

FAITH-LIFT **“PUT A LITTLE ‘UMPH’ IN YOUR LIFE”**

“Faith can move mountains, but don’t be surprised if God hands you a shovel!”

Faith is a belief in something despite no logical proof or material evidence. Faith is the cornerstone of the foundation for our Christian life. Before we can worry about living out the truth, reading the Word, or saying our prayers, we must first have a faith in the one true God. A foundation is a basis upon which something stands or is supported. That means that in all actuality, your faith is the base that holds your entire Christian belief system on it. Sounds pretty important, don’t you think? In order for us to continue to grow and develop into mature Christians, we must have a constant, strong faith. But how do you believe in something that you can’t even see? God has given us numerous examples of things we cannot see with the naked eye, yet still we know they exist. Take, for instance, the wind. We cannot actually see the wind itself, yet we can constantly see the effects of the wind around us. What about gravity? We can’t see it, but we know if we jump off a building, we will eventually hit the ground, hard. And last, but not least, consider germs. Germs are all around us, but are too small for us to see with our eyes. We often know when we have gotten some germs, though because we feel sick. That’s how our faith in God must be. We can’t always see it, but we see the effects of it and we know when we have it.

Many people agree that we must have faith to have a strong Christian life, but it’s not just a belief that will get all the work done. As the quote mentions, faith will do miraculous things, but we might have to add a little sweat and tears to it. We sometimes just assume that because we have faith it will all work out in the world and we’ll never have to do anything again. **WRONG!** Sure we have to have faith and God can take care of anything that He wants to, but don’t be surprised if He wants you to break a sweat. He wants to know that our faith is strong enough for us to “get our hands dirty” for His kingdom. Once we have faith in Jesus Christ, we must develop a spirit-led faith, a sharing faith, and a saving faith for others.

SPIRIT-LED FAITH

As we learned in a previous lesson, once we have accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, the Holy Spirit comes and lives in our hearts. Soon the Holy Spirit will begin to lead us and direct our lives. It is our job to hear His voice and follow on the path He leads us. In this situation Philip was told by the Holy Spirit to go to the road that leads to Gaza. What did Philip do? He went to Gaza! Philip’s not like us. We would want to know all the details. Why are we going there? Who’s going to be there? When will I return? Not Philip, he simply set out on faith and allowed God to take care of all the small stuff. Philip could have really caused a scene when the Spirit told him to leave, because he was having such good results preaching in Samaria. (Acts 8:5-8) We can’t get comfortable where we are. Philip didn’t gripe and complain about leaving such a wonderful

place, but rather he listened to the Spirit and went. And it's a good thing that he did, too. A man traveling all the way from Jerusalem to Ethiopia needed his help at this time. Philip was about to witness to a man who could greatly influence Ethiopia for Christ.

SHARING FAITH

Once again, Philip listens to the Holy Spirit and goes up to the chariot. Philip heard the gentleman reading the words of Isaiah, the prophet, and simply asked the man if he understood what he was reading. Philip met this man exactly where he was. He didn't jump onto the chariot and start going into all the miracles of Jesus and everything this man needed to know. He heard the man and met his immediate need: understanding this particular passage. After this, Philip began to explain the good news about Jesus. Philip did not let anything stand in his way of sharing his faith to this eunuch. It is fairly positive that Philip had to cross many barriers that he may have been nervous about. He overcame racial differences (Philip-Greek, Eunuch-Ethiopian), religious differences (Philip-Jew, Eunuch-Gentile), vocational differences (Philip-missionary, Eunuch-treasurer of government), and economic differences (Philip-poor, Eunuch-rich). Philip did not hesitate in sharing his faith when the person he was led to lived outside of his normal boundaries. Many people say that they don't share their faith because of a lack of courage, but maybe it's more like a lack of convenience. How many chariots are passing us by as we do not want to waste our precious time? People are always offering small bits of information that really relate to some deep concern, but we are usually too busy to hear them.

SAVING FAITH

After all of the discussion between Philip and the eunuch, the eunuch decided that he wanted a piece of that saving faith. He was so eager to share his faith with others that he wanted to be baptized immediately. Baptism is a public representation of our faith in Jesus Christ. The eunuch wanted to stop the chariot and get baptized. Just like so many others who accept the saving faith of Jesus Christ, the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. Jesus puts a love in us that we cannot deny and a joy that cannot be quenched. Who knows if this high official of the Ethiopian government did not go back and tell many people of the saving grace of Jesus? This encounter and experience was able to occur because of the willingness of Philip.

Our faith is the foundation in our life that prepares us for everything else we might face. Once we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we must listen closely to the voice of the Holy Spirit. We need to have a spirit-led faith. Once we begin to listen to the Holy Spirit, we have to get to the point where we will share our faith openly. Our faith is something of which we should be proud and excited to talk about. We can tell what is important in our lives by how much time we spend talking about that subject. How important is our faith?

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