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"When Christ Comes, Will He Find Faith On The Earth?"



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #210 ~

Jesus tells us a story about the necessity of faith, and it relates to the end-times (Luke 18:1-8). There was a widow who needed legal protection and she goes to the city judge, but he's unrighteous, a man *"who did not fear God or respect man."* He was a mean and uncaring man, unwilling to help this poor woman. But she keeps bothering him, keeps begging him for help, and finally, because of her persistence, he gives her the protection she wants. The lesson God wants us to learn is one of continued faith, of persevering prayer, and especially in the end times, in those last few years before Jesus Christ returns to rapture the church.

Life on this earth will be extremely difficult for Christians in the end-times, especially when the Antichrist is ruling, during that time we call great tribulation. *"Nation will rise against nation… and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes"* (Matt. 24:7). *"They will deliver you to tribulation and will kill you. You will be hated by all nations because of My name."* (Matt. 24:9). *"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child…"* (Mark 13:13). *"… A quart of wheat for a day's wages…."* (Rev. 6:6). *"It was also given to him* (Antichrist) *to make war with the saints and to overcome them"* (Rev. 13:7). *"No one will be able to buy or sell, except the one who has the mark* (of the beast, the Antichrist)." Rev. 13:17

Can you imagine how hard it will be to live and survive in those days? Christians alive at that time will be going through some of their darkest days, their most difficult experiences on earth. That's why they will need faith, for it's the means by which they can stay close to God and get help from Him so they can keep on living for Him. God wants us to know that in the midst of any trial, or during the coming great tribulation, by faith, we are safe, and can be filled with His love, joy, and peace. *"…who are protected by God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"* (1 Pet 1:5). "*I will be glad and rejoice in Your love for You knew my affliction and the anguish of my soul"* (Psalm 31:7). Might it be said of the believers who are living during those most trying times – *"Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints."* Rev. 13:10

"When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" **What about you?** Will you have faith, will you be looking to Him and trusting Him when times are tougher than they are now, harder than they have ever been before? You need to think about this question now, not later when the Antichrist is here. God wants you to be growing in faith in the present, and in the years leading up to that time when there will be great trials and tribulation. But how do you grow in faith? How do you grow in trusting God? How do you learn to walk more by faith and less by your flesh and your feelings? How do you go from being a person with little faith to a person with great faith? Here is what God

says about how we can be growing in faith.

The first key to faith is God's word. Only by knowing God's word can you have true faith, and then experience the love, life, leading, and power of God and the Holy Spirit. *"Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."* (Rom. 10:17, Ps. 56:4). If you want to increase your faith, keep reading and thinking about God's word, and then the Spirit will stir your spirit and enable you to trust Him. *"Take... the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God."* Eph. 6:18

The second key is knowing God's character. *"Those who know Your name will put their trust in You, for You, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You."* (Psalm 9:10). Knowing that God is loving, holy, good, strong, wise, sovereign, merciful, and compassionate, is essential to trusting Him, to having faith. Whenever I recite *"The ABC's of God's Character"*, a list of 26 character qualities of God, I'm spiritually refreshed, and am moved to love and trust Him.

The third key is trials. *"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance"* (James 1:2-3). None of us in our flesh like trials, but they are good for our spiritual lives, especially for our faith. God gives you trials to get you out of your comfort zone, to cause you to trust Him, to depend on Him instead of on yourself and others. (Pr. 28:25-26). When you go through a trial and are trusting God, then you will draw closer to Him and experience all the grace you need. *"'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness.' ... I am well content with insults, weaknesses, distresses, persecution... for Christ's sake... for when I am weak, then I am strong."* 2 Cor. 12:9-10

The fourth key to faith is learning from others. God has given us many examples of those who love Him and trust Him. It's important that you learn from their lives and see how they trusted God through the years. *"Join in following my example, and observe those who walk*

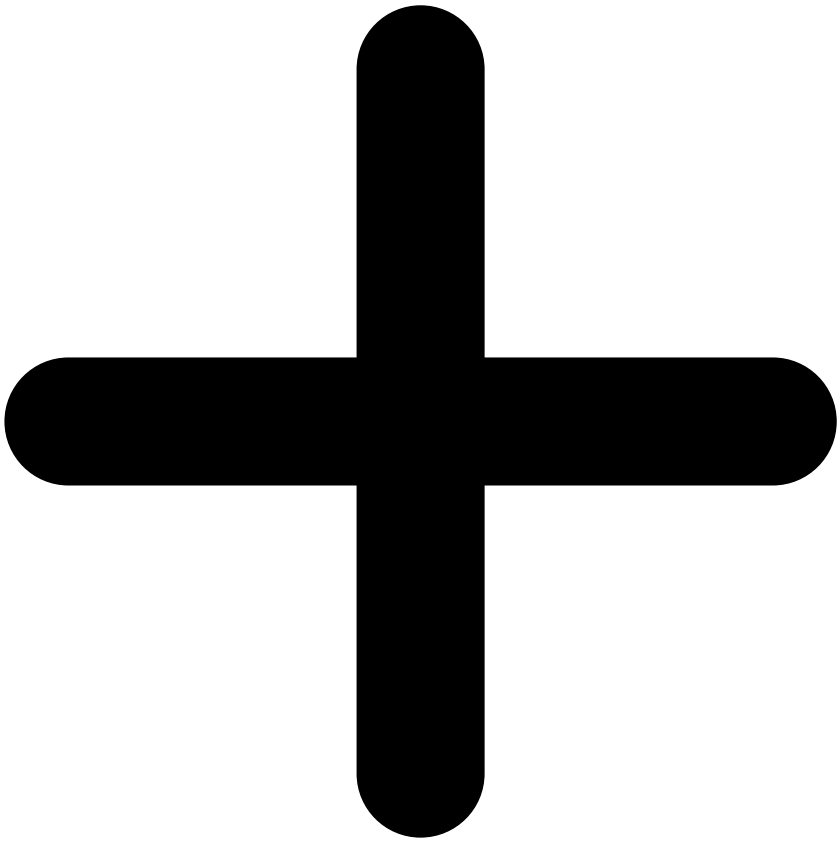
according to the pattern you have in us" (Phil. 3:17). Early on in my Christian life, I became friends with some godly men who had great faith, ones who encourage my life to this day. *"Though he is dead, he still speaks"* (Heb. 11:4). And as you read the Bible, you discover hundreds of believers who looked to God, trusted Him, depended on Him, who had faith. Then there's Hebrews 11, the single best chapter on faith, for it sums up the experiences of these saints who had faith in the living God. *"Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."* Hebrews 11:6

"Have faith in God!" (Mark 10:22). God commands you to have faith in Him. This means all day long, wherever you are at, whoever you are with, whatever you do, you are to be trusting God and His word. It means you depend on Him to lead you; you rely on Him for strength; you believe He will meet your needs; you ask Him to bless your work; you trust Him to use your relationships; you expect Him to reward you; you count on Him to protect you, and enable you to make it to the end of your life on this earth and on to heaven. I cannot stress enough the importance of you trusting God, of having faith in Him now, and for the rest of your life on this earth. And if you are a *"little faith"* person, one who is doubting, fearful, and complaining, ask God to make you a *"great faith"* person, for that's what God wants you to be and knows you can be. Matthew 6:30, 8:26, 11:20, 14:31; Matthew 8:10

Most importantly, faith is how you experience the joy of the Lord, the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14). It's how you have a close and meaningful relationship with God Himself. Without question, this is what you need more than anything else. Way too often we walk by sight, our eyes fixed on worldly things, and we are trusting ourselves, others, and things, with the result that we are spiritually empty – but as we trust and rely on God, then we will be fully satisfied by Him. *"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord."* Jer. 17:5-8; Jer. 2:5, 13

One more thing – the parable tells us one thing we are to be praying for, and it's justice. As Christians, we will suffer, be under great pressure, and be persecuted, but we have hope, for we know Christ is coming, that He will rapture us (1 Thess. 4:17), and give us relief (2 Thess. 1:7). And being persecuted on earth will result in great rewards in heaven (Matt. 5:10-12). But what is Luke telling us? *"Will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry out to Him day and night... I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly"* (Luke 18:7-8). There's a great deal of injustice and lawlessness in this world, and it's only going to get much worse (Matt. 24:12). But we are instructed to cry out to God, knowing that it won't be long before Christ comes to judge the world, and pour out His wrath on all the evil unbelievers who have rejected Him. *"The great day of Their wrath has come"* (Rev. 6:17, Rev. 8-9, 2 Thess. 2:7-8). Hallelujah! The good news is not just that Christ will enable us to escape this wicked world and bring us to Himself and to heaven, but also that there will be justice on earth. *"The Lord is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world with righteousness."* Psalm 98:9

P.S. Some have said that Christians in this country are soft, and I am sure there is some truth to that. Might we see that we are soldiers of Christ and take up the shield of faith. You must have this shield or you will get hurt and be ineffective for God. This is the time to learn, and be growing in faith, and I have no doubt this is what God is teaching you. I encourage you to read *"Your Spiritual Service: A Member of the Special Forces"*, a good article about being a good soldier.



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