

A Different Perspective
Having Faith That Moves Mountains (4)
09-25-5
You Can Definitely Try This at Home

Yesterday on the program, we were talking about the fact that our thoughts can destroy us. Truly they can. We get all caught up in negative "gloom and doom" type thinking and before you know it, that's what we're living out. We close off the possibility that God's in this place. We close off the reality that He loves us. He close of the reality that He can and will step in, in ways that we can't even dream of.

In fact my experience is that so often he steps in ways that if some Scriptwriter in Hollywood wrote it up as a movie script, they'd laugh him out of town because it's so impossible, ridiculous, improbable – things just don't happen like that ... that's unless of course, we have God showing up in our lives.

And we looked at what Jesus said as to how we can be blinded by looking through faithless eyes instead of eyes of faith. He said:

The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!
(Matthew 6:22,23)

Today we're going to look at a solution to this. Because this faith thing isn't some theory lesson. It's about God's grace really making a difference in our lives. Especially in those dark spots.

If our vision is clear then the light can get in. But if not, we end up in darkness. It robs us of the light. But it's the very last bit of what Jesus says here that is the most damning:

If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

In other words if what's going on in you is darkness, but you think that it is still light – boy are you in some serious trouble. This strikes right at the heart of this issue. We go on through life thinking that somehow we're right, and everyone is wrong. It's everybody else that's got the problem, not me. The negative thoughts cloud our vision and our darkness is as light to us. In other words, we're kidding ourselves. We think we're fine when in fact what's going on inside us is darkness.

And so we live our lives in darkness never realising there is such a better way of living. Isn't that frightening? What a waste of a life. The solution however is simple. So simple, I'm embarrassed to tell you that it wasn't entirely obvious to me. I sort of knew, but not in a way that made me aware of my negative thoughts and empowered me to do something about them.

Here it is. Hold on to your hat. Here it comes. Every time we have a negative thought, we consciously and deliberately replace it with a positive one. And the best positive thoughts of all are what God says about us in the Bible. Let me give you just three examples:

Negative Thought Number 1: *I can't possibly put up with my husband for another minute!* That could be replaced with:

Positive Thought Number 1: *Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands so that, even if some of them do not obey the word they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. (1 Peter 3:1,2)*

Solution Number 1: Do you see what just happened here? The negative thought will drive a behaviour of isolation. The negative thought will chill relations further. The negative thought is the pathway to divorce. Now replace it with the positive thought – right from God's Word. It offers a solution. God's solution. Henpecking doesn't work, but a woman has the power to change her man's heart and his behaviour by who she is. When this woman chooses to believe that thought over her negative one, she is in effect putting her faith in God's Word. She hopes in God's Word. She quietly, expectantly waits for God to renew her strength. The negative thought would end in destruction. The positive thought opens up the way to the solution. Which one is better do you think?

Negative Thought Number 2: *How could that guy possibly do that?* That could be replaced with:

Positive Thought Number 2: *Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbor, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' while the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbour's eye. (Matthew 7:1-5)*

Solution Number 2: The negative thought will never lead to a solution to the problem. The positive thought – the word of God, Jesus own word - calls this man to see and think clearly. What have I done to contribute to this situation? Maybe that other guy has something else going on in his life that’s causing him to behave this way. Now, what can I do to help?

Negative Thought Number 3: *I can’t make this phone call. I’m not made for selling. These people are never going to buy anything from me. I’m sick of being rejected.* This could be replaced with:

Positive Thought Number 3: *Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.* (Luke 6:38) Well, I’m a giver. That verse is for me.

Solution Number 3: Fear immobilises. God blesses. And when this salesperson believes that God is in the blessing business, it changes his or her behaviour. It gives them the quiet confidence to believe that God has already gone ahead, that God has seen their secret giving and the rest belongs to Him.

Do you see what’s going on here? This is about putting faith to work. This is where the rubber hits the road. The moment a negative thought comes to attack our confidence, we replace it with a positive one. And not just something we dreamed up. The Word of God. The Truth. Because when we know the truth, when we put it to work in our lives, it sets us free - it works.

It’s time to wake up to this. Faith is this – faith is choosing to believe God’s Word over and above our circumstances. Irrespective of how daunting, fearful and overwhelming those circumstances may appear. It is a deliberate choice to believe.

And then when we believe, it is about doing God’s Word. Letting it replace the negative thought and then acting on it. Because there’s one thing for certain. If we retain the negative thought we will act on it. The wife will isolate her husband. The man will beat up on the other guy at work (idiot that he is!). The salesperson will remain immobilised in their fear and not make any sales.

We act on our negative thoughts! Isn’t that a wakeup call?! Faith has two parts. Believing and doing. Sometimes, that “doing” standing still and letting God do His part. That’s still doing! And unless we act on the faith, it never moves mountains. In fact, faith without works is dead!

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you?

If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead....But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. (James 2:14f)

Faith is something we live out. Faith is something we activate. We go and we do it and we live in faith and you know what happens? It moves mountains.