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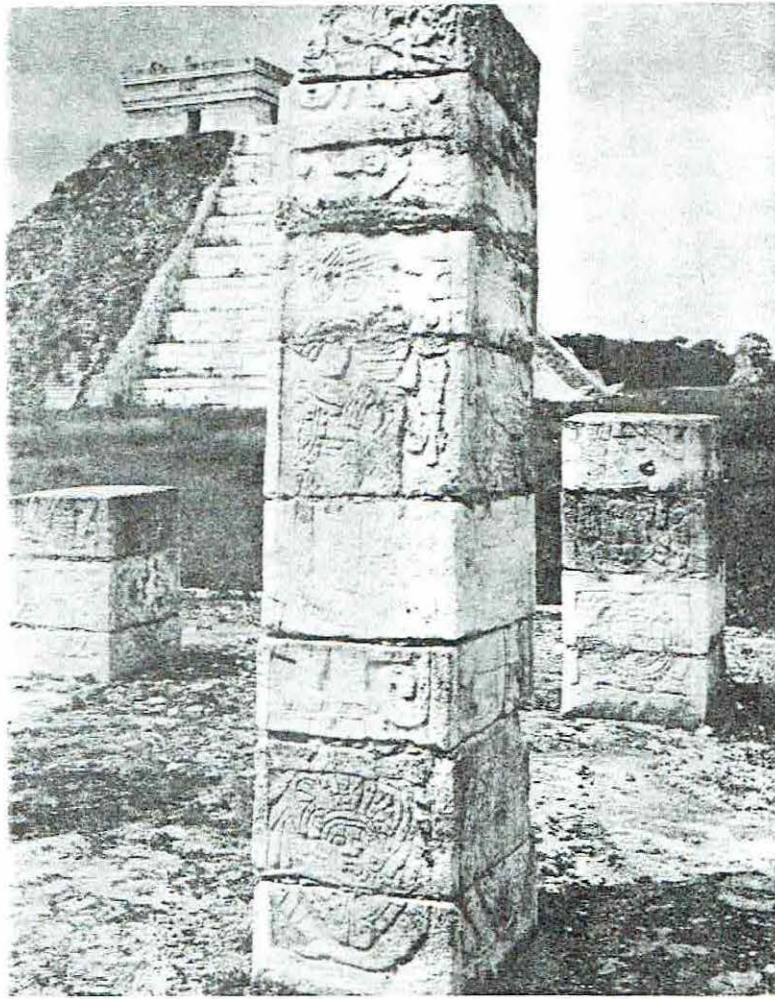
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Your Miracle Power

Mayan Revelation Number 173

Faith Through Bible Windows

Prayer

Credited For Righteousness

The Limitation of Love

From Doubt to Faith

Faith and Works

Faith, The Foundation

Faith and Boldness

According to Your Faith

Beloved Centurion:

As we approach a new examination of Faith, which is a predominant factor in YOUR MIRACLE POWER studies, I, as your instructor, am naturally wondering if your faith has been made stronger since you received the first of this series. I feel positive that you have been helped greatly and in this lecture lesson, which you have in your hand now, it is our belief there is a powerful message for you.

FAITH THROUGH BIBLE WINDOWS gives you actual instructions to follow in your life pattern, which makes it possible for you to realize your ambition and your desires, and can make for you a life filled with happiness, as it should be lived.

One of the most difficult lessons which we must learn is to love our neighbors, to love everything that belongs to God. This is not always easy. It cannot be forced, and there is but one way to realize this blessed state and that is - to LOVE GOD. When we have learned to really love God, the other will follow. We will love doing for others, and as we learn this lesson of life, we begin to receive the blessings of God's love in every walk of life. We cannot have faith in our hearts without having love there also.

This is a dynamic lesson because it is the difference between success and failure, and it is the earnest desire of your instructor that you practice the use of this faith in every department of your life. Put it to use, not just occasionally, but continuously.

Truly, I believe that the cure for all the ills and wrongs of the world, the cares and the sorrows and the crimes of humanity, the wars, all lie in that one word - LOVE. It has the divine quality which restores life, and to each and everyone of us it gives the power of working miracles if we will but do it. Try it for one day, one week, or a month and see what takes place in your life.

If you doubt this, I would like for you to think on these words which were written by Grün:

"When God formed the rose, He said, 'Thou shalt flourish and spread thy perfume.' When He commanded the sun to emerge from chaos, He added 'Thou shalt enlighten and warm the world.' When He gave life to the lark, He enjoined upon it to soar and sing in the air. Finally He created man and told him to love. And, seeing the sun shine, perceiving the rose scattering its odors, hearing the lark warble in the air, how can man help loving?"

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Think on these things as you begin your study with the prayer:

PRAYER

Let the words of Thy chosen messengers, O Lord,
 reveal to me the blessed mysteries of faith, and
 give me strength to travel the road on which the
 light of their words is cast.

Amen.

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CREDITED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS: (Romans 4: 5-9.)

The preceding lesson has advised meditation on all the references to faith in the Bible. This lesson makes no such complete attempt as that. It only undertakes to consider briefly seven out of the many that the student may get the idea of what may be done.

Let us begin with St. Paul's remarkable reference to the faith of Abraham in his letter to the Romans. "Abraham believed God", he says, "and it was imputed (credited or counted) to him for righteousness." That is, this man to whom all this was new did just what we have advised; he started with confidence. See the great consequences that followed.

Of course, Abraham was a just (righteous) man to start with, and St. Paul says elsewhere that the just (righteous) shall live by faith. But the amazing fact here is that one gets credit for righteousness to the extent of his faith, or belief, or confidence, in God.

Righteousness leads to faith even as faith leads to righteousness, but the fact still remains that in God's system of exchange one who believes in God has a large credit to his name. He has at least made a start in the right direction. One cannot hope to learn much unless he believes his teacher.

As the largest river can be traced back to its source in a humble spring or little mountain stream, so every great current in history can be traced back to a small beginning, perhaps in a single incident or a single individual.

It was so with the Hebrew race, and the law, the prophets, and the gospel that flowed from it. Abraham stood at the original source of it all, though he did not know it. He just believed God and let it go at that.

There may be many things you cannot do at your present stage of advancement, but you can believe God and start from there. Abraham looked into an unknown future and saw an unknown road stretching out before him. He broke down the obstruction of inertia and uncertainty and made the start, even though it

meant giving up much that was precious to him.

Heaps of stones all along the way indicate how often he stopped to pray for guidance and help.

"AND ABRAHAM BUILT THERE AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD"

... these are familiar words in the history of that journey. He kept trusting God, and he found the Canaan that became the home of the people who gave the world the law, the prophets, and the Christ.

Somewhere you have a Canaan, and even now you have a call to find it. Do not wait till you know all about it, for you never will. Just believe God and begin. Your Canaan may be a new condition, a new achievement, a new way of life, a new character. At least be on the way. Your faith will be credited to you for rightness.

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THE LIMITATION OF LOVE: (I Corinthians 13;2.)

We find also that faith has certain limitations or measures. For one thing, the measure of our faith is limited to that of our love. St. Paul writes in First Corinthians 13; 2 that though one may have all faith, so that he can remove mountains, and yet does not have love, he is nothing.

A study of the facts of faith expressed in the Bible and references to it in religious and secular literature indicates that there is a vital relation between faith and love, even that love is a necessary basis for faith.

Many people have a hard time reaching the point where they can honestly claim to have faith. Some who have once had it and lost it find it very hard to regain. They try to get it by studying about it, but seldom find that a very quick way.

In many cases the trouble may be that they do not start with love in their hearts - love for God, for their neighbors, for the needy and sorrowing, for the human race. Perhaps that is the answer to the problem of many who are now trying to acquire faith. It might even be the answer, or part of the answer, to your problem.

Christian love should not be hard to come by. We are all born with at least the rudiments of it in our hearts. The child naturally and easily loves those around it and continues to like others unless something unnatural happens to twist its personality. The normal thing is for us all to grow up loving God and our fellow members of the human race. If anything has changed us in that regard and made us cynical, bitter, or hard, we should ask God to help us change it. Otherwise, we can never walk the way of faith.

Often one can bind or rebind the tie of sympathy between himself and others by observing and considering them more. He would see that most people are in desperate need of compassion, and the wants and cares of human beings everywhere should awaken at once the better nature even of one who has departed far from it.

The best of all ways to learn to love one's fellow men is to be sure of one's love for God. That is the starting point. One cannot truly love God without loving God's other children. If you do not love others, mend your life in the matter of loving the Father of all. The rest will come naturally. But how is one to love God? Is it hard to love One who has done so much even for the most undeserving of us?

One cannot build a house without first laying the foundations. One cannot build a faith without doing the same. And what is the foundation of faith? St. Paul seems firmly convinced that it is love.

It may be that this is the real reason why Abraham could believe God, and have it credited to him for righteousness as it was. He was a kindly disposed man to begin with. That he stood well and was respected and liked by his neighbors in the old home town of Ur in Chaldaeaa would seem to indicate that he was generous, and kind, and helpful. To realize that humanity is one, even as God is one, and that what we do to others we also do to ourselves is an excellent beginning of the progress of the soul to faith.

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FROM DOUBT TO FAITH: (John 20;29)

The scene is a house in Jerusalem where the confused disciples of Jesus are gathered, remembering and wondering. It is now eight days since reports of His resurrection began to fly about and since some of them have seen Him with their own eyes, or thought they did.

Suddenly, without the opening of a door, the risen One appears and stands among them. He goes to Thomas, the sense-bound one who has said he would never believe Jesus was risen unless he could see Him and touch His wounds. He bids the unbelieving one to satisfy his physical senses with the demanded physical proof. Having done so, Thomas makes his great acknowledgment.

"Blessed art thou", says Jesus. "Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Thomas had believed on the basis of physical proof. That is good as far as it goes, but it goes only as far as physical fact does. It is a far better thing to believe on a basis of spiritual assurance. Thomas was already able to walk by sight, but he had somehow to manage to learn to walk by faith. He had to learn the lesson sooner or later or else he would not be able to go on with the other disciples in their development and the fulfillment of their mission.

Almost any of us can and will believe what we see. That is no particular accomplishment and deserves no particular distinction. We deserve no credit for it. It requires the use of no superior intellectual or spiritual powers. An animal or an infant can do as much. It is the person who can reach the tentacles of faith out into the universe and lay hold on truth who really accomplishes the wonderful and unusual.

One trouble with Thomas was that he had never quite accepted the idea that there could be anything new in the world. He tried to go wholly by precedent. He assumed that anything that had never happened never could happen, and even if it had happened it would never happen again.

If that were true, how dark and hopeless our outlook would be! We could never go on, or expand, or improve, or come to anything better. But now a great new thing had happened, an actual demonstration of the fact that there is no death. It threw a new light up the years, and planted new hope in the human heart. How strange it would be to go on in the old gloom and poverty of spirit when such a great deliverance had come! The best thing Thomas had ever known had happened to him now - and he would not accept it till it was proved to him!

That is the way some of us are unless and until we learn to walk by faith and not by sight. The mind of the flesh may learn it slowly and gropingly, but the mind of the spirit can learn it quickly and well. So if one is blessed who accepts the proof, how much more blessed is one who does not demand proof!

Be such a one. Do not insist on proof of things that have been proved over and over again, things that are a part of the very constitution of life, things that belong in the realm of the highest and most abiding reality. Blessed will you be when you learn to take God at His word - by Faith.

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FAITH AND WORKS: (James 2;17-20)

Another limitation on faith is what true faith causes actually to happen. It is not a seed hidden away in a bin to decay or be lost, but one planted in the ground to grow. As a tree bears fruit, so faith produces works. It is a cause; they are the effects.

St. James, like St. Jude, grew up in the same home with Jesus. Knowing Him as they did, their ultimate acceptance of Him as the divine Lord was definite and complete. Their minds were made up. They knew what they believed and there was no wavering about it.

In the second chapter of his brief letter James discusses faith, and the main thing he has to say about it is that true faith results in works, that people who really have faith do something about it.

James says,

"For as the body without the spirit is dead so faith without works is dead also."

That means that anyone's faith is balanced against its results. Jesus Himself declared that a tree is known by its fruits. Faith is no exception to the rule.

Faith is the great incentive. It not only lights the path of duty, but it also makes one anxious and ready to travel that way. We all know the tragedy of wanting to do the best thing, to get on with the task of working out our own salvation, yet finding that it is so easy to put off. Faith takes that "some time" attitude from us and puts the "now" attitude in its place.

Faith is the great dynamic. It starts the motors running. Morale does not sag when it is turned on, nor defeatism beseege our héarts. We do not then watch the clock and wearily await the time when we can put the task aside. We do not then cherish the thought of giving up. Duty becomes a joy; and our thought is no longer of how little we can get by with but how much we can accomplish.

The reward of the gardener is the loveliness of his flowers. The reward of faith is the value and beauty of the achievements to which it challenges.

Like anything else, faith would rust, and tarnish, and corrode, if it were left lying about inactive; but bringing forth its appointed works it keeps vigorous, and effective, and in good condition.

The labors of the world have been performed by those who believed in their tasks and in their ability to perform them. Thus has the road of progress been traveled by them and by us whom they have served. Thus has the Kingdom of Heaven been brought to its present stage of advancement.

If you have faith, then, or even if you are trying to have it, give out its expression in service and achievement. Otherwise it will perish. One by one undertake the things in which you tremendously believe, in partnership with God. Take fully for granted His power and willingness to help you. One day your endeavors will stand forth as your own best monument, one such as is reared only in honor of those who had faith and expressed it in works.

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FAITH, THE FOUNDATION: (II Peter 1: 5-7)

In his second letter, one of the so-called General Epistles, it not being addressed to any one particular individual or group, the Apostle Peter builds a sort of pyramid of spiritual virtues. It is instructive to notice what ones he names and in what order he places them.

"Add to your faith virtue", he says, "and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity (love)."

You see, he places love at the top of the structure as the apex of spiritual attainment, the quality without which no other is complete; but as the base he places faith. There just isn't anything else for one until and unless he believes God.

Have you an ideal you want to reach for yourself? Start with faith. Have you a problem that baffles and frustrates you, and that you feel you must solve or fail? Start with faith. Have you a task or enterprise at which you wish to succeed? Start with faith. Have you a service, great or small, you feel you must render to God, or to others as a duty to God, and does it seem to tower overwhelmingly over you? Start with faith.

There may be and probably are other points at which you want to arrive, other pinnacles you want to reach, other qualities you want to possess; but which you do not know how to begin. There certainly will be such as you go along, for living the consecrated life produces them. Start with faith. It is the point from which all these pathways of the soul radiate, even as love to God and man is the point at which they all converge.

God never requires any impossibility of anyone. We do not have to look at a task, a possibility, a compulsion to do something, as Abraham was called to leave friends and kindred and seek far-away Canaan; nor must we feel that we have to know all about it in advance, or understand all its meanings for us and the future of the world, or anything of the kind. We have only to have an attitude of heart that makes it whisper, audibly or silently, but truthfully, "I believe."

Think of the other values St. Peter mentions as way stations on the road to the perfect love. They are all treasures that cannot be bought with money or taken by force - virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, and brotherly kindness. These are essential means to happy and successful living. Whoever has them has his soul richly furnished. Like fruit-laden trees they stand all along the way.

But let us not overlook the first words of the formula - "add to". They remind us of the dynamic and vital nature of faith. It is no dead or static thing with which nothing need or can be done, nor is it a stopping place on the road. A species of plant will die out unless it is added to by planting, tending, growing, and harvesting, and doing these constantly through the seasons.

Faith too will wither and perish unless it is constantly added to, kept constantly growing. A foundation that is never built upon is a forlorn looking thing, and never so much as when that foundation is a dormant faith.

FAITH AND BOLDNESS: (Ephesians 3; 12)

In his letter to the Ephesian Church St. Paul writes of faith in Christ as something by means of which we have boldness and access. That is, faith is an opener of doors because it gives us the courage to try them and see if they will not open to us.

Most of us miss many a blessing which we do not see because it is on the other side of some gate we never try to open. We pass it by because it looks just like any other gate to us. Perhaps it is, but let us remember that the good to which it may lead may be very unlike what might be found anywhere else.

Or we may pass by our gates of opportunity assuming that we could never open them anyway. But how does one know if he never tries? And who knows how much we may miss that way?

If a gate is locked one needs a key, and to all gates of blessing faith is a key. Gates are not made to be opened by force, but by being unlocked. That is particularly true of the gates of destiny. They all yield to faith, because faith generates boldness.

In other words, faith gives us the courage to try. How many gates of opportunity and privilege would have opened, but never did because the one who passed them was too timid and unbelieving even to try them and see if they would yield! Many of them would have opened at the touch of a finger, and in some the latch was not even caught, but no one ever knew because no one ever tried.

There are two kinds of boldness. One is the offensive, bravado type, which is no ornament to any personality. The other is the venturesomeness of the mind and the daring of the soul which make one try new and great things, and not be bound to either the temporary or the inadequate.

Some people miss their good because they disregard the repeated assurance that no good thing is kept back from him who asks it in faith, but that the Father delights in being asked by His children for their hearts' desire.

We settle for too little at the counter of life. We take something that is inferior, or even go away with nothing at all, or do not even visit the storehouse, because we assume that there wouldn't be much of anything for us anyway, when perhaps wonderful values, made to measure for us, are waiting in reserve.

Faith sees things in the large. It never discounts its own privileges. It knows the promises, and does not go shrinkingly and uncertainly to the throne of grace. It knows God does not want His children frustrated and defeated, but wants them well, and strong, and happy, that they may be a credit to His Kingdom and His family. It knows He does not want to hear cringing prayers for unimportant things, so it does not hesitate to ask largely that it may so receive.

Let faith teach you to go boldly to the throne. Let it empower your thinking and your planning. Have an adequate program for your life and work.

God will respect it, and it will give you courage not to turn away from gates of opportunity but to try them and pass through them if they yield.

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ACCORDING TO YOUR FAITH: (Matthew 9; 29)

The most illuminating things about faith in the Bible are naturally found in the gospels themselves because they tell directly the story of Jesus, His teachings, and His work. One of the most significant of these occurs in the Ninth Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew and the verse indicated above.

Jesus was visiting in Capernaum and as usual leaving a trail of blessing wherever He went. He had already performed great miracles of helpfulness that day when He perceived two blind men following him, pleading for the mercy of the restoration of their sight.

This was exactly in His line, so to speak. God had patterned life in perfection. The pattern itself was still perfect, and always will be; but here and there something had slipped and kept its realization from perfection because the pattern had been departed from. The work of Jesus was and is to restore it. Blindness was an imperfection, and to make marred bodies and souls perfect again was His one great aim and purpose.

This is never as simple as it may look at a casual glance. Restoring perfection of eyesight or anything else is not something even the Lord of Heaven will always do automatically, and perhaps never alone. It is a two-way process like magnetism or electric power. Faith power too follows a circuit, and the person at the negative pole must do his part as well as the One at the positive pole.

Jesus would not simply order the eyes of these men to see. He had to see if the circuit was closed and the channel through which the power must pass complete. So instead of speaking some miracle word, He asked a question - "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" A truthful answer to that question would quickly show whether healing was for them or not. It was for them to say. Fortunately they could meet the requirement and qualify. They said they believed it.

When He had this assurance that the channel was open the Master touched their eyes with those wonderful hands which were electrodes of power, and spoke. He did not merely say, "Be healed." He said something of far greater significance - "According to your faith be it done unto you." Blessing was for them in direct proportion to their ability to receive it. They had to be faith-powered electrodes too.

There must be a balance between the thing to be done and the faith power available for the purpose. It is like making a purchase - it can be done only if one has the price. Or it is like writing a check - it may be done only if one

has the money in the bank. Or it is like building a house - it can be done only if one has the necessary material and workmen. One can do anything through faith - if he has that faith - and enough of it.

That is what happens to us in all our faith experiences. A very little faith will strike a balance with a very great need, but that very little faith must be there. Great things will yield to surprisingly little power - faith as a grain of mustard seed for instance - but the power must not be imaginary.

As you hope, and plan, and ask, remember that faith is the working capital for your undertaking. It may take surprisingly little, but that little you must have.

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AFFIRMATION

I believe God's promises concerning faith and

I apply them in all my undertakings.