

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
GOD'S ECONOMY IN FAITH**

Message Two

The Linking Faith—the Faith of the Overcomers

Scripture Reading: Heb. 13:7; Rom. 1:17; 4:17; 10:17; Gal. 5:6; 6:10; Rom. 12:3; *Hymns*, #535

I. In order to be men full of faith (Heb. 13:7; Acts 6:5), we need to see that “faith comes out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17):

- A. The source of faith is the word, but we have to realize the crystallization of this point; there are three aspects of the word:
 - 1. First, there is the written word of God—the Bible—John 10:35.
 - 2. Then there is the living word of God—Christ—1:1.
 - 3. Finally, there is the applied word of God—the Spirit—Eph. 6:17; John 6:63.
- B. The written word, the living word, and the applied word refer to God Himself; God's written word in the Bible becomes Christ as the living word, who is applied to us as the Spirit, the word of the Spirit; the more that God is gained by us in this way, the more He becomes our faith.
- C. The crystallization of the source of faith is God in His written word contacted as the living word and applied as the word of the Spirit so that we can gain the Triune God, who is able to call the things not being as being and give life to the dead—Rom. 4:17.

II. We need to see the effect of faith—nothing is impossible to faith:

- A. “If you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you”—Matt. 17:20b.
- B. *Hymns*, #535, written by Charles Wesley, expresses the effect of faith; stanza 5 says, “Let me no longer live, but Thee,” indicating that faith always annuls us and reveals Christ to us.
- C. Only God is all able, omnipotent; nothing is impossible to Him (19:26); but the Lord also said that nothing is impossible to faith, indicating that God and faith are one; faith is the subjective God applied to our being; thus, just as nothing is impossible to God, nothing is impossible to faith.

III. The believers, the believing ones in Christ, are the household of faith—Gal. 6:10:

- A. This household is a big family, and the family name is “faith”; this is the home of faith; we may say that a certain home is the Smith home or the Lee home, but now we are all members of the “faith home.”
- B. We are members of the great family, the household, of faith; this faith house is a house that believes in God through His word—Heb. 1:2; Matt. 17:5.

IV. The believers' faith in Christ brings them into the life union with Christ (John 3:15, 36); the word of God is embodied in Christ and realized in the Spirit to be our faith; the believers live Christ and walk by this faith:

- A. To believe into Christ is to receive Him and be united with Him as one—1:12-13; 3:16.
- B. This faith brings us into the life union with Christ, who is the embodiment of God realized as the all-inclusive Spirit to be our faith; faith links us with the Triune God.
- C. As the organism of the Triune God, Christ is the true vine, and we are His branches who have been organically united with Him by believing into Him; we need to remain in this organic union by abiding in Him—15:1, 5.
- D. Faith is the linking of our salvation; it links God with us and links us to God; this linking makes us God-men.
- E. We live Christ by a linking organ, and this linking organ is faith; thus, Paul says in Galatians 2:20 that the life that he lived, he lived by faith, the faith of Jesus the Son of God, “who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

- F. When we call upon the Lord by saying, “O Lord Jesus, I love You,” He becomes the faith imparted into us so that we spontaneously live Him by this faith; living faith operates through our love for the Lord (5:6); He Himself as the faith becomes our faith, and this is the linking organ to link us to the unlimited, infinite Christ.
- G. By just speaking a simple word to the Lord in conversation with Him out of our love for Him and by a little calling on the Lord, we are infused with Him; the infusing of Christ into us causes us to have Him as our faith, which is the linking organ that links us with Him; this is the way to live Christ—Phil. 4:6, 12.
- H. We believers walk by faith, by our unseen God, not by sight; this faith links us all the time to our wonderful God—2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:27; 1 Pet. 1:8.
- I. To walk by faith means that our walking is linked with God; in Luke 18 the Lord indicated that we also suffer persecution by faith; in Luke 18:8 the Lord said, “When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”—this means we have to suffer all the persecutions by faith.

V. The way to receive such a linking faith is to contact its source, the processed and consummated God, by calling on Him, praying to Him, pray-reading His word, and musing on His word; this faith links us with God and imparts, transfuses, God into us; then we will become men of faith—Heb. 4:16; Rom. 10:12-13; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15 and footnote 1:

- A. This faith links us with God and imparts, transfuses, God into us to become our living faith; this is the faith of the believers in its progressing stage.
- B. The initial stage of faith is the faith that comes from the hearing of the word; the Spirit was installed into us through the hearing of the word; now this Spirit, or this faith, which has been installed into us, stays within us and grows—Rom. 10:17; 12:3.
- C. Romans 1:17 says that “the **righteous** shall have **life** and live by **faith**”—this verse reveals that the structure of the gospel of God is the righteousness of God, the life of Christ, and the faith of the believers; this verse can also be considered as the banner of God’s eternal economy—Hab. 2:2-4.
- D. To have life by faith is the initiation; to live by faith is the going on, the progressing stage of faith; faith in the second stage, the progressing stage, is the linking faith that comes to us through our contacting the Triune God.
- E. If you contact God, faith grows in you, which means that God increases in you; we all have the same faith in quality, but the quantity of faith we have depends upon how much we contact the living God so that we may have Him increased in us; when God increases in us, the linking faith in the second stage grows in us—cf. Col. 2:19.

VI. Romans 12:3 says, “Not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith”:

- A. To think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think without a sober mind annuls the proper order of the Body life; God gave us the same faith in quality but not in quantity; the matter of quantity depends upon how we grow; if we grow today as the apostle Paul grew, the portion of faith we receive will be greatly enlarged.
- B. God first allotted faith to us in quality, and then He apportioned it in quantity; what kind of faith we have depends upon God’s allotment; how much faith we have depends upon God’s apportioning.
- C. God’s apportioning depends upon our attitude; if we are not sober-minded, God would not increase His apportioning of faith to us, and He probably would even decrease it—cf. Luke 1:53; Matt. 5:3.

VII. Faith is the indicator of the believers’ life in the enjoyment of the Divine Trinity—1 Thes. 1:3, 5, 7-8; Rom. 1:8:

- A. Paul remembered the Thessalonians' "work of faith"; their faith became such an indicator of their life in the enjoyment of Christ that they became a pattern to all the believing ones—1 Thes. 1:3, 7-8.
- B. Faith is not for us to accomplish great things; faith is for us to live God, to express God, and to minister God to people; faith is not for us to perform something great; faith is to live God and annul ourselves—1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 1:5.
- C. In all that we are and do, people must see that we are enjoyers of God; we should always bear an indication that we are nothing, but God in Christ is everything to us; we need to be those who, like Watchman Nee, pay more attention to life than work (see *Watchman Nee—a Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age*, ch. 11).

VIII. The linking faith is the divine requirement for the overcomers to meet Christ in His triumphant return—this is based on Luke 18:8, where the Lord said, "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?":

- A. May the Lord be merciful to us that when He comes back, He can find us as the believing ones, who always trust in Him, not in ourselves, and who always have no assurance in ourselves—2 Cor. 1:8-9; John 15:5; Phil. 3:3; cf. S. S. 8:5.
- B. J. N. Darby once said, "O the joy of having nothing and being nothing, seeing nothing but a living Christ in glory, and being careful for nothing but His interests down here"—this is faith.
- C. We are not for big miracles, big works, or big careers; the Lord is expecting to find, at His coming back, the ones who live by the linking faith; Christ expects to find us as His hidden overcomers—Rom. 11:3-4; Psa. 83:3b.
- D. The believers who live an overcoming and exulting life by the linking faith will be found by Christ at His return as the treasures ready to receive the salvation of their souls as the end (result) of their faith—1 Pet. 1:8-9.
- E. Today we are making ourselves ready to be His bride (Matt. 25:10; Rev. 19:7-9); to make ourselves ready is to become an overcomer, who is always linked by the living faith with the Triune God.

IX. The overcomers who live by faith will be rewarded by Christ with the co-kingship and the top enjoyment of the divine life with Him in the millennium (20:4, 6); the Lord will then say to His overcomers, "Well done, good and faithful slave...Enter into the joy of your master" (Matt. 25:21, 23).

- X. **By this linking faith we are linked to God in Christ to participate in all that the all-inclusive Christ is, has, and has attained to, for the producing of the organic members of Christ to constitute and build up His organic Body, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the enlargement and expression of the eternal Triune God in His unlimited glory in the mysterious mingling of divinity with humanity for eternity (Rev. 21:2—22:5); this is the eternal fulfillment of Romans 1:17—"the righteous shall have life and live by faith"!**