

Topic : Developing Our Spirit of Faith

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I. Introduction

1. Living in the End-Times.

Isaiah 60:1-3 Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

We are living in the end-times. Isaiah 60:1-3 tells us that darkness will increase as we have seen now the increase of immorality and wickedness. But we should not be discouraged as the same verses tell us that as darkness increases, the light in the church will get brighter and brighter. As the salt and light of the world, we are responsible in our homes, nation and wherever we are placed by God to shine and glorify Him. As darkness increase, there will be false doctrines creeping into the church. A false doctrine is a truth that is pushed to its extreme. Here are 4 examples of false doctrines:

- A. Universalism – says that God is so merciful and gracious that everybody will be saved.
- B. Hyper Prosperity Gospel – reduces having prosperity to a formula where you name it and claim it and over focusing on the physical / financial realm
- C. Hyper Calvinism – says since God has pre-determined who shall be saved, there is no need for evangelism and missions
- D. Hyper Grace – says since all our sins will be forgiven, there is no need to confess our sins and we can lead our lives in any way we want

Hence in BBTC, we will preach the full counsel of God. When we talk about the grace of God, we will also talk about holiness. When we talk about the mercy and goodness of God, we will also cover repentance from sins.

Alongside false doctrines, there will also be offences within the church as described in Matthew 24:12 because of offences, the love of many will grow cold. An offended person is unable to process his offences in a biblical manner – he is immature. There is a book by Francis Frangipane called “Unoffendable”. Our mission statement is: “To share Christ as we mature in Him”. As we mature in Him, we must become increasingly “Unoffendable”.

2. Living in a Fallen World.

John 16:33 *These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*"

We are living in the times of birth pangs as we observe the situations in Egypt, Syria and as we experience extreme weather conditions, viruses (e.g. MERS-CoV virus in the Middle East), conflicts, etc. However Jesus re-assures us that while we live in the end times and in a fallen world, in Him we will have His shalom peace.

Numbers 14:24 *But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.*

In the story of the 12 spies in Numbers 14, all 12 of them saw the land flowing with milk and honey. However 10 of them saw the giants in the land while the other 2 with the different spirit saw the God who has given them their promised land. In life, as we go through trials and difficult situations, what do you see? This message is about developing a spirit of faith to go the long haul for God as we go through life.

II. How To develop Our Spirit of Faith?

2 Corinthians 4:13 *And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak ...*

1. Develop a biblical worldview of life and issues of life.

To develop our Spirit of Faith, there are 3 points to note. The first is to develop a biblical worldview of life and issues of life. We see this example through the Christians in Berea in Acts 17.

Acts 17:11 *These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*

In issues we encounter and bother us, we need to study the Word of God and develop a biblical perspective to them, to look at them through the lens of Scriptures. SP was astounded by some political websites that are foul-mouthed and simply slamming the government. There are some things we see on the internet and social media that defiles us. If we want to look at life, politics and economics, why not view them through the perspective from the Bible?

Below are some ways to help us develop a biblical worldview of life and issues of life.

- A. We must believe the Word to enlighten us to build faith. Scriptures are only of value to us to the degree we believe and act on them.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- B. To believe, we must hear the Word of Faith i.e. Rhema - Revelation.

Romans 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

- C. To hear the Word of Faith [Rhema], we must regularly partake the Logos of the Word

Here are some ways we can partake the Word of faith regularly:

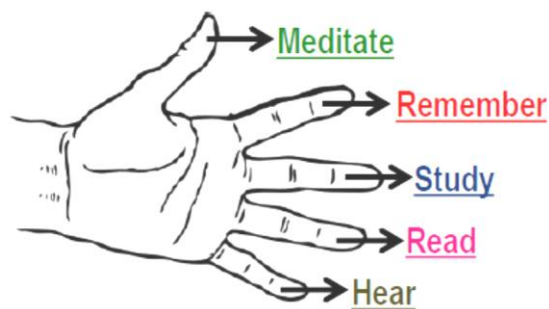


- D. We must take personal responsibility for our own spiritual life and growth.

As a young believer, we may need someone to help us learn how to read the bible and do our quiet time with God. However for those who have been believers for some time. We need to learn how to feed ourselves spiritually from the word of God. As Elder Lok has shared last Sunday, we need to learn to 'Qavah', where we intertwine our life with God.

For example, when we come into a worship service, we learn to be in the presence of God, to be spiritually refreshed, washed by waves and waves of the love of God. Every week when we come to the Worship Service, don't come as a spectator; come as a worshipper of God.

- E. Five Ways we partake the Word of God.



Read – Revelation says blessed are those who read the Word of God

Remember - To remember is not to memorize. It is to remember the truths and precepts of the Scriptures and to learn to articulate it in your own words. In this way, these truths will remain with you for life.

Study – To investigate and to find out. Learn Scripture with the posture of teaching or sharing it to somebody else.

Meditate – Like a cow chewing grass, we ‘chew’ on the Word of God until it gets into our spirit.

- F. The Rhema comes at Kairos moments in our journey along the Chronos of life.

Kairos moments are ‘God moments’ where revelation occurs as the Holy Spirit downloads a message from God to the Spirit of Man.

Hebrews 8:10 *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

- G. Rhema is personal to the believer who receives the revelation.

- H. When you hear someone else’s rhema, it is mere information to you.

As SP preaches this message, he is sharing his Rhema that the LORD has taught him. How does we make SP’s Rhema our Rhema as we hear? For each of us, we have different concerns in finance, marriage, health, ministry, etc. God knows our concerns and will take the message and unpack it for personal applications in our concerns and situations. If our posture is right, we will catch something from God through the message.

2. Find theological anchors.

The second point is to find theological anchors. An anchor is a very heavy cast iron lowered to the seabed to steady the ship amidst the waves. A theological anchor will steady you in the sea of life from the trials of life. SP likens these trials to be in a dark tunnel where there is no light or in a valley where there is no perspective. In such situations, we need to find something in God that will anchor us. It can be rooted in the character of God such as His faithfulness, or His promises as we see in 2 Peter 1:3-4.

2 Peter 1:3-4 *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

How do we find these theological anchors? It is the spirit of faith. **It is the principle of believing and speaking the Word of God.**

2 Corinthians 4:13 *And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak ...*

A. Our faith in God anchors us through the Trials of Life.

1 John 5:4-5 *For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

1 Peter 1:6-7 *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ*

SP shared real life examples of parents whose children are suffering from diseases, believers in their 40s who have yet to find life partners. In these examples, there is a chasm between the promises of God and the reality of their experiences. For them, they need theological anchors to fasten themselves to the word of God to see them through until there is light at the end of their dark tunnel.

B. We grow our faith by regularly speaking forth what we believe.

2 Corinthians 1:20 *For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God. (NIV)*

The promises are not effective until we say 'amen', to act upon the promises of God. These promises are to be appropriated as we agree with the Word of God. We need to keep claiming and standing upon the promises of God.

C. Speaking forth the Word is a range of verbal activities:



Proverbs 18:21 *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit*

- D. We must hold everything in life loosely. We must hold very tightly to the Word of God and our relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 3:1 *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus ..*

Hebrews 4:14 *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*

Hebrews 10:23 *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful*

3. Build faith convictions out of a vibrant relationship with God.

The third point is to build convictions out of a vibrant relationship with God. This is where God comes though for you and where there is light at the end of the dark tunnel.

As an example, SP shared his faith conviction of God’s protection that he will not die before his due time. While this may sound arrogant, it is not premised on himself but the Word of God and his experience with the Holy Spirit. Another faith conviction for SP is in the area of provision as SP sees God coming through for him generously time and again. We need to develop our own faith convictions out of our own relationship with God.

- A. As we experience God coming through for us, our faith rests on the power of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:4 *And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

John 15:7 *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.*

- B. Faith Convictions based on Psalm 23

Psalms 23 gives us 7 redemptive names of God out of which there are 7 faith convictions.

7 Faith Convictions	7 Redemptive names in Psalm 23
1. I am very deeply loved by God in Christ. <i>(Romans 5:8; John 3:16)</i>	1. He is my Jehovah- Rohi who loved me and gave His life for me. <i>Verse 1 - The LORD is my shepherd</i>

2. I have the Peace of Christ guarding my heart and my mind. (<i>Romans 8:1; Philipians 4:6-7</i>)	2. He is my Jehovah- Shalom the LORD, My Peace. <i>Verse 2 - he leads me beside quiet waters</i>
3. I am the Righteousness of God in Christ. (2 <i>Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 1:9</i>)	3. He is my Jehovah- Tsidkenu the LORD, My Righteousness <i>Verse 3 - He guides me along the right paths</i>
4. I am complete in Christ who supplies all I need. (<i>Colossians 2:10; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Peter 1:3-4</i>)	4. He is my Jehovah- Jireh the LORD, will provide. <i>Verse 1 - I lack nothing</i>
5. I walk in divine healing, health and life in Christ. (<i>1 Peter 2:24; Proverbs 3:8; 4:22</i>)	5. He is my Jehovah- Rapha the LORD who heals. <i>Verse 3 - he restores my soul</i>
6. I have Christ with me always. (<i>Matthew 1:23; Hebrews 13:5b</i>)	6. He is my Jehovah- Shammah the LORD who is always there with me. <i>Verse 4 - for you are with me</i>
7. I am always victorious in Christ. (2 <i>Corinthians 2:14; Colossians 1:27</i>)	7. He is my Jehovah- Nissi the LORD, my Banner of Victory. <i>Verse 5 - You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.</i>

Conclusions

1 Samuel 3:19 *The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground.*

Today's message is for all of us. If you are in a dark tunnel, you need that biblical worldview and theological anchors to see you through. If you are walking fine with God and not going through trials, you need faith convictions to bring us to another level of faith, glory, strength and grace.

END

Question

1. What are some things that challenge your faith as we live in the end times in this fallen world?
2. What are some things you do on a regular basis to partake the Word of God?
3. Share of a personal Rhema Word that you have received from God.
4. What are some theological anchors that you have pertaining God's nature or promises?
5. How do you regularly speak forth the Word of God to build your faith?
6. What faith convictions have you developed out of your relationship with God?