

Christian Living Series 2, sermon # 112 The Fruits of God's Holy Spirit

Faith #21

Raymond C. Cole
Edited Sermon Transcript

Greetings, brethren. This, now, will be the continuation of that long series on the fruit of God's Holy Spirit: "faith." As you will recall, last time we completed, in the last tape, the Greek word o-l-i-g-o-p-i-s-t-o-s—*oligopistos*, meaning "of little faith," or "manifesting a great deal of fear, doubt or misgiving," actually, is the meaning of it.

Now we are coming to the basic word that is used in the Bible for the term "faith." But it is also translated by a number of other words, as we shall later. That word is the word p-i-s-t-i-s—*pistis*, in the Greek. It is a very, very interesting word, and is used quite broadly in the New Testament. We are going to take the time, now, to analyze that word, but before we do that, I want to give you a definition, and then to give you the basic root word that undergirds the word *pistis* itself. It is taken from the Greek *peitho*—p-e-i-t-h-o—which we shall later define.

But before we do that, I want to give you the definition of the word *pistis* from some great reference works. It means "persuasion," that is, "credence." Now, if you have any need, please look up these words, so that you will see the real intent and purpose of the word "faith"—or *pistis*, as it used in the Greek. It means "persuasion." "Persuasion" has to do with a solid, firm conviction in the heart and mind. It means "persuasion"—that is "credence." It involves the basis upon which we give our undivided attention, our emotional agreement, entirely—the full acceptance of something's intent and purpose.

It means, morally, "conviction." It comes from that very thing that we commonly refer to in Biblical terminology as "conviction." Are we really convicted down in the heart? Conviction is a mental, emotional aspect of body. Many, many people have a passive regard for a number of things, but they have no strong feeling

about them. That is, they are not impelled—they are not motivated, they are not driven by circumstance. This word means something that drives us. It is a compelling motivation—it is a conviction, and it is a conviction based upon religious truth, or the truthfulness of someone else, as in this case, God, or a religious concept.

Or, it can in some cases be a matter of a teacher—having confidence in a particular teacher—because we see the evidence of God moving and motivating that individual. Now, that doesn't mean, in that case, that the confidence is in a human being, but it is in the power that is manifested by God in that being.

So, it is especially, then, related to reliance upon Christ for our salvation. You haven't seen it; you have seen no one who has ever come back from the grave and said, "I know it—I believe it." You have seen no one who has ever been born into the Kingdom of God. So, how do you know? By faith. And faith is a firm conviction that can come only by the gift of God's Holy Spirit. It is not something we can conjure up in our own lives. There are a lot of people that have a certain feeling toward things, but they are always subject to doubt or to misgiving. So we may have a feeling about something—we may feel very firmly about something—but that's not faith. Faith is an absolute, unalterable conviction, if we really have it.

So, it is, then, that matter of reliance upon Christ for salvation or, abstractly, it is a matter of constancy. That is, if we really believe it, we never turn away from it. So, when we're talking, then, about The Faith—faith in God—or faith regarding something else, which we're going to define a little later, it basically is manifested in constancy. If, then, we find anybody switching, or changing, their faith is made null and void. It's that plain and it's that simple, for if it were truly The Faith in the first place, it can never be changed, because God does not change. So there is something wrong when you find the necessity of a change—that is, a change with regard to that which belongs to God.

Oh yes, we understand that human beings have to change, but I'm talking about what God gives. Now, some will come back and say, "Well, do you think that God gave all of it?" It doesn't matter what I think. All I know is that the Bible said that He did give it to somebody, and He gave that Way to someone, and it is a Way of faith.

So we find, then, that it is manifested in the constancy—the invariable, inflexible, absolute orientation of life. You never change it, you never alter it. So it is constancy in that profession of faith, and by extension, then, it simply means the entire system of religious Truth itself, or the Gospel. And that's why, as we're going to see later, this word applies to the doctrine itself. The "faith once delivered" is not only a matter of belief in something—of faith in Christ—it is a faith in the consistency of that which has been revealed. It is a doctrine—a Way of Life that cannot change. And it is translated by a number of words: "assurance," "belief," "believe," "faith," and "fidelity."

Now, before we move on into a definition—and we're not going to get any farther than a definition today, and then I will go back, text by text, throughout the New Testament, explaining this word *pistis*—let's go back to that root word, p-e-i-t-h-o—*peitho*. It is a primitive verb meaning "to convince," oftentimes by argument. In the case of God's revelation of Truth, it is not by argument, but by a gift. Some people can convince others by an argument, and that word is oftentimes used in terms of an argument, but never with regard to Truth. Truth is a gift. When *we* convince somebody else, we do so by an argument, or by logic, or by the presentation of facts, or whatever it is, but we're going to see that that is altogether different than what God gave to us. That's a gift that cannot be achieved by argument, by documentation, or by anything that is at the disposal of man. He cannot come to it of himself; otherwise, what we can do is to create our own faith, and if faith is the ingredient by which we are saved, we, then, can save ourselves. And that is not possible.

So, it is a primitive word meaning "to convince," initially, by argument, whether true or false, or, "by analogy, to pacify or to conciliate." Now, all of these relate to human beings. They may pacify—they may use a form of argumentation, or logic, by which they eliminate certain doubts or misgivings, and they may bring about a certain conciliatory regard. So, it is then, by analogy, a pacification or conciliation by any fair means. Reflexively or passively, it means "to ascent"—that is, "to give credence to," to turn from our own conviction to that of somebody else. To "give ascent" means to agree. That is, as a matter of evidence or authority.

So, we either acquiesce on the basis of evidence—which is the presentation of documentation—or on the basis of authority. Now, in God's case, it is not a

matter of the presentation of documentation of fact, because we would not have that—not initially. Documentation of fact will come along later. But when God first calls us, we hear and we respond to something that we ourselves do not even fully comprehend—and will not fully comprehend until the fullness of knowledge is given to us.

Then, may I ask why it is that you unequivocally give your entire emotional regard to something that you do not even fully comprehend nor understand yet? You do so on the basis of the power of God's Spirit in that mind and that heart, which stirs you up, and then the documentation comes over the years. We see it in its manifestations. That's the proof that God is talking about. Now, I'm going to make many, many comments regarding that as we are going along, because this word is the key word.

We have written out, now, all of the basic foundational, fundamental material—the words that are essential for us to be able to understand the real significance of faith, and we are going to take time to understand that. So it means, then, to passively ascent on the basis of evidence, or authority, or "to rely by inward certainty"—you have implicit trust by inward certainty. And it is translated, then, as "agree," "assure," "believe," "have confidence," "be confident" (or "was confident"), "make friend," "obey," "persuade," "trust," and "yield." Now, all of those words are going to have a lot of meaning in the usage of this word. So, as I said, don't count on getting through this word too quickly, because we are going to digest it thoroughly, and we are going to understand it before we come to a conclusion.

Now, on the basis of some highly technical works which we have, and to which we refer frequently, I'd like to give you certain things before I get into the words. And this entire tape is going to be a matter of definition today. So, I want to give you, directly from the Bible, now, certain definitions of this word "faith," and what it means to you and me.

There are three broad categories—three very broad categories—and I'm going to give you sufficient evidence to really substantiate all three of them. The first one is—if you will remember, now, the definitions that I gave to you for the above words themselves—the first one is, "That which causes trust and faith." There has to be an underlying cause—a causative factor. What is it that

precipitates our trust—our confidence? But at the same time, when we find an interruption in that causative factor, it can turn us in contempt, disagreement, rebellion, and defiance, and we lose the very premise of our salvation, even though we still *claim* to be the children of God. Yet, we can lose that faith which gave us that positive assurance—that positive confidence.

What is it, now, that is fundamental—that is absolutely basic, down inside of us—that causes that kind of trust, that kind of faith, and that kind of conviction? In Titus 2 and verse 10, we are going to read, now, a particular statement concerning the matter of a mere slave. But if you will recall, we are all slaves—bondservants—of Jesus Christ, aren't we? So here, now, in Titus 2 and let's note verse 10, but we are going to back up so that we can get it in context. Let's pick it up in verse 9: "Exhort servants"—and I'm not sure what the word is here, but I would not be a bit surprised if it were not the word *doolou*—d-o-o-l-o-u, or how ever it is spelled. Because that is very frequently translated as "a servant."

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity.

The word "fidelity" here is the word that we are interested in, because it is a definition, now, of this matter of faith. "[B]ut shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Whatever that fidelity is in relationship to somebody else, for us, it is the adornment of everything that we call Christian. In other words, it puts it in a framework.

You know, many, many people have a number of very exquisite paintings, or something that has a real significance to them, because it may have emotional value—sentimental value—not because it has professional value. It has sentimental value because a member of the family, or a grandmother, or somebody, has painted something, or done something. Now, what do we do with those? Throw them in the corner? Or, do we usually go and buy a very fine frame, because the frame sets it off? Here we have the framework. It's that which sets off the picture of faith, and it is a beautiful one, indeed.

So in this case, now, we read: "[B]ut shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God." So, by whatever we are doing, we completely adorn the entire fabric of God's Truth—we set it apart as though we are putting a frame around it. It means that we honor it; it means that we are holding it in esteem, not only sentimentally, but in this case, because it has inherent value. And so, we're putting a beautiful framework around it—and the framework is our behavior—so that the doctrine of God might be adorned, and that it might stand out in sharp relief in all of its beauty, its context, and its purpose. And we are a living example of it. In other words, we are showing a manifestation of that power in our lives. Let's notice it here, now, from the *Living Bible*. Titus 2, verses 9 and 10:

Urge slaves to obey their masters [we're the slaves, and our master is Christ] and to try their best to satisfy them [meaning that we are struggling, with all that is within us, to be faithful and to be obedient]. They must not talk back, nor steal, but must show themselves to be entirely trustworthy.

That word "trustworthy" means that the owner who has a slave can go into a far country, he can be gone for a year, and he has all the confidence in the world in that slave, because he is trustworthy—he is not going to say, "Oh-oh, my master is gone now. I can sit down and take my idle and my ease; I can do a sloppy job; I can be indifferent; I can take advantage; I can filch; I can steal." No, he serves his master, and the master knows that, and the master knows that he can leave, and leave authority, responsibility, and possessions in his charge.

Are we like that, where we work harder when our boss' back is turned—we are more devout and determined when we are not being personally scrutinized than when we are? We put forth our maximum effort to live up to expectation. We demand to know what needs to be done, and we live it. We do not want to assume—we do not arrogate, but we do not assume what is right, either. We want to know, and we want to live it to the full, with everything that is within us. Now, that is exactly what this word means here.

They must not talk back, nor steal, but must show themselves to be entirely trustworthy. In this way they will make people want to believe in our Savior and God.

Christ has gone into a far country. On the basis of human rationale, there are many people who think we are stupid to manifest faith and confidence—willing obedience, total subservience to something that we cannot even see, and nobody has ever seen, since the time of Christ. Yet, by faith, we do see Him, and we know that Truth, and we believe it with all good fidelity—we are entirely trustworthy. Are we? That is the meaning of that word.

So, that which causes trust and faith—whatever it is down inside of us—is an orientation, it is an M.O.—a *modus operandi*; it is a method of operation; it is dedication; it is conviction; it is determination; it is drive. But it is all of those things combined, and it is manifested in our daily actions, in our responses to one another, and in our faithfulness to the Truth which God has given to us. In all that we do, we have firm control over our minds, our hearts, our lives, our mouths, and over everything about us—and we live faithfully the Truth of God in the sight of others of this world, even though the very one before whom we must finally come and be judged is not even present. We are still doing it, knowing that that day is inevitable.

Now, in Acts 17 and verse 31 we notice this—Acts 17 And verse 31:

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men.

"[H]e hath given assurance"—fidelity, trust, belief—"unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." We didn't see the resurrection, did we? And yet, how many of us believe there was a resurrection? We have all confidence in it, don't we? And men, when they are brought to the knowledge of God's Truth—when they are given that faith—do not question the resurrection. They do not question the validity of the Truth of God. They do not distrust those ways which Jesus Christ taught—which He brought to humankind. They believe it implicitly, and they are looking forward to a city of the future. Their confidence is not in the present, it's in tomorrow, and they live for tomorrow, not today. It will be manifested in that faith and that conviction.

So it is, then, a solemn promise, or an oath. We would stand on our oath, we would stand on our conviction, we would die for that conviction, because we

believe it. Now, why would you give up your physical life—that which you have at the present time—if you don't have a greater hope of something tomorrow? That is the essence of that faith and that conviction.

Now, it does manifest itself in many ways, and it is those manifestations that we are going to clearly define in the future. One of them, of course, is continuity of belief—we never change it. That is the living manifestation of those who really have faith—they will not change it.

Alright, the second principle involved in this matter of faith, the matter of defining it, is that it's a trust and confidence—a faith in an active sense. That is, it aggressively manifests itself in various ways. Number one: It manifests itself in God. As I said, there's no man that has seen God—none. That's what John was inspired to write. No human being has ever seen God, the Father, yet we believe it. No one has ever seen Him, and very few ever saw the manifestation of the Son, and, yet, the Son said that He was the express image of a Father.

Yet, all of us believe it today, and Jesus Christ Himself, in a notable example, when Thomas said he would not believe unless he could see and put his hands into that riven side and those nail-pierced hands. And then he was embarrassed and humiliated when he was called on. He thought, you know, that he was thinking this to himself, and saying it to his close compatriots, but we must remember that God is everywhere—omnipresent—and Christ knew what Thomas had said. So, at the next meeting, He called Thomas and He said, "Come here Thomas." And Thomas said, "No, no, no, I don't need to come. I know now." But Jesus said, "No, I want you to come here. You said you were not going to believe it. I don't want you to be unbelieving. You come on over here and you thrust your hand into my side and into these nail-pierced hands." So Thomas did, and all he could do was to exclaim, "My God, my God." And indeed it was—it was *the* Christ. And He said, "Now, Thomas, because you have seen, you believe, but blessed are those that have never seen and yet will believe."

We have not seen, brethren, except by faith, and yet, we believe—we trust—we have that confidence and that assurance. We have never seen God, and yet we believe there is a God, don't we? So, it is an active confidence, an active trust, in a Being that we have never seen. When you actually see something, it is no longer a matter of faith—you *know*. You have seen it—there it is, there's the

tangible evidence. Faith is the evidence of things *not* seen. So, we have not seen God, and yet we believe that He is.

In Mark 11 and verse 22, it says to have faith in God—have faith in God. Do we have that kind of deep-down conviction in God whom we have never seen? Do we have an implicit trust in Him so that we would absolutely yield our lives to that entity that we have never seen—so that we will bring ourselves, which is the manifestation of that faith, into conformity; we will hold ourselves in check and crucify the old self; we will absolutely destroy the wretchedness of the natural self, and the natural mind, in deference to something that we have never seen? That is the living manifestation of faith. Mark 11 and verse 22. He said: "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God." And that faith is essential for salvation. "Have faith in God." It is an active trust.

Now, how does it manifest itself? We're not getting into the detail today, we are only defining the words, but we are going to do that in the future. "Have faith in God" means to have an active trust. And it will manifest itself in certain ways.

In 1 Peter 1 and verse 21, we find that it is a matter of faith in Christ—another one whom we have never seen. We've only read about Him—we've only heard about Him—just exactly as Jesus Christ said: "Blessed are those that have never seen, and yet will believe," or trust. 1 Peter 1, and noting verse 21, and we will also read verse 22:

Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren . . .

Now, I could spend a lot of time in the manifestations here, but I'm not going to do that. But it is through the power of God's Holy Spirit. So, our active faith is through the power of God's Holy Spirit. So it is a trust in something that you have never seen. Have any of you ever been able to bottle up the Spirit? Can you put your hands on it? Do you know what it is? Can you lay hold of it and say, "Here—here's what the Spirit is"? Or, is it something that you comprehend only by a mental orientation, and yet, you see, you grasp, and you understand, by that Spirit?

So, it is, then, by the Spirit of God. "[T]hat your faith and hope might be in God." Your faith and hope might be in God. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit." So, it is accomplished, then, through the Spirit.

In Matthew 8 and verse 10. Matthew 8 and let's note verse 10. We find the relationship with Christ: "When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." It was a centurion who said, "I'm not worthy that you should come into my house. I'm not worthy that you should have anything to do with me. All I know is that all you have to do is merely speak the word. That's all that is necessary." And Christ marveled at that faith. He said, "I haven't seen that kind of faith in all of Israel." Here was a man who had trust in Christ. He knew that all Christ had to do was merely to say the word, and Christ recognized that faith. He knew that he had it. So that was a trust in Christ's ability—a trust in the promises and assurances of Christ, the power of Christ, and the call and the commission of Christ. It was a total trust, and this centurion knew that, of course, by the external influence of God's Holy Spirit.

In Acts 3 and verse 16, we find that it is a trust in that name. That's the very thing that you and I are trusting today. Here in Acts 3 and verse 16: "And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong . . ." You and I do not see the man, it's the name of that individual—the power of that Being today, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master, who is the express image of the Father. We have faith in that great and that awesome Being, and we know that what He has promised He is able to deliver.

"[W]hom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Now, He is not a respecter of persons. If we have that kind of faith, we can *also* be the recipients. Yet, for reason, my dear brethren, you and I need to be tried and proven. If we always got every expectation of our hearts, we would begin to take it for granted, and would we ever realize our own personal inadequacies and weaknesses of the flesh—our need for refinement and purification? Why, of course we wouldn't. Oh, we would think that we had the world by the tail if all we had to do was ask God and we could have anything we wanted, immediately. My Bible says we clearly must endure for this cause of patience: that *after* you have suffered a while—and endured in patience—*then* you shall receive.

Now, God didn't define the length and the breadth of that time. That's a matter of patience itself. He's the one who determines *when*. You and I have the responsibility of determining *whether*, and it's a matter of trust, even as Job said: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." So it doesn't make any difference. We leave our lives in His hands; we trust Him implicitly; we give Him our very beings, our minds, and our bodies, and we say: "Here they are. They belong to you. You have purchased them. You do with them as *you* please." And we take it in stride. Or, have some of us given them conditionally, and we take them back every once in awhile, and we demand certain rights? Have we given them unconditionally? Such is the manifestation of total faith. So, it is faith in the *name* of Christ.

It also means "true piety," or "genuine religion." Luke 18 and verse 8. Luke 18 and verse 8. Let's notice it, here. This is a very, very significant text regarding our time. Luke 18 and verse 8: "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Will He find genuine religion—the Faith, the embodiment of doctrine, the embodiment of true trust and piety (that is, the control of our personal lives on the basis of conviction)? Will He? Will He find faith on this earth? We know it is going to be relatively limited, and that limitation will be exclusively manifested, in all probability, in that small handful of people that will find the Way of Life and walk therein. Will we be a part of it? Can we have that kind of faith and trust in God? Will we give our undivided attention and conviction, or are we going to consistently manifest the fruits of the flesh—argumentation, strife, heretical concepts? Or, are we going to bury the self and be faithful and obedient to God?

It is also "assurance in hope." 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 7. 2 Corinthians 5 and let's note verse 7—Paul, here, writing to the Corinthian church, said: "For we walk by faith, not by sight." Here is an aggressive pursuit. We are walking—meaning action. We are doing something, and yet, if faith is the evidence of things not seen, it means that we are walking on the basis of something we do not see. We only know by faith. So, you see, our course of action is not something that we tangibly recognize. It is recognized by faith, and we have willed to walk in that Way of Life.

It also is a matter of "Christian virtue"—Christian virtue. 1 Thessalonians 5 and verse 8. 1 Thessalonians 5 and noting verse 8: "But let us, who are of the

day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." If we are of the day—called and chosen by God—and our course has been changed from the course of night (which represents the kingdom of Satan, that diabolical kingdom of this world), and we have been set upon and established in the way of the day, then let us walk in faith. But we are the children of the day, not of the night. We have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of light. Remember Acts 26 and verse 18? We are walking in the Way of light—day.

So, "let us [then], who are of the day, be sober." That means a real element of sobriety—that means that our minds are weighing and evaluating, and are concerned with the conditions and the circumstances of life. It doesn't mean that we are overburdened, for we cast all of our care upon Christ. But it does mean that we are alert, and that we are attentive, and we're not frolicking, and we're not out casting all our care to the four winds. We are concerned, and we have our eyes wide open, and we are watching with judicious regard and care.

"But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith"—that is, that impenetrable ingredient through which no dart of Satan, the Devil, of this world, or of anybody within humanity, can penetrate. Is that our faith, our trust and our confidence? Brethren, I've seen too many who have been destroyed by all kinds of darts. It makes me wonder, many times, just how many can weather the ups and the downs—the devious circumstances, the troubling, distressing, frightful circumstances of the day—day by day. How many of us can effectively resist these things? We don't look to other human beings—we don't look to other circumstances—our faith and our confidence is in the Truth of God, in the fact that God Almighty called us, and we have had revealed to us a priceless Way of Life. Our faith and our confidence is in that, no matter what any human being does.

And I wonder how many of us will look to a specific doctrine, or look to some situation, and we are evaluating and beginning to manifest, maybe, a few of the traits of human nature instead of the fruits of God's Spirit? We may become distraught and upset. As I said, brethren, the time to become concerned is when we start preaching heresy. Don't judge us on the basis of what some other human being does. And you had better watch, for sure, in your own lives, for I have not seen one who has departed from that Faith which we all originally accepted—for

whatever reason—who has not begun to create many, many great and powerful circumvallations, that is, forts, out of the fabric of their own minds, in the form of all kinds of strange doctrine. Invariably, they begin to distrust the Truth of God. Can you hang on?

So, it is, then, a Christian virtue, and it's going to be manifested just like the example of the Apostle Peter—though he was not yet an apostle at that time: As long as he kept his eyes upon Christ, he didn't sink. Remember Matthew 14:30? When he kept his eyes on Christ, he had no problem, but the minute he began to look to the billowing circumstances about him, he started to sink, until Christ reached out and lifted him up again. And He said, "Oh, Peter, wherefore did you begin to doubt?"

Why do we begin to doubt? Remember, we have Christ with us today, He promised to return—oh, not visibly at this time, but He came back, and we know that He is being created within all who are faithful to Him. So, He is here. How do you know? By that same doctrine, and it never changes. It never changes. Christian virtue, then, is the ability to remain the same—constancy—never giving up. Now, growing is one thing, but changing is something else.

Next, "It is the recognition and acceptance of teaching." James 2 and verse 14. James 2 and let's note verse 14: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" What we're being told here is that real faith is not merely a mesmerization of the human mind. It is manifested in how we walk—action. So it is, then, the recognition and the acceptance of a teaching—a teaching that proceeds from God and from Christ, in which we walk, we act upon it. Every one of us heard it—that Faith that we heard and to which we responded. We had no doubts or misgivings, until human beings faltered. And then many distrusted the Truth.

Let's recognize the teaching of Christ—and I don't mean because you feel that you can pull out the Bible and say, "I'll find out for myself." That is exactly what all people begin to turn to. Why, how many places in the Bible tell you that you could never do that? That trust is going to be given to you initially. That's why you believe it so fervently and so strongly. Why did people turn away when human beings failed? Because they began to set their eyes upon the billowing circumstances of life, rather than on Christ, Who said: "I *am* the Truth. I *am* the

doctrine. I *am* the Way of Life." Christ is that Word manifested. We saw it, and we knew it. Then, faith is in the recognition and the acceptance of that teaching which He gives.

Next, "It is strength—freedom of conviction." Romans 14. Romans the fourteenth chapter, and let's notice verses 22 and 23: "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." He has trust—faith. He doesn't worry about what somebody else is doing. He believes it, even if everybody else falters. What if Christ had looked around and said, "Well, wait a minute, I don't know whether to hang on to this or not. Everybody else is dropping by the wayside." But He knew better, and He believed unto the salvation of His own soul. What about you and me?

"[H]e that doubteth is damned if he eat"—it doesn't matter if it is physical food, or spiritual. "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Then, real faith is implicit strength—confidence. Faith is confidence in that which you have never seen, and it is in Christ, who is the unalterable Word of God. If, then, you have the Truth, you can have faith in it and believe it, though you have never seen it.

In 1 Corinthians 12 and verse 9. 1 Corinthians 12 and verse 9: "To another faith . . ." That is, as a gift. It's a select provision given to certain ones, as it is manifested in its ultimate form. Well, I shouldn't even say "ultimate form," but in an expanded form. "To another faith by the same Spirit." That Spirit gives us that ability, and it will give specific abilities to some for specific purposes.

Now, thirdly: You see, first, we found that, "It is that which causes trust and faith." Secondly, "As faith, it is trust and confidence in an active sense." And then, thirdly, "It is the embodiment of that which is believed—the body of Faith, the belief, the doctrine." Jude the third verse. In Jude and verse 3, we read of this unique circumstance which was going to happen in the last days:

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

That is, trust and belief in the original doctrine are the embodiment of the Truth which was given. In Romans 1 and verse 5. Romans 1, and let me hasten with this, because I want to complete the definition today. Romans the first chapter and let's note verse 5: "By whom we have received grace and apostleship [speaking of Jesus Christ], for obedience to the faith." Now, whatever this Faith is, one is capable of obeying it. I would say that has to be well-defined in the nature of responsibility, doesn't it—law, doctrine, something specific that we can obey?

"[F]or obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name." Whatever the Faith is, the Apostle Paul said it is exactly the same among all nations. Oh, I wonder what many people are going to do with that—those who want to believe that one people had a certain way of life, and somebody else had something else? No, whatever it was that was given, that action of faith was for *all* nations in His name. And "all" means all.

In 1 Timothy 1 and verse 19. 1 Timothy 1 and let's note verse 19. Here Paul, writing to the young evangelist, said: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." Whatever it is, it is something that you and I can lay hold of, and it has a well-defined dimension, because we can stay with it, or we can turn away from it, and those who do turn away are likened to those involved in a shipwreck. Is our faith shipwreck, or is it still on the high sea, sailing with confidence and assurance, despite the billowing storms that are omnipresent?

1 Timothy 4 and verse 1. 1 Timothy 4 and verse 1: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith . . ." Whatever that Faith is, you can either adhere to it, or you can depart from it. So, it is an embodiment of belief. Then, the very concepts which we were talking about up here, initially, are all involved. The first principle of faith is: "That which causes trust and faith." And the second principle is: "Trust and confidence are manifested in an active sense." Those two ingredients are definitely predicated upon the embodiment of belief—trust in that Truth which God gave to us. But some were going to depart from that Faith in the last days, and what were they going to do? They were going to "[give] heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of [demons]." What a harrowing experience. They, perhaps, don't even know nor realize that because they have turned away from the active faith that God

originally gave, they have been listening to demons, and are responding to the doctrines of those demons.

I'll tell you, when we find our entire castle shattered and burned in that last Day, and the whole of the fabric of our conceptions and our beliefs laid bare, how many are going to be embarrassed? We had better have our faith in that which God originally gave to us—trusting it, holding it in confidence, believing it, no matter what anyone else does. Can we remain that faithful? Can we put our confidence and our trust in God and believe it? Can we really believe this word *pistis*—this faith, this conviction? It is a conviction in God—a conviction in Jesus Christ—and a trust in the doctrine which is the manifestation of Jesus Christ Himself, for He said that He was the Doctrine, the Truth, and the Way of Life.

Now, in conclusion, I want to read 2 Timothy 2 and verse 18. 2 Timothy 2 and noting verse 18: "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." People will listen to almost any ideological garbage if it appeals to them. But, my dear brethren, you had better orient yourself to that to which you were originally called. Have faith in it. Don't allow any set of circumstances to ever take you away from it, for therein is the real manifestation of your faith, and anything else is merely a human assertion, and it has no value, nor merit—it is not a matter of faith. Faith is something given, and once it is given, it is manifested in constancy.

Next time, brethren, we're going to, now, deal in the specifics of this word *pistis*.