

David O. Oyedepo



THE LAW
OF
FAITH

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David O. Oyedepo

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CONTENTS

Preface	5
Introduction	7
Chapter 1: Medium of Operation	15
Chapter 2: Medium of Expression	25
Chapter 3: Scene of Operation	39
Chapter 4: Medium of Growth	49
Chapter 5: Essential Supplements To Faith: Love	57
Chapter 6: Essential Supplements To Faith: Keep to Your Source	67
Chapter 7: Essential Supplements To Faith: Be relaxed	73
Chapter 8: Essential Supplements To Faith: The Act of Praise	79
Chapter 9: Essential Supplements To Faith: Abstain From Sin	83

THE LAW OF FAITH

Chapter 10: **Essential Supplements To**

Faith: Gladness to Serve **89**

PREFACE

Many believers have been unable, try as they may, to stand on the Word of God and make their faith produce. True, several have put the Word into action, and waited for results which never came. This category of believers are left hovering between two notions: on the one hand, they may be wondering what is wrong with the Word of Faith preached to them and on the other hand, whether they are ever going to make it in the faith realm.

For such believers, this is an invaluable book. I have endeavoured to discuss in this modest volume, the fundamental precepts governing faith, its operation and guaranteed results which the exercise of faith produces. It is as practical a volume as to be useful to both the faith

THE LAW OF FAITH

preacher, as well as the general believer seeking to live and walk in the realm God has ordained for all of His children – the realm of the supernatural.

God bless your heart as you read. Amen.

Bishop David O. Oyedepo

Introduction

The existence of man on the earth is not an existence of free haphazard drifting, or a matter of chance. It is an existence guided and controlled by laws emanating from the spirit realm, the source of everything including supernatural manifestations. What every man is, is the result of what has taken place in this realm concerning him. The achievements of man are not so much due to his physical strivings, but by the workings from the spirit realm. No matter the resources (physical, mental, financial, etc) employed by man in his endeavours, if his success is not guaranteed in the spirit realm, everything he has built will either collapse like a pack of cards or will not

THE LAW OF FAITH

take off from the planning stage.

The Word of God, the only source of truth of life, asserts that, *“It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy”* (Romans 9:16). It is also written, *“The battle is not to the strong, neither the race to the swift”* (Ecclesiastes 9:11). The reason is that *“...A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven”* (John 3:27). Even the apparently successful unbeliever depends on the mercies of God to make it, because his riches are under threat from the devil and his agents who *“...walketh about seeking whom (they) may devour”* (1Peter 5:8).

God is the God of order. He has decreed rules or principles that guide everything, including the life of His children. Under these, we have the laws guiding divine health, prosperity, faith, etc.

In the operations of these laws, the believer

must bear two things in mind. First, he must follow them to the letter. This is because anything short of full compliance with spiritual rules is not reckoned with God. Take the patient who presents his prescription card at the hospital's dispensary or the chemist's shop, for example. The attendant goes through the list of prescribed medicines and from big jars, he pours out the prescribed quantity of each medicine needed by the patient. When he finishes, he cross-checks to make sure every prescribed medicine is given out. If, for instance, he gives the patient one or two drugs less, the patient will either not get healed at all, or will become a weak half-healed person. If the patient is to get healed, he must have everything complete. It is along similar lines that God's blessings are released for the believer. Hence, it is incumbent upon the believer to be knowledgeable of the stages and operations of

THE LAW OF FAITH

these laws, if he is to expect them to yield fruit for him.

The second point to note is that the sets of rules guiding the release of the blessings are not interchangeable. The rules for obtaining financial prosperity cannot, for instance, be used to obtain healing or another blessing. They are similar to rules guiding sports. You do not play football with a hockey stick, neither do you play lawn tennis with your legs. If such behaviour cannot be accepted at our own human level, how do you suppose it can be accepted in the spirit realm, where orderliness and perfection are the cardinal principles?

From the above two points, it is obvious that the child of God has rules to follow, before his needs are met. The Bible makes this abundantly clear, *“And if a man strives for the masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully”* (2 Timothy 2:5). The operative

word here is “lawfully” or according to the law. That means, without satisfying the rules, the striving man cannot be declared a winner. A football team that scores all its goals with their hands cannot expect to be declared the winner even if the ball entered the opponent’s net 10 times. The tennis player will be disqualified, if he continues to use his hand to catch the ball and throw it back, instead of using the racket to hit it. He cannot even claim to be ignorant of the rules. Once you enter for a game, you must of necessity know the rules.

It is the same with God. He wants to bless His children, but He does not want them to be ignorant of the rules. Paul gives us a glimpse of the application of one of these laws in his own circumstance. He said, “*For the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death*” (Romans 8:2). That is, by correctly applying the law of life (salvation and

THE LAW OF FAITH

obedience) against the law of death (sin and disobedience), Paul sets himself free from sin and its consequences.

There is a law guiding faith. This is called the law of faith. To have effectual faith, the Biblical faith that “*subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions*” (Hebrews 11:32, 34), you must first know that there are principles guiding its operation.

Faith is not cultivated anyhow. It is not something just to be confessed with the mouth, when it is not in the heart. It is built up by following laid down principles. Paul reveals this in Romans 3:27, “*Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.*” Do you see that? It says, “*By the law of faith.*” This means, faith has to do with observing rules, to get mountains removed from your way. You cannot lift a car with your

hands. Not only will it be difficult, but it may crush you. To raise it, you need to apply a jack which raises it, according to mechanical law. It is not advisable to pick out a promise from the Bible and apply it to a situation, just because that promise worked for another person. No! It does not work that way. If you continue doing that kind of thing, the devil will whip you very badly.

As a believer, you need to know this law of faith, just like you need to know the laws of your country, in order not to get yourself into trouble. You need to know the medium of operation of faith, its medium of growth and the role the believer has to play to get everything fixed in a neat jigsaw. The following chapters are, therefore, devoted to all these aspects of faith.

Chapter 1

Medium Of Operation

The heart of man is where faith is born and nurtured. Romans 10:8-10 says,

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth.

From the text, we can rewrite the following:

(a) “*The word is nigh thee... in thy heart: that is the word of faith...*”

THE LAW OF FAITH

(b) *“If thou shalt believe in thine heart that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead, thou shalt be saved”*

(c) *“For with the heart man believeth...”*

Take note of the emphasis on *“believe in”* the heart. You received your new birth, when you believed the gospel with all your heart. You would not have been saved, if you believed the gospel with your head. Hebrews 4:2 says,

For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

The Word of God will not produce results in a man, unless it descends into his heart. It is in the heart that the Word is synthesized into a force. Faith is thus a spiritual force that taps the omnipotence of God into a situation.

The Bible says of the woman with the

issue of blood:

She said within herself (that is in her heart), if I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole.

Matthew 9:21

The Bible says Jesus saw faith in the paralytic man and the people who let his bed down, and accordingly, their faith was rewarded with the healing of their patient (see Matthew 9:2). These are two out of several instances in the Bible that show that the heart of man is his miracle centre.

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

Proverbs 23:7

If a man's heart is dominated by fear and anxiety, he grows fretful on the outside. If peace and joy rule his heart, confidence and radiance are reflected in his personality. His language is

also guided and controlled by how much faith is inside of him. Jesus said,

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.

Matthew 12:34

As a student, I suddenly fell sick during one of our sessional examination papers. I had not even put down a word then. I was carried from the hall to the health Centre. The medical doctor, who examined me, diagnosed high blood pressure. It was unusually high. I knew that the devil was responsible. A stethoscope and other scientific equipment can only detect symptoms and not the cause (i.e. the devil) behind sicknesses. The doctor straightaway recommended that I refrained from writing the rest of the papers, with a medical report sent to the Chief Examiner. So it became officially certified that I did not write that paper on medical ground.

I eventually got to my room and the peace of God so overwhelmed me that I slept very soundly that afternoon. When I woke up, I made a simple faith declaration on the issue. I said, "Satan, if you could be so rude as to attack me in the examination hall, I am also going to prove to you whose son I am by passing that examination without writing it." I was saying that over and over again within my heart. No one else might share that kind of faith with me, so I did not have to share it with any.

Again, I ignored the doctor's recommendation since I knew the source of my problem. I went ahead to write the rest of the papers. I knew success was my right. The verdict at Calvary had established that fact. Jesus Himself said that any tree the Father had not planted ought to be uprooted (Matthew 15:13). Failure was one of such. Again, it is written,

...If thou canst believe, all things are

possible to him that believeth.

Mark 9:23

He said, “*All things*”, not some things or most things. Again, the Psalmist has said,

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help, my help
cometh from the Lord...*

Psalm 121:1-2

I said to myself, “I believe deep down in my heart that the odds notwithstanding, I will pass this paper.” Mark 9:23 is the master key; it opens all spiritual and physical doors. “It is not what I see and hear that moves me. It is what God says that moves me.”

When, later, my fiancée (now my wife) called to see me at the campus, she wanted to know how I had fared in the examinations. I told her it was well and I was going to pass it. The devil must have shuddered at the implication of such

confessions, because he soon attacked my mind with his theology. I could hear his cynical voice saying, "Now David, let us be a bit reasonable. You did not take this particular paper. You have refused to see the lecturer in charge to explain your situation to him for consideration. What earthly reason do you have to think you will pass it? Don't you realize the risk in raising such hope that is bound to be disappointed?" I remained unmoved. I knew well the danger of dwelling in the sense realm, that it can never be a fertile medium for the operation of faith. It is a realm whose victims oscillate between hope and despair because, to them, the mountains are formidable. But to the believer, whose spirit is in tune with his heavenly Father, the story is different. Jesus said,

...for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to

*yonder place and it shall remove; and
nothing shall be impossible unto you.*

Matthew 17:20

The time for the release of the results came and I went for mine. At the office, an official told me that as a result of some disagreement with the authorities, the lecturer in charge of that paper had left the country with the scripts. "There is no way to trace him", the official said. Dear reader, at this stage, I could hardly suppress my excitement. Then he added, "The authorities have decided to fall back on the previous performance of candidates for assessment." "Halleluyah!", I snapped on my inside and soon I was overwhelmed with joy. The good news was that I had scored very good marks in the previous results that were to be used.

Now, did I hear you say such things cannot work for everyone? I tell you, they will work. If

only you believe with your heart, whatever you say shall come to pass. The reason why many believers cannot exercise faith is that they have starved their spirits of the Word, which is the food of life. They have remained in their infant stage for so long that it takes very little critical observation to distinguish them from the unsaved church-goers. They talk of faith, the faith of Abraham, Moses, the apostles, etc. They get thrilled to hear how a brother or sister exercised his or her faith to turn round impossible situations; yet, when it comes to putting into practice what they have learnt, they become possessed with unbelief and slip back into the natural. It is such people Jesus asked, "*Where is your faith?*" It is the question you should ask yourself, when troubles are mounting.

Faith is part of the Christian armour. The Bible says,

THE LAW OF FAITH

***Above all, taking the shield of faith
wherewith ye shall be able to quench all
the fiery darts of the wicked.***

Ephesians 6:16

The fiery darts include diseases, sicknesses, want, poverty, losses, joblessness, broken homes, and every evil you can imagine. They fly about every second of the day and you need faith to counteract them. You cannot use any other weapon. Your strength cannot help you, your connections may fail, your qualifications cannot provide a way and your beauty can lose its power to procure you favour. What you need is faith for

***...the effectual fervent prayer of the
righteous availeth much.***

James 5:16.



Chapter 2

Medium Of Expression

Faith has to be expressed, before it can produce what you believe in your heart. Only God sees into your heart, the contending devil does not. This is because you are not contending with God but the devil, whom the Bible says we should “*resist steadfastly by faith.*” God sees everywhere, including your heart. The Bible says in Proverbs 20:27 that,

The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord...

Faith has a medium of operation and as such it also has a medium of expression. The faith

medium of expression is simply saying what is already registered in the spirit. There are two basic ways of expressing faith. First, it is by way of using words and the second is by your action (what to do).

Saying

In this section, we shall see clearly this medium of expressing faith. Your word means a lot in the spirit realm. The words that proceed from your mouth essentially determine whether you will succeed or fail in life. In other words, your words can make your lifestyle successful and it has the same potential power to bring you down. Are you surprised? There is no need to be surprised because Proverbs 18:21 has settled it. It says, *“Death and life are in the power of the tongue...”* That is to say that the power to kill and make alive lies in what you say.

Faith becomes a creative force, when it finds expression in words that are spoken. The faith of God will amount to nothing, except it finds expression in words. In that great chapter of faith, Hebrews 11, verse 3 says,

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God (which He spoke in the beginning) so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

God spoke the Word in the beginning. The Bible records, “*And God said...*” (Genesis 1:3-31). So, you can see now that speaking as a medium of expressing faith has been a principle of God from the beginning of days. Through the Bible and even now in our day, when God decides to do a thing in His heart, He says it and fulfills it. All the things that are in the world came into existence by pronouncement.

THE LAW OF FAITH

The Lord Jesus Christ was speaking about the weight of words. If you believe something with your heart only, that will not get you through the situation except you speak it out. A decree without a consequent proclamation is of no effect because no one has heard it. Therefore, it is null and void. If the government, for instance, bans the sale and consumption of alcohol without issuing a gazette (that is, a public proclamation) to that effect but goes ahead to enforce it, the decree will be resisted by the people. So as a believer, you must first work out your decree (desire) on paper (your heart), then you proclaim it (say it) before it becomes established in the physical realm.

Apostle Paul said that

*We having the same spirit of faith,
according as it is written, I believed, and*

***therefore have I spoken; we also believe,
and therefore speak.***

2 Corinthians 4:13

If you believe, then you must express your faith by saying what you believe. By speaking what you believe, you are releasing potent spiritual substance into the atmosphere to accomplish the spiritual things you have settled in your heart. Your problems and obstacles in life are spiritually removed once you BELIEVE, but they are physically manifest when you SAY what you have believed.

In order to drive home this point, let us see what Jesus says in Mark 11:23,

For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall SAY unto this mountain (obstacles and problems), be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come

to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith.

By saying what you believe, you are demonstrating confidence in God's ability and you are equally exhibiting your convictions and assurance in the Word of God. I tell you, it is a higher spiritual principle that beats the devil hands down! Jesus says your problems will crumble at your command of faith. This is because the words that you speak without doubting get the devil, who is the source of those problems, off balance. Once the source of your problem is dealt with, the problem will give way.

This is an age-long faith principle that has been settled since Old Testament times. The Prophet Jeremiah received this message from the Lord. Listen to what he says:

... I will make My words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood and it shall

devour them.

Jeremiah 5:14

You know what had happened? Some people were constituting themselves a hindrance in the way of God. Those people had to be removed and God commanded His Word to be spoken. The Word of God in your mouth is FIRE and it will devour any hindrance on your way. The Psalmist recognized this fact and that is why he says in Psalm 18:44-45,

As soon as they hear of me they shall obey: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me. The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their hidden places.

Every disease or any such thing in your life is a stranger, by virtue by of what Jesus has done on Calvary. So, when you accept and believe the Word of God concerning your particular

THE LAW OF FAITH

situation, go on to confess and when those strangers (demons and their attendant calamities) hear your confession of faith, they will not only obey you, they will disappear. The Bible says they shall fade away, including their symptoms!

You may begin to wonder what to say, possibly, how to begin your confession of faith. The Bible says,

I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt; open your mouth and wide and I will fill it.

Psalm 81:10

The land of Egypt here represents the domain of the devil with its characteristic problems of sin, poverty and despair. God has redeemed us from all these. But in case the devil tries to afflict you with what obtains in his kingdom, God says just open your mouth wide, in faith and He will give you what to say because you

have believed His Word.

That is the kind of thing Jesus Christ was referring to when in Luke 21:15 He said, *“For I will give you a mouth and a wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist”*. God will give you words in your mouth to speak and wisdom to communicate correctly, so your problems have no way of resisting your command.

Romans 10:10 says that *“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”*. When you believe with your heart and you confess with your mouth, all the packages of redemption become yours. The Greek word used for “salvation” is ‘sozo’ and it means total redemption. It covers all areas of life – physical, material and spiritual.

If you don’t say what you believe, you have

THE LAW OF FAITH

not fully complied with the law of faith; that means you have not striven lawfully and as such you cannot expect to be crowned. Do you want to be crowned? Do you want to be a winner? Then begin to confess the good investments of the Word of God in your heart. You have the potential to win because you are spirit-filled and Christ lives in you richly.

In fact, with all these, you are a spiritual dynamite! The words of faith that come out of your mouth are power-packed. All the elemental forces of hell cannot but flee (fade away) at your confession of faith.

Let your faith find expression in your mouth or else it is dormant. For faith to be active and for it to have the desired results, it must be spoken (confessed). Faith in the heart is not an end in itself, confession with the mouth brings result. Faith gets your problem settled

spiritually. Believing the Word of God in your heart and confessing it with your mouth will make it physically manifest.

Acting

The other way faith finds expression is through our action. James the Apostle wrote “...*shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works*” (James 2:18). Think of a farmer for instance, who prepared a piece of land for farming. He procured some good seeds for planting but only kept talking about how good the seeds were and how much harvest they would yield, instead of sowing them. It is quite certain such a farmer would reap no harvest. His confession would bring him nothing. For those seeds to have yielded, the planting action was inevitable.

Friend, that is how much role positive action plays in making your faith produce. There is

THE LAW OF FAITH

the case of Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:18, who having prayed to God for a child, is reported to have right away taken bread “...and her countenance was no more sad.” That was faith in action. You can hear her under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit saying in 1 Samuel 2:3 that “...the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed.” Hannah was saying here in effect that her action was weighed by God and that proved her worthy of an answer.

God is still in the business of weighing actions today. Faith is dead without action. The Book of Daniel recounts the story of King Belshazzar of Babylon, to whom God said, “*Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*” meaning “Thou are weighed in the balances, and art found wanting” (Daniel 5:27). Most Christians have lost wonderful blessings by inaction or negative action. In the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus first made the people sit down on the

grass by companies, ready to eat even before the food was manifested: Mark 6:39; John 6:10. That was nothing but faith in action. Act out what you believe.

In His healing ministry, Jesus was always demanding action from all the sick folks: “*Arise*”, “*Take up thy bed*” etc. Until you arise, you will not shine. The Bible says in Isaiah 60:1, “*Arise, (and you will) shine...*” The answer follows the action. Jesus was an action-packed master; that was why His faith was always producing. At the death of Lazarus, He refused to bow to the unbelief of Mary and Martha; action made Him press forward to the grave where He ordered the stone to be removed (John 11:39). That was faith in action. You would not expect anyone to come out, if the stone was still in place. His action always paved the way for His faith to produce.

Let it, therefore, sink into your spirit that for

THE LAW OF FAITH

faith to produce, positive action is required; before your blessing is released from above, God weighs your actions to see if they comply.

If your actions are found wanting, your blessings will be withheld. If you believe you are healed, then arise. To stick to your bed is to remain sick. If you believe you are blessed with a baby, then go ahead and begin to make your preparation for its arrival. If you believe you have got a job, get up early and be ready as one who is going to work. If you believe you are more than a conqueror, then carry the bright look of an overcomer on your face. To believe one thing and act differently is contrary to the law of faith.



Chapter 3

Scene Of Operation

In Matthew 10:32-33, Jesus said,

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my father which is in heaven.

Two facts emerge from this statement; first, Jesus is here emphasizing that He is the mediator between man and God. Secondly, by implication, some people are going to deny (or feel ashamed of) Him. Who are those who are

THE LAW OF FAITH

going to feel ashamed of Jesus? Is it the unbeliever? Of course, yes; but he is not alone. I want to make it clear that denying or feeling ashamed of Jesus Christ is a spiritual crime that can be committed by the believer as well. How? Simply by feeling too shy or ashamed to identify yourself with Him in public, by word of mouth or action. I have earlier on discussed the part played by utterance and action in the expression of faith. I said this has to do with speaking and acting out what you believe God for, either in your closet or outside. What I am pointing out in this chapter, however is that the operation of faith should not be made a private affair. It should be made public as circumstances demand.

What do I mean?

Well, quite a number of believers are often ashamed to demonstrate their faith to the

outside world. When troubles mount, they are ashamed to confess in the presence of unbelievers, statements of faith like "Thank you Jesus. I know You are beside me to fight my battles for me." They are afraid to tell their parents that "By His (Jesus) stripes, I am healed; therefore, I do not want to see the doctor." When you tell a sister believing the Lord for a child to go ahead and buy baby kits, she tends to ask you, "What if people ask me who the kits are for?" She agrees with you on the importance of walking by faith. However, when she goes to buy the kits and friends or relatives ask her to whom those things belong, she invariably says they belong to another woman's baby. She had the faith to go ahead to buy the baby kits, but the fear of mockery, ridicule and scoffing of the unbelieving public had caused her to deny or feel ashamed to confess that her Lord Jesus Christ had promised her a child, who was even then on the way.

THE LAW OF FAITH

Now, read Matthew 10:33 again. It says,

***But whosoever shall deny me before men,
him will I also deny before my father
which is in heaven.***

Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant. You do not receive from the Father without His sanction. Now, you have felt ashamed of Him. You have refused to identify yourself with Him. Therefore, He too is going to feel ashamed to tell the Father to give you that particular need. If it is healing you want, you will not have it. If it is a job or a baby, you will not have it either. Like begets like. Negative begets negative. Positive begets positive. You have opted for the negative and, accordingly, you will receive it. This is because the Bible says,

***For by thy words thou shalt be justified,
and by thy words thou shalt be
condemned.***

Matthew 12:37

There is no denying that in the operation of faith, you are likely to appear foolish before the world. Definitely, people are going to mock, jest, make cat-calls, or even physically oppose you. The reason is that, the world system of thought is completely at variance with the things of the spirit. The world says that if you are sick, you should see the doctor. Spiritual law says that you should remain in your room and use the Word (Sword of the Spirit) to deal with that particular affliction. The world says you should carry out your own vengeance, the law of the Spirit says that vengeance belongs to the Lord. The world says that to prosper is to gather, the law of the Spirit says that to prosper is to scatter. There is no way the two systems can reconcile. From the world's perspective, the laws of the Spirit are nothing but foolish. But the solemn truth is that unless the believer is set to despise shame, unless he is ready to look foolish before

the world, he is not ready for victory yet.

Look at the woman with the issue of blood in Mark 5:25-34. She did two remarkable things. First, she was the only person who believed that merely touching Jesus' garment would heal her. The rest felt that it was proper to invite Him to their houses or get Him to touch them or speak out the words of healing. Secondly, she confessed her disease without feeling ashamed or embarrassed about it, adding to her faith that she could obtain her healing through touching His garment. No wonder, Jesus told her, "*Thy faith hath made thee whole.*" That is faith operated in public.

Again, look at what happened at the marriage feast in Cana. Wine was finished and yet there remained people to be served, including a governor. Jesus ordered that six huge water pots be filled, not with wine, but with water! Can you imagine how queer the instruction must

have sounded? The task was to be performed in the public by a reasonable number of human beings, who had no previous contact with Jesus to understand what He must be driving at. Yet, the record says, they obeyed, thereby openly demonstrating their faith in Jesus' ability to do something to save the wedding host from the embarrassing situation. Praise the Lord!

Now, coming to Jesus Himself, the Bible says in Hebrews 12:2,

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus had to endure shame –public whipping, taunts, slaps, revilings, etc. before He overcame the world and was glorified. There was nothing He did or said in secret. He said, “*I spake*

THE LAW OF FAITH

openly to the world” (John 18:20). The Bible enjoins us to make Jesus our example, to forget about what the world says and fight the good fight of faith, wherever we are.

In Acts 14, we come across the disciples in Iconium speaking boldly of the Lord, who also “*gave testimony unto the word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.*” If you want to achieve victory by your faith; if you want signs and wonders to follow you, then it is high time you started coming out in the open. Jesus said,

Neither do men light a candlestick and put it under a bushel but on a candle stick; and it giveth light unto all that in the house.

Matthew 5:15

Your faith is your life. It is that which drives away darkness from your life. It is meant not

only for yourself, but to help others as well. If you operate it privately for your own benefit, it implies that you are putting your candle under the bushel.

The action has two implications. First, you feel ashamed of Jesus. You want His healing, but you do not want people to know that He healed you.

Secondly, you are being selfish. You keep your source of blessings from the world. But it is part of the means God uses to advertise His grace to unbelievers and get them saved. Your operation of faith should, as the need arises, be made known so that people would have cause to glorify God in your life. When you fail to do that, the impression you create in the public is that you got your victories through your own efforts. You stole God's glory by 'increasing' yourself and decreasing Him. Do you want to see the glory of God in your Christian walk?

THE LAW OF FAITH

Do you want to be used mightily by Him and receive the crown of the overcomer? Then, stand out of the crowd; operate your faith on the sick and the oppressed. If you do not achieve results in some of the ministrations, it is an opportunity for you to find the missing link and be able to achieve results next time. Jesus has given you power. Go ahead and utilize it for His glory.

Chapter 4

Medium Of Growth

So far, we have considered that faith is a spiritual force that operates in the spirit of the believer, and finds expression in his actions and utterances. I wish to add here that these are not only the facets of the law guiding it; there is also the growth dimension of it.

Through His Words, Jesus Christ affords us glimpses of this growth dimension. In Matthew 14:31, we discover that there was an upsurge of faith in Peter's heart, as he walked on the water towards his master. The other disciples watching the scene must have been thrilled by their colleague's faith, for up to that point, none of them had been able to exercise faith enough

THE LAW OF FAITH

to be a partaker of Jesus' miraculous activities. As they held their breath, hoping that Peter would make it to the master, a storm suddenly arose. For a moment, Peter was cut off from his master. He found himself alone. Fear gripped his heart, quenched the faith supporting him on the water. Then he began to sink. At that crucial moment, the only alternative left for him was to cry out, "*Lord save me*". Jesus told him, "*O thou of little faith....*," to point out to him that he was operating at a lower realm of faith. True, he had been able to walk on water; but that faith was momentarily inspired by Jesus' presence. Peter had almost no faith of his own. What he had was just something puny that could not support him on water. Perhaps, we would not have known this, if the storm had not betrayed it.

Contrasting sharply with Peter's faith was the

Centurion's. Record says that Jesus marveled, saying, *"I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel."* Again, Jesus often told people, *"According to your faith, be it unto you"*, to indicate that a person receives from God according to the measure of faith stored in his or her heart. Paul, in writing to the Thessalonian believers, was full of thanksgiving to God that their *"faith growth exceedingly"*(2 Thessalonians 1:3). But at the same time, he makes us to understand in Chapter 3:2 of the same epistle that there could be people, who would be completely devoid of faith in God.

We can conclude from these and other references in the Bible that faith can be totally lacking, little or great. This in turn implies that faith depends on a kind of nutrition for growth. The most important nutrition for growth is the Word of God. It is the major spiritual food for the human spirit to develop upon. The process

THE LAW OF FAITH

is similar to the growth of the human body. For the body to grow properly, it must be fed with the right diet. Depending on the quantity of diet consumed, the growth rate is fast, slow or even stunted. Faith as a living force can grow fast, slow or become stunted, depending on how much of the Word is imbibed into the spirit. In this light, Peter stressed that,

As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby

1 Peter 2:2

Paul told Timothy,

Study to she thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

To have faith, it is vital to feed upon the Word

of God because there is no short-cut to growing spiritually. The Bible says that,

***Who through faith, subdued kingdoms,
wrought righteousness, obtained
promises, stopped the mouth of lions.***

Hebrews 11:33

It is also written that the way to have this faith is by hearing and reading the Word. It follows that without knowing and applying the Word, the believer cannot live righteously, receive the promises of the covenant, or destroy the works of the devil because all these operations work by faith. Take the Corinthian Christians for example. After being in the faith for many years, they were still wallowing in the quagmire of carnality. They fought, envied each other, and fornicated, because evidently, the Word was not dwelling in their hearts sufficiently to enable them live above sin. A similar situation prevailed among the Hebrew

THE LAW OF FAITH

Christians who, for many years, were hovering around the basic teachings of the scriptures, instead of graduating to be teachers themselves.

Like those earlier Christians, many Christians today still remain babies because they do not give first place to the Word in their lives. Their faith is not developed enough to enable them receive great things from God and to do exploits for Him in return. They have come to believe more in just the emotional experience of worship, in stickers, in big Bibles, experiences of other brethren, and other such things that do not actually make for growth of faith. This is a sad affair. The Bible says, "*The just shall live by (his own) faith.*" It does not say the just shall live by possessing big Bibles or listening to the experiences of others, neither does it say that emotional satisfaction produces answered prayer. It says the just will live only by his own faith.

There is yet another way to increase your faith. This is to pray always in the Spirit, which is, praying in the Holy Ghost, or in tongues. Jude 20 says,

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.

Paul said, “*He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself*” (1 Corinthians 14:4). To edify yourself means to build up your faith. The two verses mean the same thing. When you pray in the Spirit, it is your spirit that prays with the assistance of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the Divine Teacher of the Word and also the One who brings to memory what the believer has studied. Thus, when you pray in the spirit, the Holy Ghost passes across to your mind verses of the scriptures that are relevant to your prayer point. However, He cannot give

THE LAW OF FAITH

you what you have not studied. But certainly, He will refresh your memory concerning those scriptures you have studied, in order that the presentation of your request will be effective.

Praying in the Spirit is thus a faith-building exercise for the believer. It is not a thing of fancy. It has a definite part to play in spiritual warfare. Whatever opinions people may hold about it, do not add to, or subtract from the validity of this fact. If you are a spirit-filled believer, continue to pray in the Spirit as you study the Word. If you are a believer and you are not filled, it is better to get filled. Let the rivers of living water flow out of you to bless others. It will definitely help to increase your faith.



Chapter 5

Essential Supplements To Faith: Love

The part played by love in the operation of faith is so important that it cannot but be given separate treatment here. Anything that has to do with God, necessarily has to do with love because love is essentially an attribute of God. It is love that impelled Him to sacrifice His only Son, Jesus Christ, so that He could reconcile man unto Himself and restore to him his original delegated authority to rule over the work of His hands. Since God is love, he or she is born of love and has the capacity to develop his or her love to God's standard of love. The

Bible says,

...God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

1 John 4:16

Every believer indwelt by the Spirit of God should understand that God is there to use him or her as a channel of showing His love to mankind. Hence, any activity of the believer, especially, those that have to do with his fellow man must, as a matter of principle, have to be motivated and guided by love.

Faith is a gift of God by means of which His omnipotency is brought into a situation. He has provided man with the means of acquiring this faith and He expects that its entire operation be based on love. This is a fundamental law of the Spirit. The Bible says in Galatians 5:6 that,

...in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision;

but faith which worketh by love.

Have you understood it? The verse says, “*Faith which worketh by love.*” In other words, Paul is saying that faith works or achieves its effect within the context of love. Outside of love, it is vain and cannot work.

For instance, you can meditate on the verses of scriptures on divine healing, and receive revelation knowledge of those verses from the Holy Spirit. You can then go ahead to appropriate the promise concerning your ailment by faith. But dear brethren, if you are not walking in love, if you are settling scores with another person, whether a believer or unbeliever, you will never get healed. St. John gives us insight into this when he says, “*Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him (God) because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight*” (1 John 3:22). That means that you

can receive your healing only if you obey the law. Romans 13:10 says,

Love is the fulfillment of the law.

In one of the series of “Faith Seminars” held in Kaduna, Nigeria, there was one woman in the congregation who, I learnt later, had been praying and fasting for a particular need. Her husband had gone overseas and she intended to join him over there. But an embargo on issuance of International passports had made it impossible for her application for passport to be considered. As a child of God, she knew well that *“if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.”* No doubt, she believed that verse and on that basis, she used her faith to claim her passport. It never worked. Her fasting could not help either. Confounded, she attended the seminar where she learnt that the basic hindrance to answered prayer is failure to

walk in love. It turned out that she had been nursing grudges against her in-laws. The Bible says, *“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me”* (Psalm 66:18). Her faith was there all right, but it needed the fuel of love to set it in motion. That fuel was lacking and there was no way God could move her “mountain” without contravening His own law. With this understanding, this woman went home, bought gifts, sought and obtained reconciliation with her in-laws. A few weeks later, she obtained her passport and foreign exchange and was ready to fly out to join her husband abroad. Do you see that? Praise the Lord.

The scriptures cannot be broken! It makes no difference, who or what is the basis of the believer’s bitterness. Once he fails to conquer such bitterness with love, he can never obtain the promises. Do you know why Jesus was able to do many exploits? Just because He was

THE LAW OF FAITH

always overflowing with compassion for people, wherever He went. We are told in Matthew 14:14 that when Jesus saw the multitude, He had compassion on them for they were like sheep without a shepherd. With such love and compassion in His heart, He was able to feed the multitude with only five loaves of bread and two fishes.

Yes, it is love that makes faith efficient. It is love that helps faith to grow. The devil is well aware of this. So, in most of his schemes against the body of Christ today, he tries to play unguarded brethren against each other. He knows that the most effective way to hinder the power of God from being manifested in the body, is through the spirit of dissension and unforgiveness. Show me a church whose candle has been removed, and I will show you a church that is split into opposing factions. Show me an evangelist whose ministry is collapsing, and

I will show you a man whose heart is waxing cold. Show me a preacher whose sermons hit the walls and bounce back at him, and I will show you a preacher who loves himself more than he loves his fellow man.

But beloved, do you think things ought to be like this? Is it impossible for a child of God to love just like Jesus did? Definitely not! There are two strong reasons backing this assertion. First, Romans 5:5 says,

...The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

That means every spirit-filled child of God has the God-kind of love. The Bible says in Galatians 5:22 that love is one of the fruits of the Spirit.

Secondly, Jesus said, *“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in*

him, the same bringeth forth much fruits..."

(John 15:5). Every believer has Jesus abiding in him or her. Jesus is the trunk; the same life flows to the branches so that they are able to bear fruits. If a branch is not bearing fruit, it does not mean that it is not getting its supply of nutrients. It only implies that it is not utilizing those nutrients. Jesus as the embodiment of love, has passed on to us the same kind of love. It is up to us to develop it. It starts with determination because if you are not determined, you cannot develop it. Just tell yourself that you are going to love everyone you come across with a true heart. Then, be ready to surrender all interfering selfish interests to Jesus because if you don't surrender your interests, it will be impossible for you to love. Jesus said no man can serve two masters. You cannot serve your interests, while you seek to serve those of others. One set of interests will

have to give way to the other.

If you want your vision of God's glory and power to broaden, make love your cardinal principle in life. God can never operate in an atmosphere of selfishness, hatred, backbiting, etc. Therefore, begin now to say to yourself, "I am a child of God. I am born to love. I have God's love dwelling in me. Therefore, it is possible for me to lay down my life for others. I shall minister to the sick, rescue the perishing, care for the dying, give to the poor and pray for my enemies." Go into action after this short confession. Be on the look-out for situations that will need your love and stretch out a helping hand. You will discover, as you go on doing this that, you will receive results to your faith almost immediately. God is faithful. His eyes run to and fro over the world to perform His Word towards those whose hearts are perfect towards Him. Are you ready?



Chapter 6

Essential Supplements To Faith: Keep To Your Source

As God is the only One who can meet all your needs, it is important that you rely on Him alone. Any move towards getting help from another source amounts to double-dealing, and God cannot perform for people who stand between two opinions. Your expectation is either from Him or you are not ready for His great acts at all. The Psalmist says,

My Soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him.

Psalm 62:5

THE LAW OF FAITH

He also says in Psalm 121:2, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." God hates double-dealing business; He is a jealous God. He said, "...*My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images*" (Isaiah 42:8). It is not hard to know why people double-deal. They think God must of necessity have to go through men to accomplish His Word. No, sir! Anyone who thinks that way has not, within the framework of his imagination, fully comprehended the immensity of God's power.

God is Jehovah El-Shaddai, He is all-sufficient. He is more than enough to meet all situations, all by Himself. He could, if He chooses, go through men. But He is not necessarily bound to do that. He can make use of inanimate objects, if He so chooses. When God looked around and saw no man to speak to Balaam on His behalf, He used his

(Balaam's) own ass to do the speaking. Jesus told the complaining Pharisees on His entry into Jerusalem "...*I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out*" (Luke 19:40). The five thousand were fed directly from heaven. In 1Kings 17, God was the one responsible for replenishing the pot of flour and the cruise of oil of the widow of Zarephat. Like the example I gave earlier, you cannot look unto God for employment and at the same time go about seeking favour from bosses. Jesus said, "*No man can serve two masters.*" If you are tapping God's resources through your faith to meet one kind of need or another, then, it is better for you to go ahead with that alone. It is by so doing that God can justify you.

There was the case of a woman I once ministered to for a miracle. As I laid hands on her, God ministered to me: "The woman has

an alternative." I stopped the prayer and told the woman, "God said you have an alternative source to what you are seeking: true or false?" She affirmed it was true. Then I told her that she should make up her mind who to choose: the Living God or her poor alternative. Then I gave her time within which to make up her mind anew about the matter. The woman's behaviour was enough reason for God to fold His hands. Why? Because God is a jealous God. He wants all the glory in every matter to be ascribed to Him. He is beautiful for all situations. What He has done to your situation, no man else can.

We are further enjoined, "*Let your eyes be single and your body be full of light*" (Matthew 6:22). Look up to the hills, brethren, look up. For by so doing, it will be impossible to look down. Looking down means looking at the problem, and that alone can destroy you. If it is

left to you, you have no power to stand the devil. You overcome him by your faith, which taps power from above to counteract his activities. Remember the episode of the brazen serpent in the Book of Numbers chapter 21. The instruction was to look at the brazen serpent and not Moses. Any victim of the snake bite, no matter his position or usefulness, who looked elsewhere, would surely die. Therefore, look unto God and you will win always.

Chapter 7

Essential Supplements To Faith: Be Relaxed

It is worthwhile pointing out that as powerful as faith can be, it is vulnerable to wrong attitudes like anxiety and impatience. Anxiety is borne out of unbelief and unbelief will rob the believer of every promise of God. Impatience is wanting to receive the promise earlier than the divinely appointed time. The Bible says,

***Be still, and know that I am God: I will
be exalted in the earth.***

Psalm 46:10

Experience has taught that the price to pay for anxiety and impatience could be costly

THE LAW OF FAITH

sometimes. Consider Saul, King of Israel. Samuel the prophet was to be around to offer sacrifices on behalf of the land, as the Philistine army moved in for battle. After waiting for a while, Saul, in a fit of impatience, decided to offer the sacrifice himself. As soon as he finished, Samuel appeared. Samuel told him, "You have behaved foolishly" (1 Samuel 13:13). The cost of that single act of disobedience, borne out of impatience, was the end of his dynasty. Like King Saul, several believers through impatience have lost God's best in life. They have imagined God's finger in the wrong place, tried by their own calculation to put two and two together to get their four, and gone ahead in their plans only to get disillusioned in the end.

Undoubtedly, tribulation comes, even in the course of waiting on the Lord for a particular need. But definitely, it has a part to play in

strengthening faith. The Bible says that we are even to glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation works patience, and patience experience (Romans 5:3-4). This admonition is repeated in Hebrews 10:36

For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

The point here is that faith needs to be tried to enable it grow. That trial is through patience. It is patience that gets you to know God by personal experience; your testimonies become stepping stones upon which you believe God for greater things in your life. A patient believer is thus a man or woman of faith. He or she is confident that, by virtue of the integrity of God's Word, He who has promised is able also to bring it to pass, even in the face of overwhelming odds.

God is a God of patience and He wants us to

take on the same attribute. When we are patient, we shall have no anxiety. Jesus said,

Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.

Matthew 6:27-28

The assurance here is that, "The Lord will fight for you even as you hold your peace." It is written,

In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.

Isaiah 30:15

For your faith to work effectively, therefore, you need to relax even as you look out for the manifestation of the thing upon which you are exercising your faith. In that mood of calmness, you will be able to catch the "still small voice."

We discover in 1 Kings Chapter 19 that while Elijah the prophet was complaining and murmuring, he had no solution to his problems. However, as he lay down quietly, the still small voice spoke and showed him the way out.



Chapter 8

Essential Supplements To Faith: The Act Of Praise

Praising God is also an essential part of the faith walk. The Psalmist says,

God inhabits the praises of His people. (paraphrased)

Psalm 22:3

This is because

Praise is comely unto God.

Psalm 147:1

We have been created essentially as praise

THE LAW OF FAITH

beings, to show forth the glory of God by our words and deeds. God answers our prayers by dispatching His angels to perform the specific task we commit unto Him. But in praises, God Himself moves. When that happens, all hindering mountains flee like thieves from His presence, and in their places, stupendous miracles emerge.

Read of the battle between the people of Israel and the combined forces of Moab and Ammon in 2 Chronicles 20. The Israelites knew well from their wilderness experience that God is “*fearful in praises*” and could perform wonders that could go beyond their wildest imagination. So, acting upon that knowledge, they adopted the unusual strategy of having a choir to lead the combat troops to battle. The record says, “...*The Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir... and everyone helped to destroy another*” (verses

22-23). Not a single Israelite soldier drew out his sword in that battle. Yet, they won and enjoyed a massive spoil that took them three days to gather.

Remember, too, how in 1 Samuel 16:23, David was casting out devils by playing his divine music on a stringed instrument. No devil can stand the face of genuine praise and worship because such a place is exclusively the monopoly of the Almighty Himself.

If you are a praise-filled believer, you will keep the devil constantly at a distance and miracles will come your way more frequently than should have been. The Bible says that Zion is a city of the living God. It is a domain of miracles. It is written,

But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an

THE LAW OF FAITH

innumerable company of angels. To the church of the first born which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

Hebrews 12:22-23

This is the reason why Mount Zion is a city of miracles. What gets you there is praise. The Psalmist, therefore, exhorts that believers should “*enter into His (God’s) gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise*” (Psalm 100:4). Have you faith? Add to it praise and discover for yourself a new dimension of God’s power.



Chapter 9

Essential Supplements To Faith: Abstain From Sin

The fear of God entails having a holy reverence for His Word. When you do that, you will not fall into any form of sin. The subject of sin has been brought up at this stage because it is a fundamental hindrance to the effectual working of faith. Just as love is a fundamental prerequisite to getting your faith to produce results, sin is also a fundamental condition for failure in practically every aspect of a believer's pilgrim walk. It nullifies all acts of righteousness. God says,

THE LAW OF FAITH

When I shall say to the righteous that he shall surely live; if he turns from his own righteousness and commits iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered.

Ezekiel 33:13

A man steps into sin, as soon as he steps out of the fear of God. For as long as a man is walking in the fear of God, he cannot at the same time be walking in sin. Paul said in Galatians 2:17, “*But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin?*” The answer is obvious: “*God forbid.*” No matter how great faith a believer has, God cannot justify him if he continues to dabble in sin. It is written, “*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy*” (Proverbs 28:13).

A major cause of sin in a believer's life is lack

of attention to the Word of God. The Word has cleansing power. Jesus said, “*Ye are now clean by the word that I have spoken to you.*” A believer who has no time for the Word has no time to live a clean life. John said,

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin for His (God’s) seed remaineth in him.

1John 3:9

The seed is the Word of God, and the Word is light. If you give room to the seed in your life, sin cannot stay because darkness cannot comprehend light.

Read Deuteronomy 28:1-13 for yourself. These are wonderful blessings under the Abrahamic covenant that are available to every believer, through his faith. But sin in the believer wipes off everything and in their place are substituted terrible curses. Paul said in 2

THE LAW OF FAITH

Corinthians 6:17, “*Come out from among them (the rebellious generation) and be ye separate...and touch not the unclean thing.*”

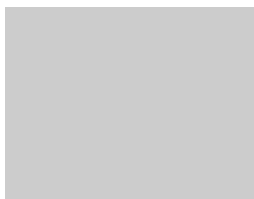
The unclean thing ranges from the smallest lie to murder. Every sin is sin, no matter how small or great it may be in the eyes of man. God can never be tempted with sin because He has purer eyes than to behold evil. The exhortation is:

Having therefore these promises (the blessings of Abraham), let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

2 Corinthians 7:1

So, we discover here that another gateway to the effectual working of faith is the purification of self through the Word. Remember Eli, the priest of the Lord's temple in Shiloh. His children's flagrant violation of the temple's ordinances, coupled with their father's connivance moved God to break His promises

with him. *“Be it far from Me”,* said God, *“for them that honour Me, I will honour, and them that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed”* (1 Samuel 2:30).



Chapter 10

Essential Supplements To Faith: Gladness To Serve

Finally, the believer should not forget to add to his faith, a willingness and gladness of heart to serve the Lord, in whatever role he or she may be called upon to play. It could be in the area of witnessing, singing, and help to others - especially the needy or any other activity that furthers the spread of the gospel or the edification of the body. Jesus told the Pharisees and scribes that the greatest commandment is to:

Love the Lord thy God with all they heart, and with all thy soul, and with all they mind, and with al they strength.

Mark 12:30

This statement speaks clearly to every believer that the totality of his being must be surrendered to God for His use. It is true that our salvation does not depend on our works, either for God or for man. But we must not forget that we have been saved unto good works. We have not been saved to become idle, awaiting our eventual call to glory. No! If the Kingdom of God is a matter of bread and butter, I believe everybody would get saved, without even being preached to. After all, the prime motive behind the endeavours of man, is his desire to achieve comfort, peace and prosperity.

If Christianity is just saying, "Hey Presto" for goodies to fall from heaven like ripe mangoes, I am sure there would not be enough room in

the churches to contain people. But the Bible has not said that. Instead, we are enjoined to be partakers of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God (2 Timothy 1:8).

The importance of serving God with willingness and gladness of heart is further underscored in Deuteronomy 28:47-48. It says,

Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things: therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger and in thirst and in nakedness and in want of all things: and He shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck until He hath destroyed thee.

You can pray all the prayer of faith, but if you have no joyful attitude towards the service of the Master, you will end up disappointed. You will serve your enemies. Your afflictions will

continue to multiply.

For those who are serving in the vineyard, it is dangerous to complain, murmur and grumble. Such attitude will rob the believer of his reward and even heap curses upon him. The Bible says,

But since ye say, The burden of the lord; therefore thus saith the Lord; Because ye say this word, The burden of the Lord, and I have sent unto you, saying, ye shall not say the burden of the Lord; Therefore behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, ... and cast you out of My presence.

Jeremiah 23:38-39

Be willing and glad, therefore, to be involved in God's work as a privilege and not a burden. Stop complaining and murmuring. Cultivate a single-minded vision of endearing yourself to your Maker, by going all the length you can with

Him according to the ability He has granted you. If it is witnessing, do it to save souls who would otherwise perish. If it is singing praises, sing with all your heart. If it is interceding for others, do it with love, taking upon yourself their afflictions. If it is giving, give cheerfully, not counting the cost. Remember that every single act of goodness, no matter how small, carries great rewards in the present age, and in the age to come.

May the Lord bless and help you to turn a new page in your faith life.