

[Faith, Hope & Love_Part1](#)

We have learned that the Kingdom of God is completely unlike the kingdom of the world and that the character and nature of the king over each kingdom is more different than words could ever describe. We have also learned that the foundation of the kingdom of the world is the lie and the foundation of the Kingdom of God is truth. Tonight I want to address more about the character and nature of God's Kingdom and drive even a deeper wedge in our understanding about how different these two kingdoms are.

If truth is the foundation for the Kingdom of God, its building blocks are faith, hope, and love. We are going to be using **1 Corinthians 13:8-13** as our baseline scripture over the next few weeks to discuss these building blocks.

1 Corinthians 13:8-13

Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever! Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture! But when full understanding comes, these partial things will become useless. When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. Now we see things imperfectly as in a cloudy mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God

now knows me completely. Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

Because the Kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom which invades the physical realms, we naturally have a very limited ability to see into and to understand the things of this spiritual kingdom. As primarily physical beings, we are trained to use our physical senses and not so much our spiritual senses. In fact, when it comes to our spiritual senses and capabilities, we are still mostly children; we tend to walk, talk, and act like children instead of sons and daughters of the King of kings. Like children, we run around here and there only partially aware of our surroundings and only partially attune to the true spiritual battle that is happening around our lives 24x7.

Fortunately, in this body we have received a taste for the spiritual and it is fantastic; beyond imagination. I want more and I know you do too. But our limited ability to access this unseen realm is extremely frustrating and it is what tends to keep us fixated on what is easy to understand: the physical—the things we can touch, smell, see, feel, manipulate, and so on. Yet, our fixation on the physical is way out of place. All that is physical, along with the kingdom of this world, is passing away; it does not last and it will not last. The spiritual is what lasts forever. We know that to be true; we just have not yet entirely adopted it as our absolute truth. Yet trying to understand and grasp the spiritual—even the little bits which God shares with us—can be so confusing and frustrating because we simply do not see clearly. Sometimes it feels as if we are just making things up (which I know we are not, but it sure feels that way).

Therefore, in order to bridge this huge gap between the physical and the spiritual, God gives us spiritual gifts to both connect us to the reality of the spiritual kingdom in which we live, and to afford us a glimpse into what is really going on in our lives behind the scenes in the unseen world. For example, He gives us prophecy, speaking in unknown languages (commonly referred to as “speaking in tongues,” and special knowledge. And He grants these gifts, as the Spirit determines, to people in the body; and these gifts are to be used to serve and strengthen the body and build it up in faith. These gifts provide a very special bridge allowing us a certain amount of sight and clarity into the unseen world; and they also provide us much needed direction to fight in the war with unseen beings who control the kingdom of darkness.

In terms of prophecy, the Spirit has richly blessed us with this gift; and I for one am so thankful. Through prophecy, God connects us to the things happening in the unseen realm, He gives us perspective in order to manage and endure the various ways that the kingdom of the world tries to invade and destroy our lives. He gives us perspective on what He is doing and why He is doing it, and He even tells us what He is going to do (He tells us the future before it happens). Through prophecy, God gives us a view of how He sees us, what He loves about us, and what it is about us that makes Him so happy. He has used prophecy as an instrument of correction and has shown us things that need to be completely removed from our lives. Prophecy has also been critical in our learning how to battle against the enemy; how to develop appropriate war strategies; and how and when to engage the enemy

This gift has been a real blessing. And I can say that because this gift (as it is used in operation in our body) is like all things of the Spirit, it comes along side of us and

walks with us through the difficult and crazy journey that the Lord takes us on. All that we do is authorized by our heavenly Father; we are led by Jesus; the Word of God is our absolute authority; the Spirit reminds us of all that Jesus has said, convicts us of sin and righteousness, comforts us, and comes along side of us; and the gifts which the Spirit bestows upon us are our travel companions that help us navigate the narrow pathway of faith.

One of the other gifts that connects us to the unseen world is the gift of speaking in unknown languages, or speaking in tongues. It is an amazing gift that, for me at least, the Lord uses and calls upon when we are engaged in battling with demonic beings. He also calls upon this gift during certain times of deep adoration and worship. This language is a language of angels (**1 Corinthians 13:1**), but there are times it can be understood in the various languages of men (**Acts 2:7**). It is such a strange gift because the one who speaks it cannot understand with their mind what they are saying, but their spirit is engaged and they know the words they are speaking are having an impact and are accomplishing things in the unseen world. **1 Corinthians 14:2** says that the one who speaks unknown languages speaks mysteries to the mind, but they speak by the power of the Spirit of God. That is why we can be confident that it is authoritative and that this gift is an effective and powerful weapon in this war that we are fighting over the realm of mankind.

The third gift that is mentioned that specifically connects us to the spiritual realms and the spiritual battle that we fight against the kingdom of the world is that of “knowledge” or as it is phrased in some translations, “special knowledge.” The idea is that a person receives understanding about a matter from the unseen spiritual realm and this understanding or knowledge is not something they would

otherwise have any ability to know or guess. It seemingly comes out of the blue; yet, is perfect and is exactly what is needed.

I have seen this gift used so many times where God gives me wisdom and understanding about what is happening with a person and the nature of the spiritual battle that is being fought over their lives. Sometimes it is a wisdom about their lives, what they have done, what they are doing, what was done to them, what they are thinking, and what they are planning; yet, other times it is a wisdom about what the enemy is doing, the lies he is speaking, and how he is setting them up to trap and enslave them in his dark dungeons of the “Me.” I know that many of you have experienced this in action and you know it is very creepy. Sometimes it really creeps me out because it is so naturally supernatural; it just happens. There are no lightning bolts or thunder; I just suddenly have knowledge. Even the very first time I met many of you and we sat down to talk, the Lord gave me deep insight and understanding into you lives. It is a powerful gift that always reminds me of the fact that the real world is the unseen world and this world—the physical—acts like a veil that keeps us partially blind to what is really happening.

Prophecy, tongues, and special knowledge, these are three very powerful spiritual gifts that equip our body to do what God has called us to do, which is to give sight to the blind, free the captives from prison, and release those who sit in dark dungeons (*Isaiah 42:7*). Yet, as powerful and fantastic that these gifts may be, they are just tools to help us bridge this big gap between the physical and the spiritual realms. They are tools that were specifically designed for our lives in this earthly realm; but they only get us partially connected to the unseen realms. These tools, take prophecy for instance, only reveals part of the picture because the true

picture is beyond our ability to comprehend. What is really happening and going on behind the veil is far too amazing for our physical minds to get a hold of. Let me give you an example. In writing to the church at Corinth, Paul said this:

2 Corinthians 12:2-4

I was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know that I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.

There is so much more for us to know and experience, things that cannot be expressed in words, things so fabulous that we simply cannot comprehend. This is why when John received the ***Revelation***, God used earthly pictures, images, numbers, and symbols to communicate this message because the reality and the glory of the heavenly realms simply cannot be described in a way that the physical mind could understand. The point of it all is that in our now, we only know in part; and that is how it is in these earthly realms. And as wonderful as prophecy, tongues, and special knowledge are, and how useful they are in helping to navigate our narrow path, even they will not remain (***1 Corinthians 13:10***). They are tools specifically designed by the Spirit for the physical, for the partial. Thus, one day even these gifts will one day no longer be needed. You see, we will not always be physical beings, one day we will be immortal, supernatural, and we will no longer

need a bridge to make that connection between the physical and the spiritual, for we will be completed in Christ and be like Him—we will even know as we are known.

1 Corinthians 15:40-56

There are also bodies in the heavens and bodies on the earth. The glory of the heavenly bodies is different from the glory of the earthly bodies. The sun has one kind of glory, while the moon and stars each have another kind. And even the stars differ from each other in their glory. It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies.

The Scriptures tell us, "The first man, Adam, became a living person." But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. What comes first is the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man. Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man. What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever.

But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We will be completed, we will be made perfect, for we will be made into the image of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We will be immortal, filled with His power and strength, and clothed with His glory. Our bodies will be eternal; and they will be spiritual bodies perfectly designed for the spiritual realms—perfectly designed for the Kingdom of God. Did you grasp the fact that the Spirit said our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God? We give so much attention and importance to not just our physical bodies but all things physical; yet, none of it is fit for spiritual life in the Kingdom of God. Still, we know the Kingdom of God has come (**Matthew 12:28**), and even now we are to be dwelling and existing as ones who do not belong to this world but belong to the Kingdom of God. Therefore, we need to shift our perspective on all that is physical and put it in its proper place and not give it so much authority in our lives.

Now we see things imperfectly as in a cloudy mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that we know now is partial and incomplete, but then **we will know** everything completely, just as God now knows us completely (which in and of itself is a totally amazing concept). And I know that when we come to this fullness of understanding, we will—as God said—sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb from **Revelation 15:3-4**. We will say, “Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous deeds have been revealed.”

Do you see? Do you get it? We will understand God and all that He has done so thoroughly that we will be fully convinced that all He did in our lives was great and marvelous; all of it, from beginning to end with no exception. We will realize that all of our complaining, griping, moaning, fighting, and wrestling, as well as all our anger and condemnation of His ways, was entirely stupid and without merit. It was a waste of time, physical and emotional energy, and mental effort. It was all a waste and more than a waste, it was a loss. Our time could have been spent glorifying the Lord.

I mention this song, because the Lord is calling us to be those select few who are willing—yes, willing, to walk by faith and not by sight (**2 Corinthians 5:7**). He is calling us to choose the path of death. He wants us to agree with Him—in our now—that all His ways in our lives are great and marvelous—perfect even—and are worthy of our glorifying His name. We don't have to continue to walk as children and do childish things (like whine, complain, cry, and throw fits over what

we don't like); rather, we can grow up and put childish things away. We can clothe ourselves with the truth and an understanding of the Kingdom of God, and our King, such that we choose to live—in our here and now—like sons and daughters of the King of kings and the Lord of lords, fully equipped with the tools we need to navigate the spiritual in the realm of the physical.

And this brings us to the crux of the passage in **1 Corinthians 13**. Prophecy, tongues, knowledge, and the like, are tools to help us bridge the gap between the physical and spiritual realities; but as we studied, these gifts are temporary and will not remain. There are three things however that will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love. These are the permanent building blocks of the Kingdom of God. Again, all the tools that God gives us to navigate this very narrow pathway will be done away with for one day they will no longer be needed. But faith, hope, and love—the very building blocks of the Kingdom of God, will always remain. Over the next few weeks, we are going to study each of these building blocks so we can understand more thoroughly how we are to be living in this world. And we will start with faith.

Faith: is betting our lives upon all that is our King, while forsaking all else. Faith is not an amorphous concept, It is tangible, it is thick, it is practical, and it is always, always active. Our faith is entirely dependent upon the character, nature, and personhood of our King. If you did not go and meditate on all the descriptions of our King which we studied last week, then you are likely going to struggle with your faith. I say that because faith is really an application of facts; it is not blind and it is not mystical. Those are lies that have been propagated by the father of lies. Faith is the willingness to believe all that God has said about Himself and all He has said

about you—all that has been proven out in His actions toward His **Beloved** all throughout time. Faith is the willingness to believe and the willingness to prove out this belief by choosing to live as if it is all true regardless of what you think, feel, and see. Hence, Faith is comprised of this combination of belief and action. Faith is about you choosing to make your life decisions, your practical day-in-and-day-out decisions, based on who our King is. And if you do, you will find that you stand not on some scary invisible cloud, but on a huge Rock—a Boulder that is ginormous; and you will stand safe and secure with no alarm for nothing can harm you when you are firmly fixed upon the Rock.

If you go back and study what we learned about our King Jesus, you will realize that every description of our King is a description of another way in which Jesus is our I Am: our compete everything for everything we can ever need in this life. We are spiritual beings encased in the physical; we have been called Sons of God and have been put to the task of engaging in a very real spiritual battle with unseen forces of wickedness; and Jesus is Himself everything we need for this bizarre existence of the spiritual and physical. He is everything; and if you truly choose to place your faith in Him (your belief and your action), you will not be disappointed for it is written in scripture: “Behold, I lay in Zion, a choice stone, a precious cornerstone, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed” (shamed, or disgraced) (**1 Peter 2:6**). That is a statement of fact that we can rely upon.

There is an amazing passage in **Deuteronomy** where Moses declares God to be His Rock and Moses also speaks of the impact of not trusting in God and instead following the king of this world:

Deuteronomy 32:3-6, 15-18, 39-41

I will proclaim the name of the Lord; how glorious is our God! He is the Rock; his deeds are perfect. Everything he does is just and fair. He is a faithful God who does no wrong; how just and upright he is! But they have acted corruptly toward him; when they act so perversely, are they really his children? They are a deceitful and twisted generation. Is this the way you repay the Lord, you foolish and senseless people? Isn't he your Father who created you? Has he not made you and established you?...

But Israel soon became fat and unruly; the people grew heavy, plump, and stuffed! Then they abandoned the God who had made them; they made light of the Rock of their salvation. They stirred up his jealousy by worshiping foreign gods; they provoked his fury with detestable deeds. They offered sacrifices to demons, which are not God, to gods they had not known before, to new gods only recently arrived, to gods their ancestors had never feared. You neglected the Rock who had fathered you; you forgot the God who had given you birth...

Look now; I myself am he! There is no other god but me! I am the one who kills and gives life; I am the one who wounds and heals; no one can be rescued from my powerful hand! Now I raise my hand to heaven and declare, "As surely as I live, when I sharpen my flashing sword and begin to carry out justice, I will take revenge on my enemies and repay those who reject me.

I am sorry to say that far too many of you claim the name of Christ but you know so little about Him. That is something you have to remedy. You have been fed some

of the most amazing truth throughout the years; yet, you simply do not know Him and you have exchanged the truth of your God for a lie, for demons really. It is no different than what Israel did. It is time for you to accept the reality that you are either living in the Kingdom of God and your master is the Lord Jesus Christ or you are living in the kingdom of this world and your master is the devil. It is time for you to decide to whom you really want to belong.

If you call on the name of Christ, then you need to know who it is you call on. If you say you believe in His name, then you need to know what that name is all about. If you say you are a child of the living God, then you need to know what it means to have this living God so invade your life and your earthly realm that no one can tell the difference between you and Him. But you need to know Him. You need to know what He is like. I say that because the devil, your stand in father, lies to you about God all the time; he lies to you about His motives, His desires, His faithfulness, His love, His promises, and about everything about Him. And if you don't know who your God truly is, then you are not ready to bet your life on the truth because, in actuality, you know more of the lie than you do the truth. As a result, the lie eats you alive and the lie dominates your life. The lie is your food, the lie is your drink, and the lie will even be the clothing in which you wrap yourself.

But if you want to flee from the prisons of darkness and the staple diet of the lie, then you need to walk by faith and make your day-in-and-day-out decisions based on the fact that Jesus is your God, and you are not. Jesus is your provision for everything, and you are not. Faith is the pathway to truly knowing and experiencing God and living in the Kingdom of God as a son who belongs. This is why the Spirit

declares that without faith it is impossible to please God (**Hebrews 11:6**). Yes, impossible; you simply must be willing to bet it all on who He is.

Some of you may be familiar with **Hebrews 11:1-2** and might be thinking that the description of faith I have given you is different than the one the writer of **Hebrews** gave us. Therefore, I think we need to analyze this description in **Hebrews** and round out our understanding of faith.

Hebrews 11:1-2

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval.

This verse has always been a great calendar verse, but it actually has a really interesting connection to our unseen kingdom. Faith is described in two ways: the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen. A more literal translation of the Greek would read: And faith is of things hoped for assurance or confidence; of things not seen, evidence or conviction. What grabbed me is that both “hoped” and “not seen” were in the *present passive participle*. In other words, God in our now gives us hope and continues to give us hope; and when we have confidence and assurance in that hope, faith is realized. And since all the promises of God are yes in Christ (**2 Corinthians 1:20**), He is our confidence and assurance.

That is why it is so critical to your faith that you know your King. Go learn about Him. Also, “not seen” being in the *present passive participle* speaks of the way God has, in our now, veiled the spiritual kingdoms and will continue to keep it cloaked

or veiled from the confidence of our flesh. Thus, Faith is realized when we bet our lives on all that Christ does not let us see, feel, taste, or touch but is revealed by Him through the Spirit. In fact, our faith, the willingness to bet our lives (the action) on all that God says about Himself (the belief), is the evidence of all that is not seen. In other words, when we exercise faith, our very lives become the evidence of all that is not seen.

I find it interesting that faith will live on forever and ever. Faith does not go away with this world and with the physical. It will remain. You would think that once we are in the presence of God we will no longer have a need to exercise faith because we will then see and know and experience the fullness of God. But think about it. Faith is not something we do; it is not a verb but a noun. Faith is; it has substance. Right now it seems like something we do because it is always active, but the active part is merely living out what is: the action is the evidence. And if you don't live out what is, then it is not real to you—it is not really faith, but just empty words. In other words, a horse acts like a horse because it is a horse and we can tell it is a horse by the way it is acting. The horse is not just trying to be a horse, but we can tell it is a horse because it does things that are consistent with what we know a horse to be as opposed to some other animal. And that is the same with faith. Our faith is active and proven out because we have faith not because we are trying to have faith. I hope that makes sense? Faith is not something we can try to do; it either is or it is not, and one comes to know the difference by the evidence.

And our faith will follow us into eternity. In that day, when I see clearly and I see Jesus face to face, I will be fully assured of all that I hoped for because He will be my completion. But even then, there will still be the unseen as the Father exists in

unapproachable light, who no man has seen or can see (**1 Timothy 6:16**). Christ has explained to us the Father, but no one has seen Him (**John 1:18**). **Psalm 104:2** says that God has covered Himself with light as with a cloak. Thus, faith will still be the conviction or the evidence of that which is not seen. In other words, the fact that we will be in heaven serving and worshiping God will be proof that the Father sent the Son to save us. Faith will still be active; for even if we do not see the Father we will love Him and our marriage to His Son will be the evidence of our eternal faith.

The point I am trying to make is that faith is one of the eternal building blocks of the Kingdom of God. Faith in our now enables us to know God and experience God and so it will be with our faith throughout eternity. And it is only by faith that you will come to learn how to live in the Kingdom of God separate and distinct from the kingdom of the world. And faith will always remain, now and forever. Thus, this building block is critical; it is essential; it is the way of the true **Beloved**. Remember, without it you cannot please God. And this is why true Christianity—the way of the **Beloved**—is different from the religion of Christianity. One is based on people who have chosen, and daily choose, to bet their lives on the character and nature of Jesus. They cling to His personhood; trusting that as their Lord He will arrange the details of their lives and lead them down the best pathways for their life of faith. The others are those who have chosen and daily choose to follow the idea of Jesus—wanting what Jesus has done for them—and placing their hope in what they want Jesus to do for them in this life. Therefore, if you want to live by faith, I once again exhort you to learn all that you can about your God, study everything you can about Him (and you can start with our study from last week), eat of the meat and drink of the milk, and learn why He is everything you need all the time. Then make

the decision to let Him be your God despite what you think, feel, or see. You simply need to get out of the way and stop clinging to the devil's world. Let it go and give yourself completely to the King of kings and Lord of lords for without faith it is impossible to please God.

And we will pick up next week with more of a practical application of faith and then after that we will move on to "Hope," the second concept in this spiritual trifecta of faith, hope, and love.

Let's Pray