

Living FROM THE CROSS

LESSON NOTES

Text: 2 Cor 5:7—"We live by faith, not by sight."

Living FROM the Cross requires living by faith in who God says we are, and what God says we are, because of the Cross.

Q. How would you paraphrase this statement?

What we know about faith.

1. Faith comes from hearing, not seeing.

- **Two kinds of faith:** Word-based vs Sense-based. If you believe you are what you see in yourself, and what others say you are because of what they see, then you have a Sense/Sight based faith.

a. **Faith like Thomas;** John 20:24-29

- Rom. 10:17 - "**Consequently**, faith comes from hearing the word of Truth."

Q. What is the "sequence" of faith?

2. Faith in God's Word substantiates what we believe, but do not yet see.

- **Heb 11:1** - "Now faith is the assurance (title deed, certificate, confirmation, reason) of things hoped for (promised, divinely guaranteed), and the evidence (proof) of things not seen (the conviction of their reality - faith comprehends as fact what cannot be experienced by the physical senses)." AMP

Q. What would you call "unsubstantiated" hope?

3. Truth must be realized for it to be "living" faith.

Q. What does it mean to realize truth?

- Realizing truth - "to bring a concept or theory into concrete existence."
- Living FOR the cross is theorizing its affects. Whereas living FROM the cross is realizing its affects - i.e., "bringing the concepts of righteousness, holiness, identity, love, forgiveness, reconciliation, shalom into existence."
- James 2 - "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? ...Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds."

4. Consequently, living faith will practically affect how you live your life today.

- You will act according to what you believe! Principle of faith - Pr. 23:7 - "As a man believes in his heart, so is he."

Q. If you believe your core nature is a "sinner", how will you be inclined to behave?

Q. If you believe you are still guilty of sin how will you be likely to feel?

Q. If you believe that holiness is something yet to be achieved, what are some attitudes you will likely display?

Q. Conversely, if you truly believe your new core nature is "saint", how will you be inclined to behave?

5. Living by Faith means waiting in expectation for truth to become sight.

Q. What's the difference between wishing for something and expecting it?

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Pregnancy.

Couples say, "We're trying to get pregnant." They're living FOR pregnancy. Planning the time of ovulation, sexual intimacy. There are pre-pregnancy "works" to do. Sometimes surgery or invitro are required. But the day the DR says, "You're pregnant!", you rest from these works and begin living FROM pregnancy. You go from wishing to expecting and from wanting to having a child. Your hope is substantiated by the confirmation that "it is finished."

Q. Can you see the baby? No! But you "wait in expectation" until what you can't see yet becomes visible to your sight. This is the difference between living FROM and living FOR.

Story of Pastor Yonggi Cho—chair, desk & bicycle.

Pastor Yonggi Cho (founder of Yoido Full Gospel Church in South Korea, which he started in a tent with 5 people. It eventually became the world's largest congregation, with a membership of 830,000) Pastor Cho shared the story of how in his early days of ministry, he spoke on faith and told his congregation that he had a desk, chair, and bicycle.

After the service, three young men followed him home to see the items but on getting to his house, they saw nothing. They asked him, where is the chair, desk, and bicycle? Pastor Cho pointed to his stomach. Perplexed they looked at him. Where were you all before you were born? he asked. In our mother's womb they replied. Correct! Now, did you exist before you were born? He asked again. Yes! We existed in our mother's womb, they replied. But no one could see you then, right? Well, I am pregnant too! I am pregnant with my chair, desk and bicycle, Pastor replied happily.

So, pastor you are pregnant they said laughing. Soon word got around that the Pastor is pregnant. Women would look at him and smile as he passed. Little children would put their hands on his stomach to feel the bicycle. But soon, true to Pastor Cho's words, he received a Chair, Desk and Bicycle.

Like Pastor Cho, we are pregnant with "everything" Christ finished on the cross! We may not see it yet in the natural. Others may not see it yet either, but it exists in the womb of our faith because God has promised it. If we wait until the appointed time, our faith will become sight.

CASE STUDY: FAITH LIKE ABRAHAM

Abraham is an example of word-based faith. By faith he lived FROM God's promise and waited in expectation.

THE STORY:

The Promise—Genesis 12:2, 3—"I will cause you to become the father of a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and I will make you a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you."

Q. What words are most repeated in this passage, and what can we learn from it?

The Covenant of Blood—Genesis 15:18—"So the Lord made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I **have given this land** to your descendants..." I.e., it is finished!

Q. What is the faith implication of what God said to Abram?

Gen 17:4,5—"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. **No longer will you be called Abram** (exalted father) your name will be Abraham, (father of many) for I have made you a father of many nations."

Q. When did Abraham become a "father of many nations"? Was it before, or after, Isaac was born?

Considering the significance of one's name in Hebrew culture, discuss how others might have responded to Abram changing his name to Abraham?

Q. How does Abraham's confession of faith relate to how we "live by faith"?

READ: Romans 4:16—21 NLT

13 Clearly, God's promise to give the whole earth to Abraham and his descendants was based not on his obedience to God's law, but on a right relationship with God that comes by faith. 14 If God's promise is only for those who obey the law, then faith is not necessary, and the promise is pointless. 15 For the law always brings punishment on those who try to obey it.

16 So the promise is received by faith. It is given as a free gift. And we are all certain to receive it, whether or not we live according to the law of Moses, if we have faith like Abraham's. For Abraham is the father of all who believe. **17** That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, **"I have made you the father of many nations."** This happened because **Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who calls those things that are not as though they were.**

18 Even when there was no (visible) reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, "That's how many descendants you will have!" **19** And Abraham's faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah's womb.

20 Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. **21 He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises."**

OBSERVATIONS:

- a. All God's promises are received now by faith, not by sight.
- b. God called Abram a father of many nations before Isaac was born.
- c. God's promises have both a present and future reality.

Vs. 17, **God said...**"I have made you a father of many nations (Gn. 17:10) So **shall** your offspring be. (Gen. 15:5)".

- d. Abram stopped identifying as "exalted father" and began to identify as Abraham "father of a multitude", by faith.

CONCLUSION

Living FROM the Cross is choosing to believe that you are everything God says you are and have everything God says you have, because of the Cross.

God sees you **"finished"**! It's just a matter of time before what you are in the realm of faith becomes sight. But becoming sight won't make it any more real.

HOMEWORK:

Reflection: What is IT?

Read: 1 Samuel 17 0 David & Goliath