

The Reality Of Faith

Many people think faith is acting like something is so when it really isn't so, and if we do that long enough, then it will become so. But that's not it at all. Faith is real.

Hebrews 11:1 says,

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Faith is substance. This is saying that faith is real. It is the evidence of things not seen. Notice it didn't say "things that don't exist." They do exist. They just aren't seen.

Even in the natural world, we've come to realize that there are things that do exist that we can't see. We can't see television signals, but they do exist. In fact, wherever you are right now, there are television signals right there with you. If you say "No there aren't" just because you can't see or hear them, that doesn't mean they don't exist. It just means you aren't very smart. They do exist, they are just unseen. They are unseen realities.

A television set can make unseen signals visible. When we see the images is not when they became real. They were already there. A television set doesn't generate images. The set just receives the signal and converts it into sights and sounds that we can perceive. But the television signals were already there, before we tuned them in.

Probably every person reading this letter has watched television when suddenly the picture went blank. What did you do? I bet you didn't call the television station and complain about them stopping their broadcast. The first thing you did was check and see if everything was working on your television set. Was the electricity on? Was it plugged in? Did a tube go out or did some circuit melt? You checked your receiver to see what was wrong with it. You trust that the station broadcasts 24/7. You don't question that until you eliminate all the possible problems with your set.

Likewise, God is real and does exist. He just can't be seen. He is broadcasting all His power and blessings 24/7. It's never God's transmitter that is broken. It's always our receiver that is the problem. If we ask God for something and we don't see it manifest instantly, most people question why God hasn't answered that prayer yet. They assume that because they haven't seen or heard anything, nothing has happened. That's all wrong. We need to have more faith in God than we have in a television station.

There is a very good illustration of this truth in 2 Kings 6. Elisha, the prophet of God, was revealing the Syrian's battle plans to the king of Israel. Every time the king of Syria tried to ambush the king of Israel, Elisha would warn the king of Israel, and he would ambush the Syrian's ambush. This happened so often that the king of Syria finally asked his servants to reveal who the traitor was. He knew that the king of Israel could not be maneuvering like he was without inside information.

When one of the king of Syria's servants said that Elisha, the prophet of God, was revealing the words that the king of Syria said in his bed chamber to the king of Israel, the king of Syria sent his armies to capture Elisha.

Second Kings 6:15 says,

“And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?”

When Elisha’s servant saw the Syrian troops, he panicked. He knew why they were there. They had discovered Elisha was the one telling the king of Syria’s battle plans to the king of Israel. They were in big trouble. Look at the response of Elisha to this situation in 2 Kings 6:16: “And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”.

People who don’t believe anything exists beyond their five senses would say Elisha was lying. He was confessing something was so when it really wasn’t so, hoping that it would become so. But that’s not the way it was at all. Elisha spoke the truth. There were more with him than was with the Syrian army. It’s just that Elisha’s forces were in the unseen reality.

The key to understanding this is to recognize there is another realm of reality beyond this physical world. Those who are limited to only their five senses will always struggle with this. They think Elisha was lying, and indeed, he would have been lying if all that exists is this physical world. You could count the Syrian troops by the thousands, and there was only Elisha and his servant. But Elisha wasn’t lying because there was another world of reality. If you looked at the whole picture, the physical and spiritual world, then Elisha was right on. In the spiritual realm, there were many more horses and chariots of fire around Elisha than there were Syrian troops.

According to 2 Kings 6:17,

“Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And he LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”

Gehazi’s physical eyes were already wide open. God was opening his spiritual eyes. He was able to see with his heart into the spiritual world. And when the spiritual world was taken into consideration, then Elisha’s statement was perfectly true.

Those who see faith as an attempt to make something real which isn’t real will always struggle with those who see faith as simply making what is spiritually true a physical truth. Those who limit truth to only the physical realm would have called Elisha one of those “name it, claim it,” “blab it, grab it” cultists. But in saying such things, they condemn themselves. They show they only consider what they can see, taste, hear, smell, and feel to be reality. They are what the Bible calls “carnal.”

When Gehazi’s eyes were opened, the Syrians didn’t disappear. They were still there. The physical truth was still true, but there was a greater spiritual truth that emerged. **True faith doesn’t deny physical truth; it just refuses to let physical truth dominate spiritual truth. True faith subdues physical truth to the reality of spiritual truth.**

Because Elisha believed in the realities of the spiritual world, he raised his hand and smote all the Syrians with blindness. Then he led the whole Syrian army captive to the king of Israel. Praise the Lord! That's not bad for an old prophet whom carnal people would say was all by himself.

Elisha was not just speaking some wishful statement, hoping that it would become a reality. He knew what was real in the spiritual world, and he controlled his emotions and actions accordingly. There is no indication that Elisha saw the horses and chariots of fire around him. He didn't need to. He believed it. Those who operate in true faith don't need to see with their physical eyes. Their faith is evidence enough.

There was a woman at a campmeeting who had a huge goiter on her neck. She went forward for prayer and knew that she knew she was healed. So, she got up in front of the audience and gave a testimony of her goiter being healed. However, the goiter was still visible. But the people praised God, thinking that the healing would manifest itself shortly.

The next year at the same campmeeting, the woman got up again and praised the Lord for her healing, but there still wasn't any visible proof. This concerned a lot of people, but they didn't say anything. Then the next year, the same thing happened. This was too much for most of the people, and it caused the leaders of the meeting to approach this woman and tell her she couldn't testify of this healing again until the goiter was gone.

The woman told the Lord that she knew He had healed her, and she didn't have to see visible results to believe it. But for the sake of the unbelievers, she asked the Lord to physically remove the growth. It disappeared and the woman showed them what she already knew was true. You can get that strong in faith. Your faith is substance and all the evidence you need. Faith is real.

I've experienced this in my own life. When my youngest son, Peter, died on March 4, 2001, my wife and I spoke our faith and said, "The first report is not the last report." We spoke resurrection life back into Peter's body, and then we headed into town. It was one hour and fifteen minutes from the time we got the call until we got to where Peter was. During that time, I was operating in faith. I remembered prophecies that had not yet come to pass in Peter's life, and therefore, I knew it wasn't time for Peter to die. I rejoiced by faith, seeing Peter alive and well.

My oldest son, Joshua, met me at the door and said, "Dad, five or ten minutes after I called you, Peter just sat up." Thank You, Jesus! This is the point: I didn't rejoice more once I saw Peter raised from the dead than I did while I was still driving. During the drive, I knew Peter was alive, and I was rejoicing with all my might. It was actually anticlimactic when I saw in the physical what I had already seen in the spiritual. Don't get me wrong; I was blessed and I rejoiced to see my son raised up after being dead for five hours. But the physical reality wasn't more real to me than the spiritual reality of faith.

This is the way I live. I know it's not "normal," but I'm not getting "normal" results either. I've been believing big, and there have been big results from that believing. When we moved into our new offices, and when we see the warehouse finished, that was, and will be, anticlimactic. I'm seeing all these things in the spirit now. When they manifest physically, others will be impressed, but I'm impressed now.

I'm not believing for something that isn't real to become real. I've seen into the spiritual realm by faith, and I'm simply making what I've seen in the spiritual world manifest in the physical world. All of the things I'm seeing with my physical eyes now, I have already seen in my heart. I saw it on the inside before I saw it on the outside. This is a wonderful way to live. This is the normal Christian life. This is walking by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7).