kept him, giving him comfort. David was kept safe through life's wars and conflicts by having learned the language of faith, a language that claimed God's protection.

Declare God's Guidance

In the midst of danger David declared God's guidance: "Thy crook are my comfort" (Ps. 23:4, NEB). The crook is a long implement curved like a hook on the end. The shepherd would carry his crook with him at all times. When a sheep would begin to wander, the shepherd would stretch out that crook, hook it around the neck of the sheep, and gently pull it back in the right direction..

In the same way, God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, leads us in the right way. With danger nearby David learned the language of faith that declared God's guidance.

When everything seems dark without hope, and you feel lost, meandering on the road of life, do not be confused or worried. Instead, use David's language of faith: "I do not know the way, but God is guiding me. Even now, His tender hand is upon my head." As you declare God's guidance you will feel the leading power of God a reality in your life.

In Proverbs we are instructed to: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths" (Prov. 3:5-6, MEV).

If you and I will declare God's guidance, He will smooth our paths. As David used the language of faith during times of danger, so should we. You and I need not fear danger nor evil, for the Almighty God will be ever with us.

In the Sight of Enemies

In our lives we not only have the dangers caused by evil, but we also have many enemies: doubt, frustration, failure, inadequacy, people bent on our destruction. While in their presence the language of faith continues to be important.

Proclaim God's Provisions

David proclaimed God's provisions: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies" (Ps. 23:5). The Lord prepared a table with delicious food within sight of David's enemies. God provided all David needed for strength to carry on, and David proclaimed God's provisions loudly.

Our enemies want us to starve, and to be destroyed. But God's purpose is different. The Lord prepares a table full of provisions, especially for us, in the sight of our enemies. While we proclaim God's provisions with our language of faith; God shows our enemies how gracious He is to His children.

Acknowledge God's Honoring

David acknowledged: "You anoint my head with oil" (Ps. 23:5). If you pour oil on someone's head on a hot day you refresh that person. To anoint one's head with oil was also a symbol of honor, uplifting one above the others.

The Bible records that God anointed Jesus Christ, and made Him superior to the angels. In the sight of his enemies David acknowledged God's honoring him, virtually saying: "God bathes my head with oil, uplifting me, making me superior to my enemies." God's presence and provisions do the same for us. He makes us superior to our enemies, and we must acknowledge this with our language of faith.

Declare God's Blessings

David further declared, "My cup runs over" (Ps. 23:5). In the sight of David's enemies God blessed him past his needs. God blessed him with so much that his cup of need ran to overflowing. In the sight of your enemies God will bless you, too, and cause your cup to run over.

In Genesis, God made a wonderful promise to Abraham: "I will make of you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing" (Gen. 12:2). After that promise Abraham had to go through a long process to learn

the language of faith. When he did, he declared God's blessings, blessings that remain with us even today.

As a youth David learned the importance of declaring God's blessings. When he was a youth, David learned the importance of declaring God's blessings. When he went to fight the giant Goliath he knew God had blessed him with divine favor, and declared this with the language of faith.

To a mammoth giant of great strength the youth David declared: "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a shield, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have reviled. This day will the Lord deliver you into my hand. And I will strike you down and cut off your head. ... And then all this assembly will know that it is not by sword and spear that the Lord saves. For the battle belongs to the Lord, and He will give you into our hands" (1 Sam. 17:45-47).

By his language of faith David built circumstances of victory, causing the mighty Goliath to be defeated. David's language of faith set the scene where God could work. David then ran toward Goliath and, using his sling, tumbled the giant with a stone directly to his forehead. In the sight of the enemy troops on the opposite bank David killed Goliath, bringing God's will to fruition.

David knew the language of faith. Perhaps the most eloquent portion of this language was at the conclusion of David's psalm: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps. 23:6). The conclusion of the language of faith is this: God is faithful, God is good, God gives us His blessings abundantly.

Learn the language of faith. Learn it during times of normalcy, during times of danger and in the sight of your enemies.

Use the language of faith. During times of normalcy use this language in your physical life, your spiritual life and your social life. During times of danger use the language of faith to affirm God's protection, and declare God's guidance. In the sight of your enemies—whoever or whatever they might be—use the language of faith to proclaim God's provisions, acknowledge God's honoring, and declare God's blessing.

Be assured, whatever the situation, however grave the difficulty: God is faithful, good and desirous of giving you His abundant blessings. Let the language of faith permeate your life.

Let it develop your Christian walk and deepen your life with Christ. Release God's power with the language of faith, and let the miracles of God flow through you.