

Faith

By Mpho Thulo (Part 5)

So then faith [cometh] by hearing,
and hearing by the word of God
(Romans 10:17)



Being born from a black South African race, I could swear that I am just like the typical Gentile nations mentioned in the Bible. As far as I can remember we did go to church and came back to also worship our tradition. I remember trying on my own understanding and knowledge to sum up all these practices together. Really it didn't make sense and it wasn't something that was open for discussion, I mean no black man or woman can actually sit down with older people to try to understand this set up or point of view, it feels like a curse and rebellion against ancestors and forefathers, and for this reason we all followed suit, "the ways of our forefathers". When you start to exercise your faith by leaning on God and not your own understanding, His spirit will begin to show you things on a new level and will bring you to wholeness. Our black society here in South Africa and Africa needs to know the true faith. What I've also realized as I grow in my faith in Christ is that there will be a time when I will have to defend my faith. Where I would meet wise man and woman who have the

wisdom of this world and are very inspirational, but if I do not know the foundation of my faith I will shy away and be bombarded by their ideologies, philosophies and cultural belief systems.

A church is where we learn about our faith and if the doctrine of the church doesn't align with the foundation that was laid by Jesus in recognizing His church then we are still lost. We will reach for other things and secular beliefs to enhance our church tradition the same way the 7 churches had done in the book of Revelation and also in the Old Testament where the children of God started to worship idols, made sacrificial offerings for idols and the gods of the Amorites and other foreign gods. This happened because the doctrine was wrong and twisted and other ministers added their own doctrines to the original Doctrine of God preached by apostles of Christ.

People lost their true worship and faith because the Book of the Law was no longer read

in the assembly and this caused a drift between man and God. We have so-called Christian churches that recognize our traditional norms and cultures that still practise animal sacrifices and consult with dead spirits and river gods. If our very own preachers and ministers still uphold the ways that was prohibited by the Word of God, then what does this mean to the foundation of the true church that was structured by Christ? Every church must preach the true doctrine of the Bible, the church should resemble the church that the ancient Christians built, the church that recognizes Christ as its only foundation.

"Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means 'rock'), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it" (Matthew 16:18)

The church that upholds Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is the true Church. The mixture of tradition and church services does not form part of His Will.



Here is example taken from the Bible of faithful servants of God

- Abraham, the Father of our Faith. When God tested Abraham's faithfulness to Him by asking him to sacrifice his son Isaac, he did not waiver even though what God asked him was painful and heavy. He believed that that in the end he will return with Isaac by his side.

We come along tests like these in our lives where God asks us to do something that is outrageous in our eyes or even a fear of ours. When I started to hear God I had to be faithful to Him even when I couldn't understand why. I had to do what He asked me to do and the result is to mature in faith. In the case of Abraham we learn that faith desires an action on our part. He went to the mountain of Moriah and was going to be faithful to God and he received what he was trusting in God for.

- When Moses was called to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, the Lord required him to go to Egypt to face pharaoh and deliver the children of God. So in this scripture reference we see that Moses was doing what He was called to do.

- In a nutshell, in the call of the Lord it takes faith to do what you are called to do. Moses could have been fearful to return back to pharaoh and own up to what he did when he killed the Egyptian, he could have chosen not to go back to Egypt, I am sure he thought of many reasons to not to go, but faith overruled his circumstances. When God calls you He expects you to do the natural.

If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you.

- We also see faith in Christ Jesus where He endured the death on the cross, He could have well said "no Father, I have done enough, I have preached, healed the sick, restored the broken-hearted and delivered the captives...", but His faithfulness to God made Him strong enough to go on and face all kinds of tests and tribulations knowing in His heart that it will all work together for the good of all mankind and that God's Will be done.

Faith means I am going to do what the spirit has revealed to me, regardless of how my circumstances of life may be. Heed your call regardless of your educational background, your past or your denomination, because when you are faithful to God it means you trust that He will come through for you. It will be futile to proclaim faith when our actions do not mirror our beliefs. So take that leap of faith and step into the unknown because the call of God is bigger than we can see or imagine. Trust in God to provide for your journey.

Our faith should not be based on things like maitlamo or dithapo (binding/beads), and animal skin bands and snakes skin bands like it is

taught in our Ukuthwasa beliefs. These beliefs shift our focus and deter our beliefs. Instead of believing and trusting in God, we start believing in earthly things and the power which we believe they have.

Sin, Faith, Duty

Jesus said to his disciples: "Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come. It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. So watch yourselves."

"If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them."

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you."

"Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? Won't he rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'" (Luke 17:1-10 NIV)