

FOCUS - KEY TO FAITH – 2
MAY 6, 2020

REVIEW:

- Without faith, the gospel benefits no one, we won't inherit God's promises, we won't live right, we won't please God, and we won't receive from God.
- Satan targets our faith to determine if it's genuine.
- Our focus is the key: Reasoning, what is seen, guilt, negative advice, Satan's strategies, worldly pursuits, emotional feelings.
- Our focus should be on God's Word and integrity.
- Levels of faith – No, little, great, and perfect faith.

CONTINUE: GALATIANS 5:6

If faith works by love, then we must consider what God's Word teaches on the subject of love. Love was the motivating force behind every miracle of Jesus. **MATTHEW 14:14** Jesus is no less compassionate today as He was when He was here on earth. Knowing how much God loves us is a major key to growing in faith.

UNDERSTANDING LOVE

1. God's love for us.
 - A. **ZEPHANIAH 3:17** – God has exhausted His love for us.
 - B. **ROMANS 5:8** – God's love for us is found in Christ's death.
 - C. **JOHN 15:13** – No greater love exists.
 - D. **JOHN 16:27** – The Father loves us personally.
 - God's love for us is not based on our performance. We don't earn God's love. God chose to love us. **1 JOHN 4:19**
 - **MATTHEW 7:7-11** – "How much more?" It's up to us to receive God's love – **EPHESIANS 3:18**
2. Our love for God.
 - A. **PSALMS 91:14-16** – We must set our love on God. **JOHN 14:21-24**
 - B. **MARK 12:30** – This involves all the energies of our being. First, God wants our heart. Second, He wants our emotions. Third He wants our decisions to be based on His thinking. Finally, He wants our bodies crucified and serving Him.
3. Love for self. **MARK 12:31**
 - A. Our mind is the control tower of our lives. Our thinking is what controls us, our relationship with God and others. How we think determines if we succeed or fail in life.
 - B. **2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-4, 11:3** – Satan blinds the minds of the lost, and deceives the minds of the saved, not their feet! He wants to belittle us and convince us we're unworthy. He'll use past sins and what others have said about us to control us.
 - C. Questions we must ask ourselves.
 - Where are these thoughts coming from?
 - Where will these thoughts lead me?
 - Will they get me where I desire to go?
 - Are they biblically acceptable?
 - Will they build me up or tear me down?
 - Do they produce guilt or condemnation?
 - Do they fit who I am as a Christian?
4. Love for others. **JOHN 13:34**
 - A. Jesus raised the bar from "love your neighbor as yourself," to "love one another as I have loved you."
 - B. **EPHESIANS 2:4-6** – God's love took us from the lowest to the highest position attainable.
 - C. **MATTHEW 5:44-48** – We are to love our enemies.

CONCLUSION: 1 JOHN 4:18 – Love is the true mark of maturity. Growing in love enables our faith to be strong and vibrant. **ROMANS 5:5** The Spirit's involvement and help are necessary!