

Examples of Faith

By: Walter Wilson

Wilson:

When you get on a bus, it's by faith. Every time you get on a train or an airplane, you're going by faith. When you sit down at the table to eat, it's by faith. You believe the food is all right. Every time you sit down on something, it's by faith.

You believe it will hold you up. We live by faith. The banker does business by faith. He has faith in the man that he lends the money to. Now, in the Bible, God makes a great deal of faith.

And I want you to notice, if you will, that faith comes before experience. Let me show you how this is. In Matthew nine uh verse two, there was a man brought to Jesus who had the palsy. And this man, you remember, was let down through the roof into the presence of Jesus. And we read, when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the sick of the palsy, son, be of good cheer.

Now, the man was still sick of the palsy when Jesus said it, he was still in his sins when Jesus said it, he was still helpless on his cot, because you remember that four different men carried him to get him to Jesus. He wasn't able to walk. And he was still in all of this trouble and weakness and sickness when Jesus said to him, son, be of good cheer.

Now, unless the man was a dumbbell or fool, he would believe Christ Jesus, wouldn't he? That is, if he believed in the Savior at all, he would have accepted that message and at once became

happy in his spirit and in his soul, in his heart. Now, nothing had happened to him yet, and yet he was told to be of good cheer. Now, faith believes God. Faith takes God at his word before any experience of deliverance or blessing takes place.

He was still sick of the palsy. He was still in his sins. He was still helpless and hopeless. He'd been trying his best, I suppose, with the various men of that day the healing men, the doctors.

And yet he wasn't well, so along comes this lovely man, this lonely man, this strange man, and he says to him, son, be of good cheer. Now, he hadn't seen anything happen, just like in the case of Abraham. You remember God said to Abraham when he looked up at the stars, so shall I see be my my just think of it.

He didn't have any children, and he was past age, and his wife was past age. And yet here he was being told he was going to have children like the stars of the heaven, well faith believes God without any evidence and without any experience. And then Jesus said to him, thy sins be forgiven thee. Well, no wonder. Here's a man who believed the word of Jesus.

Though he was helpless. And though he saw no way out, though he tried every kind of remedy, I suppose, and then along comes this strange man, this unusual man says, son, be of good cheer. Thy sins be forgiven thee. Well, that's faith. And beloved, you ask your heart do you rejoice before the deliverance or do you just rejoice after the deliverance?

Do you rejoice in the word of our Lord? And before anything takes place, before you're brought out of your difficulty and trouble, well, you ask your heart about it because that's what happened in this case. Now, there's another case in Matthew 14, verse 27 where the disciples rent a boat out in the storm. It occurs also in Mark 6:50. It's the same incident.

And there the disciples were rowing and working against the wind and the waves. What a time they were having. And then Jesus came walking on the water and he said, Be of good cheer. It is I. Be not afraid.

Well, now, the storm was still raging and the boat was still tossing and the waves were still slopping over into the boat. And these men were still in their fear, the fear of drowning. How come that before the storm stopped and before the deliverance came they were told to be of good cheer. It is I. Well, now, suppose it was I.

The storm was still raging. The wind was still boisterous and blowing and the water was getting in the boat. Yet he said, Be of good cheer, it is I. Nothing had stopped yet the storm was still on. The boat was still in danger of sinking.

When he said, Be a good cheer, it is I. Wonder beloved if you would have done that. Would you get a good cheer while the water was still coming into the boat and the storm was still raging and the lightning, the thunder and the storm was on, the wind was boisterous, I wonder if you'd be of good cheer. Or would you wait until it was all over and then be of good cheer. Remember we

read over in James beloved, count it all joy when you fall in to diverse temptations, not when you crawl out.

Anybody can be of good cheer when you crawl out. But these were told to be a good cheer when they fell in. You see, this is a matter of faith again. And the Lord Jesus was looking to see whether they really believed him. Would they take him at his word?

He didn't say, Now I'm going to stop the storm. He didn't say, I'm going to calm the wind and the waves. He didn't promise them anything. He just said, Be of good cheer. It is I.

You see, his presence is salvation. That's all that's necessary just to know that he's there. He had told them to go over to the other side of the lake. He didn't say, Go to the bottom of the lake. And so they evidently must have believed him.

They were toiling and sweating and rowing and afraid of sinking when they heard these comforting words come from that wonderful person be of good cheer. It is I, because I'm here, you don't need to be afraid of anything. Isn't it strange, beloved, that when folks get in trouble so often, they never think about Jesus at all? That's especially true of unsaved people. When they get in trouble about their sins, they think of the Church, and they think of baptism, and they think of religion, and they think of being good, and they think of confession and lots of things religious.

But they don't think of Him, that he can do anything. Isn't it strange? The human heart doesn't want the Lord Jesus at all. And here they were out there and they saw Him walking on the water. They saw Him there in the midst of the storm.

And I suppose that they thought he'd go down with them, that he was going to sink also. Well, if they had known Him as they should have known Him, by this time they would have known that he was the conqueror of the wind and the waves and the storm. But somehow or other they didn't. He had to tell them, be of good cheer. It is I.

And so when they saw who it was we don't read that even then they felt at ease and at peace. Even after he told them who he was, they still evidently were afraid and toiling and rolling. And then after he calmed the wind and the waves. And by the way, that was two different miracles, being able to stop the wind. Sometimes, in fact, always when the wind stops, the waves keep on rolling.

Well, he stopped both of them, both the wind and the waves. So he had two miracles there. Then they worshiped Him after that, after it was all over. Well, who wouldn't? Anybody can worship after it's all over.

Anyone can have peace after the storm is made to calm, after the trouble is finished. Who wouldn't? Unless he is a very ingracious, ungracious man. But don't you see, beloved, the Lord Jesus always calms the person before he calms the storm. He always brings good cheer to the mind and heart before he produces the miracle.

But we want it the other way. We are such people of unbelief that we say, well, I'll praise God after the storm is over and after the serious illness is helped and the person gets well, then we'll praise the Lord. But that isn't what this is talking about. This is talking about being of good cheer before the thing has stopped, before the storms ceases, before the wind becomes a calm, before the waves stop rolling and getting into the boat. Well, you see, that's faith.

Faith believes the Lord. You get another wonderful case of it in the fourth chapter of John, where a centurion came down to see Jesus and asked the Savior to go up to Capernaum and see his boy who was very sick nigh unto death. And Jesus said to him, except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. Well, that's true. I've seen that.

I saw that just last week when a woman came all the way from a distant city to see me about her soul's welfare and she couldn't feel that she was saved. I said, My dear lady, you never will feel that you're saved till after you are saved. You want the feelings first before God saves you. And it took me the longest time to prove to her that she had to take Christ at his word without any evidence or feelings or an explosion inside of her or seeing a ball of fire or having some strange, wonderful experience. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God not by any explosion or any unusual experience or the vision of something remarkable without anything at all.

And so Jesus said to this man, except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. Then the man, seeing what Jesus was getting at, said lord, you just speak the word and I'll believe you.

And Jesus said, Go thy way, thy son liveth. And he believed Jesus and turned right around and started back. There was 42 miles back to Capernaum.

And as he went the next day, it was quite a ways and they had to go on donkeys or camels and all slow. As he went, the next day his servants met him. They were on their way down to get him, to tell them to come on back home. And they said, Why, the boy is well. Oh is that so? When did he get well?

They said, yesterday at the 7th hour. The fever left him. And then it says, the man believed. Well, now, it said in the previous verse that he believed. How come he believed twice?

Well, I'll tell you, the first was the belief of faith. He believed the Lord Jesus without any evidence at all. Then the next day when he got the evidence, he believed again. He believed from the evidence. Well, it's always that way in our own experience with the Lord.

First you take him at his word. Then afterwards, when you see the results of it, you believe. Because you realize that you feel it you experience it. Well, here is this man walking on the water, this lovely God Man, Christ Jesus. And he said, Be of good cheer, it is I.

And so when the storm was calm, then they worshiped him. Isn't it nice that he doesn't treat us like we deserve? Why wouldn't he say sometimes, well, if you don't believe me, go on your own way and paddle your own canoe. I'm through with you. But he doesn't do that.

He's very sweet and kind. And in the case of these men in the boat, he calmed the storm anyway and he calmed the wind and the waves anyway. And they reached their desired haven safely.

Well, the Lord wants us to believe him, take him at his word without any evidence of any kind, just believe what he says. And when he said to this man, this sick of the palsy man in Matthew nine two, thy sins be forgiven thee.

Rise, take up thy bed and walk. He believed the Lord Jesus, and he rose with a jump, I imagine, and leaped and praised God, my, my, the dear man. He'd been helpless and now he's just filled with radiance because he met Jesus. Beloved, you take him his word, you too will be delivered from your troubles. Now he doesn't say he'll stop the trouble always, but he does say, you'll be of good cheer.

And then you can know very well he's going to deliver you from your troubles. Now, in John 16:33 read, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Now here they were in a country that hated the Lord Jesus. Among the people that despised the Lord Jesus, he was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. Yet he said, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Well, he hadn't overcome those scribes and Pharisees. Apparently they were still hateful. In fact, they were bent on killing him. And they did kill him. What do you suppose the disciples thought when Jesus said, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Why, they could look around and say, well, what world? This one certainly isn't overcome. But you see, beloved, our Lord is talking about their souls and their hearts. They could be in the midst of an antagonistic world, and yet that world have no effect on them at all. Never bother them a bit, just go on their way, singing, serving and dying for Him, with their hearts at peace and their souls at rest.

You see, we are in the midst of an antagonistic world still. All around us are those that hate the Lord Jesus. All around us are those that have no interest in Christ, don't want Christ, don't want his church, don't want his word, don't want anything that he has. Just want to live in sin and lust and having a good time and make money and keep well as possible and having a good time in the world with no Jesus and no Savior what the Lord says about his children, you be of good cheer.

I've overcome the world. Don't let it bother you a bit. The judgment day is coming by and by, and every single person is going to stand alone before the Lord Jesus and be judged by Him. He's the Judge, the Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment under the Son. So just take your time, just abide a while.

And after a while you're going to see the enemies of God bow the knee to Jesus Christ and confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Every knee shall bow every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. So don't you worry, beloved. If men hate you because you belong to Christ, if men reject you because you're righteous, if men refuse to have anything to do with you because you want to be a good person, well, just let it

pass. In due time, he's going to take those very people, make them bow their knees to the Lord Jesus and acknowledge that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Then there's another case in Acts 27, verse 25. Paul was in a storm on a ship and they'd been having quite a bit of trouble. They'd thrown over all the cargo and they had thrown over a lot of the tackles that were heavy and big ropes. They'd gotten rid of everything that was movable that they could get rid of and it looked as though they were going to all be killed. Then Paul said something.

You know, it's wonderful to say things that are worth writing down for other people to read and remember. Did you ever say anything, beloved, that's worth saving for 100 years? Did you ever say anything that was worth other people reading years afterwards and in foreign countries?

Well, Paul did. He said, Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God.

It's wonderful to be around somebody that believes God. That's a blessed thing. If you know somebody that believes God you associate with that fella or that woman, they're worth it, and they'll give peace to your heart. And when you get in trouble, they're the ones that you'll go to and confide in and want them to pray for you and say things that will be a blessing. Never choose your companions among those that hate God and do not believe him.

Well, here was this man on this ship and he said, Sirs, be of good cheer. Now, the storm was raging and that ship was being tossed about like a cork. Why, they had no control over it. They'd thrown the tackles overboard. They couldn't do a thing with it.

And they even let the boats over because the soldiers wanted to get off in these boats. And Paul made them cut the ropes and let those boats fall into the sea. He says, Unless you all stay in this ship, you'll all perish. You can't let a single one of you go. You must all stay right here.

Soldiers and passengers and prisoners and the crewmen, you must all stay on this boat, sirs. See how polite he was? Wasn't that nice to talk to his superiors like that? But he was a prisoner, you see, and he called other prisoners and the crew men and all of them, sirs. It always pays to be polite and kind and considerate of others and of their feelings, sirs, be of good cheer.

He didn't say, Be of good cheer because we're going to be saved he said, Be of good cheer, because I believe God. That's wonderful, isn't it? You don't know many people that believe God do you? Do you know very many among all the Christians, for instance, that you know? Do you know many of them that really believe God?

Or do they wring their hands and sit up all night and walk the floor and say, why did this have to happen to me? And how am I ever going to get through tomorrow? The bank said they're going to foreclose on the mortgage and we'll be sitting out in the street with our stuff on the sidewalk and we're going to die in the poor house. Do you ever hear anything like that from a Christian? I have.

I tell you, I've seen it. And then death comes suddenly, a heart attack, and your sweetheart is taken away from you suddenly. Well, are you going to say, sir, be of good cheer, for I believe

God. Now, you look at the trouble this man was in when he said that. He was in a ship that was helpless, tossed in the wind and the waves and the storm, and with no chance to be saved, all hope was gone, says so.

And these men were sailors. They'd been in storms before now, they've seen all kinds of trouble on the oceans, on the Mediterranean Sea, I suppose and I won't tell you that's, a big body of water. And here they were, tossed around here and there like a cork. And yet this single man in the midst of a bunch of those that were afraid of their lives and trembling and they hadn't eaten anything for several days, about two weeks, I think it was, they hadn't eaten.

They just couldn't sit down and eat, I suppose they couldn't keep the food in front of them if they had it when that terrible storm. But they wouldn't eat. They were too frightened. They were in too much trouble. And they had to watch that boat all the time and wonder when it's going to go to pieces and sink with them.

And in the midst of that terrible situation, Paul stood up quietly, and I can see him now, I suppose he folded his arms and stroked his beard. These fellows all wore beards those days and said, Gentlemen, sirs, be of good cheer. Holler hallelujah.

Sing the praise of God for I believe God Well, isn't that wonderful? You know, beloved, when you're around anybody that really believes God, you have all sorts of lovely confidence and rest. And his very presence makes you feel sweeter and better and more calm and quiet in your spirit. I believe God. And they did get calm, and they didn't leave the boat.

And the boat was wrecked, all right, but they were all safe on land and not a person was drowned or lost. Well, he believed God, and he wants you to believe God even when you can't see any way of escape. You don't see how in the world you're going to get through tomorrow. You believe God? Well, you're still here, aren't you?

You're listening to me. You've been through days when you felt you didn't know how in the world you're going to do it. But here you are listening to this message. See, God always has a way of doing it. He doesn't always explain it to us, but he always does it.

Now, in Luke seven, verse 13, Jesus met a funeral procession out on the road going to the cemetery. And you know what he said to that woman? That mother, her boy was lying dead there on the casket. And he said to this dear mother, weep not. Well, the boy was dead, why not weep?

She'd lost her son, why not weep? But he said, weep not. Now I say to you, beloved, you suppose you met somebody on the way to the cemetery? And they said, no, don't cry, don't weep. You'd say?

Well, you're crazy. God gave us tears to use in time of sorrow and I expect to use them. Well, Jesus said to this dear mother, weep not. He knew what he was going to do for her, and so I suppose she believed Him, I don't know. But Jesus touched the casket and touched the boy.

And he says he sat up and began to speak right out there on the way to the cemetery. The Savior knew how he was going to stop her weeping and why she didn't need to weep. He knew what his remedy was and what his provision was for her poor broken heart. And so he brought it in and gave the boy back to that mother. And the cemetery lost a customer and the funeral procession was turned around and went back home.

Now, you never heard of anything like that in your life. But you see, every time Jesus does a miracle, it's a new miracle. He's always doing something that he didn't do before, and he'll do it in your case, whatever the need is, whatever the sorrow is, you remember the Lord Jesus knows how to dry the tears and bring in the remedy and bring peace in your heart. Really, it's a greater miracle to bring peace in the heart while the trouble is on than it is to stop the trouble. And that's what he wants to do with you, I'm sure.

Now in Luke 8:52, there was a girl that was dead, a dear little girl, about twelve years old. She was lying dead in her home. And her daddy was a preacher. He was the head of the synagogue there. Because you see, death just comes anywhere.

It comes into the White House, comes into Buckingham Palace, and it will come into your home. Death goes everywhere. It doesn't care anything about the person. It's no respect for a person. And when Jesus came in, he said to that father and mother and the other friends, weep not.

Weep not. Why, she was lying dead. Why shouldn't they weep? The whole place was upset because this sweet little girl had died. Why shouldn't they weep?

But he said, weep not. And so he went in and raised that little girlie from the dead. You see, beloved, when he tells us, weep not, be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid. Why, you just stop your weeping and say, lord Jesus, I'm looking for you to bring about the blessing. Bring about the relief that I need.

I expect you to do it. There's another case in Acts 23, verse eleven, there was a mob after Paul, and his life was in danger. And you know what Jesus said to him? Be of good cheer, Paul. Be of good cheer.

Oh, my. The mob was after him. He was in terrible trouble. He was just about to be killed and they were beating up on him and having plenty of sorrow and trouble. And the Lord said to him, Be of good cheer, Paul.

Now, how could he? Don't you see, beloved? Lord always calms the person before he calms the trouble. Now, some of you who are listening to me may be in trouble. You may be having a great sorrow.

Well, are you going to be of good cheer after it's over? After the Lord is done. What you want Him to do? After he's brought deliverance, after he's found a remedy, then you're going to be a Good Cheer? Well, anybody can do that.

That doesn't take any faith at all. But he wants you to be a person of faith and believe his word. And if you belong to the Lord Jesus. If you're one of his people. If you're a child of God and a sheep of his pasture.

Don't you think he cares and cares for you and wants your blessing and your joy and your peace will let Him say something to you. Beloved. That will give you the peace and the joy and the rest that you ought to have. In Matthew nine in verse 22, there was a woman that came and touched the hem of his garment. Remember that?

And she believed if she could get to Jesus, everything would be all right. Beloved, I wish you believe that everyone that's listening, if you get to Him, he straightens up everything. He has the remedy. He knows what to do. Then again, in Mark in 10:49, there is blind Bartimaeus.

And Jesus said to him, Be of good comfort. The people said, Be of good comfort. Rise, he calleth thee. He was still blind. Beloved, let me urge you to be a man of faith, a woman of faith.

And if he says, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee, take him at his word and sing hallelujah and be a triumphant, believing Christian. Your heart will be glad and God will be glorified, and people will know that you are a man of faith.