

James Goll: You Must Choose Today—Fear or Faith?

In today's global society with violence escalating, rampant shootings, riots, tumultuous economic times, wars and rumors of wars happening on an almost daily basis, we have some basic choices to make.

What guides me? What directs you? Fear or faith? Which way will our nations head?

"Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not cast him out?' Jesus said to them, 'Because of your unbelief. For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move. And nothing will be impossible for you'" (Matt. 17-19-20).

Many people live in the past. (Ask me how I know!) I honor the past and I trust you do as well. But faith is not present there. Many believers live in and for the future. They have great revelation about what is coming. (I trust we all do.) But faith is not activated in the future. Faith is in the present tense now! Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is..."

Recently I posted on my social media a quote from Corrie Ten Boom, "There is no panic in heaven! God has no problems, only plans." If the church is pushing the panic button instead of faith and trust, prayer and confidence towards God, what do we expect the world to look like? Will we create a culture of fear or faith? Which will it be? Does the culture of the church affect the culture of society? The way I read the Good Book, it sure does! We need the gift of faith to be fully operational in the church and in our lives today and every day.

Faith is. Faith is not about yesterday or even some time in

the future. To receive and release this precious commodity called the gift of faith, you have to be living in the present tense “now” moment of time.”Now faith is.”

Take Up the Shield of Faith!

“Put on the whole armor of God” (Eph. 6:11), Paul wrote to the members of the church in Ephesus. His advice applies to every single member of the body of Christ. That means each one of us must wear every piece of spiritual armor daily (Eph. 6:14–18.). As an important part of that full armor, well-equipped Christians carry a “shield of faith” (verse 16).

Without the shield of faith, we may become casualties on the battlefield. With it, we can extinguish the fiery arrows of the evil one, as well as help to shield our fellow soldiers. But we must take it up for ourselves to use it. We must exercise our measure of faith—*faithfully* (in both senses of the word). Again, Jude exhorted us, “But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith” (Jude 1:20).

The Starting Blocks

The starting point is the basic faith that every believer must take up daily. We call it our “*measure of faith*” (Rom. 12:3; Rom. 14:1–2; Eph. 4:12–13). When our measure of faith is exercised faith-fully, it grows, and it bears abundant fruit.

It may start out very small, but it can accomplish great things. Jesus said, “For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. And nothing will be impossible for you” (Matt. 17:20,). Here is an important key: It is a speech-activated kingdom!

Your “faith muscles” will never get built up if you do not use your shield. If you have a spectator faith—you love to watch *others* exercise their faith—then you will become a couch potato Christian. You have been born with the same basic set

of physical muscles as everyone else, but if you do not exercise your muscles, you will become puny instead of strong.

I have a personal trainer right now at Temple Fitness for the first time in lifetime. I am working out—sometimes hard! I have to get my core strong. It is that way in the spiritual, also. We need to exercise our faith muscles to keep our core values and beliefs strong. On the spiritual battlefield, how much you exercise your faith will determine how big your “guns” are.

If you are truly “faith-full,” you will be filled with two kinds of faith: faith in God’s ability to do amazing things; and faithfulness, as in dependability. The latter kind is a character trait, an attribute of a person of covenant loyalty, whose word is their bond. “The fruit of the Spirit is ... faith” (Gal. 5:22).

Both kinds of basic faith should continue growing over time, but that can happen only with consistent use. Everyone’s faith works—and grows—through love. “But faith working through love” is an amazing principle of the Spirit (Gal. 5:6b). Isn’t it wonderful how all of the fruit and attributes of God and His gifts work together? I just love Him and His ways!

Defining the Gift of Faith

It can sometimes be difficult to differentiate the spiritual gift of faith from the measure of faith that is common to every believer, without which we could not even come to a saving faith.

The spiritual gift of faith is like faith with a booster rocket. It is a supernatural confidence-surge that makes it possible for a person to pray or declare God’s will and to thereby effect either miraculous blessings or cursing and destruction. We would prefer to think only of the blessings and creative miracles, but remember that faith power can also toss mountains into the sea or wither fig trees within hours

(Mark 11:12–14, 20–24).

The spiritual gift of faith is not *your* faith—it is an impartation of a portion of *God's* faith. That is why it carries with it such confidence and authority. When God reveals certain facts concerning His will in a circumstance, and you "just know" it will happen, that is the gift of faith. It is to be much sought after. Such faith is irresistible.

More Desirable Than Gold

When such knowledge is declared orally, the words do not return void (Is. 55:11). They are more desirable than gold:

"... the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yes, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (Ps. 19:8–10)

God gives the gift of faith generously, and He wants us to recognize when we experience it, so that we will appreciate it and use it well and wisely. Let's all make a point to use the measure of faith with which we have been supplied, rejoicing greatly should our circumstances or our sphere of influence require more.

Let's lay hold of God and let His faith be deposited within each of us in ever-increasing measure! Let's make a determination together: "*We choose faith over fear!*"

Dear Heavenly Father,

I thank You for the measure of faith we each receive, and I am grateful for the opportunity to grow in the fruit of the Spirit called faithfulness. But I want more, Lord!

Release the gift of faith into my life to bring forth miracles for the glory of Christ Jesus' holy name in the earth. I vow

to store up the Word of God in my heart as a way of positioning myself to grow in faith. I want to speak to mountains in Jesus' name and see them move! I choose to create the culture of faith over fear in Jesus Name! {eoa}

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