

## BFF375 Faith, the Conviction of Things Unseen

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. I will say, how are you but, [sings] happy birthday to you. That's all you get. I'm not doing the whole song.

Steve: Wow. Good job.

Scott: You're like an honorary member of the family now.

Steve: Well, thank you. I'm privileged. I don't know if you also know that it's also my wife's birthday.

Scott: No way. I did not know that. Wow.

Steve: And in 10 days it will be John's birthday. He loves celebrations and that will be an event. When the local diner servers sing to him, they bring out a waffle with ice cream on it, and when they are all done singing, they put whipped cream in his mouth. This is a tradition for many, many years.

Scott: That's awesome.

Steve: Today, we're going to continue our series on being a priest in God's kingdom and also being a warrior, a spiritual warrior. This is what we were designed and created to do, some of those good works that God prepared for those of us that are His children. Today, the topic is the power of faith.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for faith that believes in Jesus. Thank You for faith that believes in Your Word. Thank You for faith that comes from reading Your Word. I pray that You will help us to have faith today and not just some future event. Give us faith right now so that as we're reading these Scriptures, we can be believing them and having an impact on our world's welfare, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: I think the best definition of faith is in Hebrews 11:1, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." It's a mouthful, but when you think about it, that covers it. You are assured that what you're hoping for is going to come to pass.

You have a conviction even if you don't see any evidence, but you know deep down in your being that it's going to happen. Another definition of faith that I've heard is, faith takes things as they are and makes them bend to the will of God.

Today, we're going to do some bending, we're going to express some conviction, and we're going to be assured that what we're hoping for, what we're believing for is going to happen. The things that we don't see yet, we're going to contribute to making them bend to the will of God. How does that last definition strike you right from the start?

Scott: I like that.

Steve: I'm assured that God's Word is true, every jot and tittle. Heaven and earth are going to pass away, God's Word is going to stand. The will of God is revealed in

Scripture. We know that the Word of God is true. Now we're going to mix it with faith which is an interesting expression. Most modern translations translate Hebrews 4:2 this way, "Good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened." The King James renders it, "They were not mixed with faith," and I like that.

United by faith, mixed with faith, the point is, is that in order for God's will to come to pass, we have to believe it. We must mix it and unite it with faith. I'm going to read a couple examples from Scripture before we move a little bit further along.

Jeremiah 25:11-12, "This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years. Then after 70 years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares Jehovah, making the land an everlasting waste."

Four chapters later, Jeremiah 29:10, "Thus says Jehovah, 'When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you My promise and bring you back to this place.'" This promise in the writings of Jeremiah, is God's inspired Word. This is what will certainly take place. Daniel was a refugee, a slave, in Babylon a result of the captivity. A remnant of Judah was picked up and taken to Babylon.

Psalms 137 describes the heart of those captives, "By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our lyres. For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.'"

They lamented, "How shall we sing Jehovah's song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill, let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy."

This is how Daniel felt. He was a captive, and along with the other captives, they sat down by the waters of Babylon and wept. They remembered Jerusalem. This was their highest joy.

It's not surprising then, when we read Daniel 9, "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the Word of Jehovah to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely 70 years."

Daniel, being a student of Scripture, who loved Jerusalem, noticed, "They were only going to be here for 70 years." Then Daniel, "turned my face to the Lord God, seeking Him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes."

Daniel saw from Scripture what was prophesied, and he knows that God is watching over His word. Jeremiah 1:12, "Jehovah said to him, 'You have seen well, for I am watching over my Word to perform it.'"

Daniel was familiar with Jeremiah and knew the 70 years was up. As a result, He turned himself, and he began seeking God to fulfill His Word. He was mixing, uniting with faith what God had said. He set himself to pray, to take things as they were and make

them bend to the will of God. The will of God was 70 years and then a return from captivity.

Daniel determined to set himself by praying and fasting. He was seeking God until He fulfilled His Word to Jerusalem." That's exactly what happened, for we know the rest of the story. Ezra returned, Nehemiah returned, they rebuilt the temple. All these wonderful things happened.

I like to think that it wasn't just Daniel. I like to think that there was a team of people who were reading the Word and noticed, "70 years is up." Maybe Daniel learned it one day when he was in the synagogue and the local priest was saying, "This time is now. Let's all begin to pray." We know that Daniel prayed. This is an incredible example for us in Scripture.

I also know people that have lived in Jerusalem since before the turn of the century 125 years ago. My spiritual mentor's parents were married on the walls of Jerusalem way back in the day. He himself was born in Jerusalem, and there were people over there who were praying for Jerusalem.

In 1900, Jerusalem was not what it is today. It just wasn't. Not even close, but these people knew God's Word. Psalm 122:6–9 says, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. May they be secure who love you. Peace be within your walls and security within your towers.

"For my brothers and companions' sake I will say, 'Peace be within you.' For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God, I will seek your good." These people were over there and they set themselves to pray that God would restore Jerusalem.

Isaiah: 62, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. And the nations shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. You shall also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of Your God.

"You shall no more be termed Forsaken, neither shall your land any more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah, for Jehovah delights in you, and your land shall be married." Beulah means married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you."

Many people are praying, among them myself and several of my friends, who are praying for this passage to be fulfilled to the letter.

Micah 4:1–2, "It shall come to pass that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

We haven't seen that yet. We've seen Jerusalem make progress. Jerusalem was a desolation 123 years ago, but by 1948 it had become a nation, the whole land of Israel, and Jerusalem has become her capital. However we're still waiting for that Scripture in Micah to come to pass.

There's another passage that I think of when I think of Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:10, "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look upon Me Whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn."

This is heartfelt repentance. They're going to realize, "We killed Him. We have pierced the Son of God." They're going to mourn as one mourns for a child that they've lost. They're going to weep bitterly. They're going to look upon Him Whom they pierced, and they're going to say, "Hey, that's Jesus."

We know from the New Testament that He's not coming back until people begin to say, "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord." I think that's what's going to happen. People in Jerusalem are going to say, "Man, we killed the Son of God. Oh," and they're going to weep and they're going to be sad.

The Spirit of grace and supplication is going to be poured out on them, and then they're going to look upon Him. They're going to look to Jesus and they're going to say, "Oh, come back. Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord."

We haven't seen that yet, but I'm believing for it, even as I'm reading it, I'm believing that that day is upon us. I'm believing for it to come to pass. Just like Daniel, I'm believing for that to come to pass. The time is ripe.

Here are some other passages. I only have about two-thirds of a page left. These are incredible promises that I remind myself of on a regular basis when I'm praying and at my post as a priest. Isaiah 45:22-23, "Turn to Me and be saved all the ends of the earth for I am God and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the Word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me, every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance." This same passage is quoted in Romans 14:11.

Now, I don't know how much more you need, but to me that feeds my soul. Every knee is going to bow, every tongue is going to confess to God from the ends of the earth. God said, "That Word has gone forth. I have spoken it, and I'm not changing My mind. "Before things are done here, every knee is going to bow, every tongue is going to swear allegiance." You and I know that's not the case now. By faith, we greet it from afar, you might say, and we mix it with faith. We bring it to pass.

Philippians 2: 9-11, a similar passage, "God has highly exalted Him," speaking of Christ, "and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Wow, what does that mean? In heaven, on earth, under the earth, is that Sheol? Is that...? We don't know. All we know is that every knee is going to bow, every tongue is going to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. When you put these three passages together, there's no one that escapes them.

Psalms 22:27, "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to Jehovah, and all the families of the nations will worship before You." I believe that.

Habakkuk 2:14, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea." I believe that.

John 12:32, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to Myself." I love these passages. It doesn't say, "I'll draw most people," or, "Most of the knees are going to bow." No, He says, "I'll draw everyone. Every person. Every knee is going to bow. Everybody's going to be drawn to Myself because I have been lifted up from the earth," and it's going to happen.

Revelation 1:7, "Behold, He comes with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they that pierced Him, and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him."

1 Timothy 2 brings worldwide knowledge of God right up to date. Paul says, "I urge supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good. It is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, Who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

You don't have to pray about whether God wants certain people to not be saved. Just turn that piece of your theological brain off because the Bible says He desires all people to be saved, He's going to draw everyone to Himself. Every eye is going to see Him. Every knee is going to bow, and every tongue is going to confess.

That's exactly what the Word of God says. I'm believing for that. I'm believing that He is greater than the devil. He's greater than the world. He's greater than the flesh. He's greater than the media. He's greater than these so-called power brokers.

When it's all said and done, we're going to be satisfied, and He's going to be satisfied. He's going to watch over His Word. He's going to perform it to the letter.

There is another issue, Luke 18:8 says, "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?" Will He find people that absolutely continue to believe Him, that continue to have the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen?

By God's grace, it's going to happen. I'm trusting for that. That's one reason I spend so much time in Scripture, because, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ." If you've been believing with us today, then you are changing the world by faith. Scott, now you have to think of something articulate and inspired to add to this.

Scott: I pray for faith because I, like a lot of Christians, live most of my days like a practical agnostic. I'm just keeping it real here, [laughs] because I have trouble believing God's going to do anything sometimes.

Then, I'd ask for Him to shore up my faith, and I read His Word and I see His Word coming true. I have to ask myself, I just say sometimes, "Look, either God's in this or He's not." I choose to believe that He is because I've seen it throughout His Word.

That's the only hope we have is that He is working because I know if it's in my strength, I'm sunk. I confess this isn't where I thought you were taking this lesson, but there's about 200 other verses about faith that I found looking up.

Scott: We could do this for a few months, I think. [laughs]

Steve: I think that the best word you just said was "choose" because that's exactly what we do. We choose faith. When we don't have enough, we ask God to fill our faith cup, but a full faith cup comes from marinating in Scripture.

These promises, by the way, I just pulled them out of my daily readings because I have lists of these things that I read a couple of times a day and they feed my soul. They feed my spirit. They inform my outlook, and so I'm not discouraged if I have to hold my nose and watch the evening news, which I rarely do.

If I do, I'm just sitting there saying, "Yeah. Enjoy your little brief foray because your time is limited. Your days are numbered, and Jesus Christ is the King of the earth, and every knee is going to bow, and He's going to be King of all the earth. Amen." Let's pray.

Father, thank You that You are King of kings and Lord of lords. Thank you that You reign and You reign alone. We know that we have an enemy, the god of this world. We know that his time is limited. Right before he's about to go into the pit, he really raises a stink, and we're seeing the smell.

We're seeing the stink, but we're also noting that his time is limited. That he is going to be in that pit. That Jesus Christ was manifested to destroy him...

Steve: to take his power, and so we get our eyes back on Your Word. Every knee is going to bow. Every tongue is going to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. I pray for Jerusalem right now. I pray that you'll fulfill these words to her, that the inhabitants will look upon Jesus and they will mourn for Him. They will believe in Him, and they will draw near to Him.

There's other passages that declare that You're going to open up a fountain for sin and uncleanness. You're going to take care of their needs, and You're going to wash them and make them white. We know that there's going to be peace someday in Jerusalem, which we don't see now.

The whole world is fighting for pieces of that city, but there's going to be a day when You will be reigning there. The nations are going to flow to You, and they're going to learn from You. We're believing that.

We're going to see marriage there, because a young man marries a virgin? No, our sons will marry You. There's going to be all kinds of wonderful things happening in Jerusalem, beginning with the reign of the King. We're believing for that.

Thank You for the examples in Scripture of Daniel. Thank You for Jeremiah's word that was fulfilled to the letter, and thank You that every Word of God is going to be fulfilled to the letter.

Give us faith. Help us to choose faith. Help us when it's the darkest to have that thing that is assured and convinced even though our eyes don't see it. Help us to live in faith and walk by faith and help us to be among those who, when You return, have faith in God and in His Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at [spdemme@gmail.com](mailto:spdemme@gmail.com). If you have a question for me, you can reach me at [scott@unsocializedmedia.com](mailto:scott@unsocializedmedia.com). Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.