

I. GOD CALLS US TO LIVE OUR LIVES NOT BY WHAT WE SEE AROUND US (HEB. 11:6)

- A. Everything in the Christian life is by faith. Salvation, prayer, gifts of the Holy Spirit.

2 Cor. 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Rom 14:23 ...for whatever is not from faith is sin.

- B. What is faith? Simply it means: to believe, to trust. And if you really believe it, and trust, then you will act in accordance with what you believe. The Bible says it, I believe it, that settles it.

Now faith is the substance (assurance) of things hoped for, the evidence (conviction, proof) of things not seen (Heb. 11:1).

- C. Faith is believing and trusting in God and His Word (both “logos” and “rhema”) that results in actions that are consistent with that belief.

II. 5 HINDERANCES TO HEARING GOD AND LIVING BY FAITH.

- A. Having a “works” mentality. I need to fast and pray more before God can release spiritual gifts in me. If you think you can earn God’s gifts, then you will not feel worthy much of the time. “I don’t feel **worthy**. I’m a sinner, so God wouldn’t do that for me.” God works miracles in our midst because we believe, not because of our works.

***Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?** ⁶ Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." (Gal. 3:5-6 NIV)*

- B. Lack of Biblical teaching and truth.

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word (“rhema” – the spoken, present word) of God (Rom. 10:17).

And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples ² he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."... ⁵ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied(Acts 19:1-2, 5-6).

- C. Wrong examples in the past. E.g. if people think Christians are weird, etc., will not want to get saved. See weird example of gifts of HS, will not want to have anything to do with them. Do not look at man or you will never progress in your faith. Fix your eyes on the Lord.

- D. Fear. Not being convinced in your heart of God’s goodness. We must step outside of our comfort zone and tradition. We need to follow God in His Word, not your own religion.

Luke 11:13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

E. Expecting God to do what you are called to do. You need to obey. God will “zap me” or move “sovereignly upon me” if He wants to do something. No, we need to cooperate with Him. Trust and obey. No other way.

F. I do not need to wait for God to take away my pain, my depression, make me healthy and wealthy. God’s grace is sufficient for us.

2 Cor. 12:9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

III. 7 APPLICATIONS: GROWING IN FAITH TO HEAR FROM GOD

A. Expect to hear from the Lord. God will not force it on you. God will speak to **you!**

Luke 18:17 "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Acts 2:17-18 And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.

B. You have to desire it. Burn with zeal and desire for it.

Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with Tongues (1 Cor 14:39)

C. Listen. Pay attention to God. Put up your spiritual antennas. Stop and listen. Then you will hear (1 Sam. 3:10). Get rid of distractions. Make space so that you can listen to God. Be still and know (Ps. 46:10).

Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears." (1 Sam 3:10)

D. Value God’s eternal Word. His eternal, unchanging voice. Expect the Lord to speak to you through the Bible (words of the verse, or the “address”). Heb. 4:12.

E. Get around people who hear God. Prophets and people with prophetic gifts are given by Jesus to the church to help people hear from the Lord (Eph. 4:11-12).

F. Be filled with God’s love (1 Cor. 14:1)

Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy (1 Cor. 14:1)

G. Grow in faith. Start where you are. Don’t be afraid to take a risk. You must grow in the grace that God release to you. Don’t let the process of growth discourage you. Your faith will increase. Start small. It will grow.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith (Rom 12:6)