

Living by Faith

- Ron Stullenbarger -

Living by faith is the key that unlocks the door to the fullness of God's promises. There is no doubt that God will always be faithful to His promises. Scripture is clear in 2 Timothy 2:13 that *"if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself."* Faithfulness is within God's nature. But, without faith we will not experience the fullness of what is available to us in God's promises. God does not force emotion on us. He does not force us to receive the joy and peace that comes through trusting him. He does not force us into the fullness of relationship available to us in faith. And He does not force His purposes on us. Faith is the vehicle by which we experience all that God longs to give us. Specifically, faith is the avenue on which we experience the fullness of God's promises for intimacy with Him, purpose in this life, and freedom from sin.

Hebrews 10:19-22 says, *"Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."* By faith we walk into God's presence. In faith we believe God desires to be with us.

Experiencing the fullness of restored relationship with our heavenly Father requires a heart full of faith and trust that God longs to tangibly be with us, His children. Without faith we will live solely for the pleasures this world has to offer and miss out on all the satisfaction of living this life for and with God above all else. In faith we can experience all the intimacy available to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Hebrews 11 is clear that it is by faith that the works of God are done. When we live by faith we bring the kingdom of God into every dark corner around us. When we live by faith we invite the Holy Spirit to work in and through every situation to draw others to the Father.

And finally, Ephesians 6:16 says, *"In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one."* Paul teaches us that it is through faith that we extinguish the flaming darts of the evil one. If we don't trust God at His word that we who were completely entangled to the schemes of the enemy by sin are now considered the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21), we will not walk in freedom. It is through faith that we renew our mind and experience the wonderful freedom from sin available to us.

May you seek out all that God has in store for you if you will take Him at His word and trust Him in response to His faithfulness. Spend time in prayer receiving all that God longs to give you by faith.