

Faith – A pillar of Society

1 Corinthians 13:13

And now these three abide, faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love.

Down through the ages the church has been condemned because of its lack of love. It has been challenged, chided, compelled and even molded by society who only want love. While this is paramount, society needs something that we the church can only give. Faith. Belief. Something that doesn't originate in us but something which can transform a society. If all we do is meet the physical need of someone then we fail as a church. Faith is one of the three pillars of society.

Faith is belief in something.

Without belief we go nowhere, do nothing, believe in nothing. Absence of faith makes everything acceptable. Everything becomes relative to what we are feeling right now.

Belief causes things to change

Society needs to believe something. It needs to find something outside of itself to believe in, otherwise all it believes in is itself – that keeps getting smaller.

Things get smaller without faith.

Over the last one hundred years science has made some startling discoveries. Yet as we continue to move forward our world is actually getting smaller.

Language decreases from one generation to another. If you look today at the most popular type of language you get some interesting uses of language.

Let me demonstrate:

How many of these words can you tell me the meaning of?

Metamorphic, coemption (the purchase of all of something on the market)

Ubiquity – the ability to be everywhere at once

Orbicular – something is like a circle

Sacrosanct – something very holy

What about the current destruction of language via text/web based communication.

C U 2morrow

I ges U R B4 H

LOL Gr8 2 meet U

The list is quite astonishing. Now I am not trying to pull that down, just wanting to show that language is actually getting simpler. This is in direct correlation with the 'first law of thermodynamics' – if left alone everything gets smaller.

'When we have an absence of faith – things get smaller'. Our world shrinks. The opposite is true. **When we allow faith to shape our world its gets bigger.**

Why is it that business people with big vision and belief in themselves succeed? It is not the big vision that makes them succeed it's the 'belief' side of things. How much more can we succeed because we have God for us?

Now I am not just here to talk about belief, but right belief.

Right Believing is based around who God is.

Hebrews 11:6

Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that comes to God **must believe that He is**, and He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. (Emphasis mine)

The first part of call for all people in relation to God is that they must believe He exists. Now it would only take a fool to say that God doesn't exist. People need to believe that God exists outside of them.

God exists outside of us. He not governed by the pollution of this world or our lives. He is not bound by the conventions of our time. He rules over all. He exists outside of what we have.

Why is that important you may ask?

John 3:1-21 we see the story of Nicodemus a ruler amongst the Jews living in Jesus' time.

He came to Jesus at night. Now we understand that this may have been because he wanted to do see Jesus in secret. However, this reveals something important in the working of God. **When we get outside of what we have, or normally live in, faith and revelation come.** Getting outside of our clearly defined comfort zones gives room for God to move. While some of these comfort zones are good and allow us to seek God, every now and then we need to do something different.

For some of us, that means going on a holiday, taking a break, visiting a new café, taking a different path when we walk. Doing something new opens us up for the revelations of God.

Jesus asked the disciples to give out bread when they had only enough for themselves.

Jesus told Peter to come and he walked on water.

The four men carrying the stretcher had to climb a roof, destroy a roof and then lower a sick man down in front on Jesus.

When we get outside of who we are, into what God is, Faith transforms lives.

Nicodemus was no different. In verse 3 Jesus says unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. In my margin it gives a different rendering of that scripture. **It says unless a man is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**

When we have God in our world, **we have something from outside of who we are, we can see the amazing picture and vision that God has created for us.** God in our world allows us to see. We need to believe outside of ourselves. We need to have faith in something outside of ourselves.

When we believe something changes. Your world is changing because of the power of God in it. Your world is getting better because of the working of the Holy Spirit.

What happens when our belief is combined with Vision?

The impossible becomes possible. The improbable becomes probable. The unbelievable becomes believable. The unreachable is reachable. The hidden becomes revealed. The unknown becomes known.

Something that was outside of your reach becomes attainable.

Acts 3; 1-9 we see the story of the lame man at the gate beautiful. Peter and John are walking past and he sees them and thinks to himself those men there have something I can get off them. So he begins to beg them and ask of them for something to help alleviate his current situation. **He wants a placebo, a band aid, a pandol for a never ending headache.** What he got was something far much more life changing.

Many people come to church just looking for a placebo for life. They just want their situation to change, once it has they move on. But God is interested in not just giving a placebo, a bandaid but a life changing intravenous injection of life giving blood. It will change your very being.

He was a cripple from birth. But he had a vision to live. He wanted to live life as best as he could. He knew the right place to be seated to get the best out of the people who walked past. He knew how to get people to give to him and he knew who to ask. **His only problem was that his world was limited by his knowledge and disability.** Our world is limited by our own knowledge. It is limited by the disability caused by condemnation. But that can change! Your world like His world was small and God wanted it to be bigger.

He was destined to become part of a message that would rattle down through the corridors of time. A message of Faith. God is able to do something that man needs. God is able to transfer people from one dimension of living to another. Faith in God allows people to jump through into new dimensions.

Peter and John came along. (And along came Jones, slow talking Jones.)

God get's his attention – he had to shift his eyes away from his situation onto the hope of getting something.

Peter and John spoke faith, 'Look at us'. **The lame man had faith because he was expecting something.** He did not know what he was going to get.

God always responds to faith. The man wanted something. He had expectation. He was expectant. When we are expectant things happen. **God is looking for an expectant people.** A people with expectation about the good things that He has done and will do through them and in them.

God always responds to Faith. It pleases him. It moves Him. He moves things around by faith. He formed the world through faith.

When we take our expectation and bring it to God He multiplies it and gives us far much in return.

When we combine faith and vision, be expectant. God is moving. God is here right now, moving things. He will respond to your faith even if you think it's too small. Its not the size of your faith that's important it's the fact that faith exists.

Without faith it is impossible to please God for he that comes to God must believe that HE IS. What is God to you.

What is God to you. Just a friend. He is a mighty God every ready to help. He is your shelter, He is your source and supply. He is the banner over your world. He is the title over your life. He is the door into a new opportunity. He is the one who is fixing that thing you are worried about.

When your faith is combined with the power of God, big things happen. People get healed, People get free from addiction. Miracles hit people's lives. God shows Up.

AS we approach 2008, get ready for absolutely amazing year of God stretching you and using you to expand the kingdom of God.

Next week I want to talk about how to strengthen your faith.