

**Christian Living Series 2, sermon # 124**  
**The Fruits of God's Holy Spirit**

**Faith #33**

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Edited Sermon Transcript

Greetings, brethren. This is a continuation of the long series, now, on the fruits of God's Holy Spirit—a subject that I do not believe can be superseded by any other subject in all the Bible, because, actually, the fruits of the Spirit are the manifestations of the working of that most auspicious gift of God: His Holy Spirit. It is given to us and is working in our lives. Can anything be more significant than that? It involves personal mastery—the overcoming of self—and the manifestation of the quality of life of Jesus Christ Himself through the power of the Spirit, because we understand that Christ lives in us by the power of that Spirit.

So this is the continuation of that series, now, and this is tape number 33, specifically, on the fruit of faith, itself—which is one of the fruits of God's Holy Spirit. In essence, it is the 124th message, overall, in the series on the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The series is getting to be rather lengthy and there is a great deal more that needs to be yet covered.

The last time, we were discussing—going through—the two very significant considerations of faith, itself. One of those considerations is the fact that faith looks backward. In other words, faith, as we manifest it today, not only looks forward in anticipation of something in the future—as the basic underlying fabric for vision, for confidence, and for assurance—but it also looks back, because our faith that looks to the future is predicated on something that occurred in the past. So it has its double direction. In other words, faith looks backward, as well as looking forward.

So, the last time, we discussed this matter of the faith that looks back, and then, on the heels of that, we established the foundation of that faith, which is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The very fact that Christ Himself lived on this earth, was crucified, was buried, and then, subsequently, was resurrected, became the very foundation of our confidence, our direction, and our assurance of the future.

But then, there is something, now, that points forward. So we are next required to look at that faith as it looks to the future. So faith, then, does look to the future, and we want to know what it is. We know that it is a matter of vision—of grasping something that we cannot put our hands on—because no human being can, through a schematic, or through design, or through calculation, or through any human endeavor, whatsoever, determine what the future is. The future is in the hands of God, and men must manifest faith and confidence in God. So, when we look to the future, it has to do with our health and our well-being; it has to do with our inheritance of everlasting life; and it has to do with our orientation in life, because you and I cannot even determine the next second, and that comes in but a very brief moment for each one of us. Yet, none of us know what the very next second is going to bring. But God knows all those things—not only the next second, but the next day, the next hour, even the next week, and on into the years. He even knows where we are going and what is going to transpire, because the Book of Life has already been recorded, and God knows.

Now, that doesn't mean that any one of us is forced into that configuration. There are those who cannot grasp God's ability to see and to understand all things, and yet leave us as complete free moral agents to bring to pass in our lives whatever we will, elect, or choose to do. He doesn't force us into it, He merely has the capacity to look into the future and say, "This is exactly what they are going to choose to do, individually, with their free moral agency." So, therefore, we act as free moral agents, but God already knows what we are going to do, and it is, in part, even recorded—it has already been recorded—because the Bible says that there are some whose names were written there from the foundation of the world. Now, how in the world can a name be written there if God doesn't know who is doing what, and why?

So He knows that, but you will notice that He never said anything in the Scriptures, whatsoever, about us, individually. He only said that "so-and-so is going to do so-and-so," and He left the choice up to us. So He never indicated what trials and difficulties we would go through, day-by-day. Not at all. He does not indicate our highs and our lows—and every one of us goes through them. We have our ups and our downs, we have our problems, we have our times of exhilaration and excitement, but we have our times of despondency and discouragement, as well. We all go through these things because we are human beings, and it is for that reason that we need to recognize that the most auspicious

and the most significant thing, I guess, that should happen in our lives is the mastery of self. That's why we are here. It isn't a matter of all of the intellectual achievements. It isn't the fact that we can stretch our brains—our minds—to achieve great status in the world, or that we have tremendous mental capacity, and so on.

Now, I'm not downgrading those things, whatsoever. God wants intelligent beings, yes, but is that the most important thing? There are people who are filled with vanity and with arrogance who are incredibly smart. Is that what God wants? Not at all. He would rather we would be a little less smart—if it's a matter of choice—and have a little better character. So God wants us, first and foremost, to achieve character, and then, if we can add to that brilliance, success, and accomplishment, marvelous—we have then given things the proper priority in our lives, and those things are most significant and most essential.

So, we are looking forward, now, into this concept of "faith"—faith that both looks back (and is predicated on something that has occurred in the past), and in a forensic consideration, looks into the future. What is this faith, then, which looks forward?

In Galatians the fifth chapter—Galatians the fifth chapter—and I would like to cover a number of texts today, so I hope that I can avoid long and elaborate explanations, although, my dear brethren, I am going to take the time, if necessary, because I want us to understand faith. I don't want to go through all the speaking that I am going through, and the amount of time that I am consuming from you, without leaving something that you can sink your teeth into. If we don't really understand it, and if faith is still a nebulous principle, we will not have achieved anything. So, brethren, I ask, please hear what is said—listen carefully—and make these things significant in your lives. I am going to read them directly from God's Word, but they are principles we all lived in times past—we knew, we understood, and we had that very foundational confidence and trust. So listen carefully, and let's move along as rapidly as we can, now.

Here in Galatians the fifth chapter, verses 5 and 6: "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness . . ." For we through the Spirit—now, it is through the Spirit that we have faith, isn't it? If I understand correctly, just down a few verses here, in the same chapter, we find the gift of faith is through God's

Holy Spirit. So, "we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness . . ." What is righteousness? It has nothing to do with the brilliance of our minds, it has to do with the character of the individual—obedience to the laws, the statutes and the judgments of God.

So, "we through the Spirit"—that is, the power of the Spirit, then—"wait [patiently, I hope] for the hope of righteousness [that is, for the manifestation of that character in our lives] by faith." You see, we are looking down into the future for the hope of that character.

I was thinking broadly as I was driving over to the studio this morning on how the most important thing in the life of a true and a genuine Christian is self-effacement—mastery. You know, that's what the Apostle Paul said very clearly in 1 Corinthians 13. He said you can have all knowledge—he said you can have all of these various things, you know, so that you can manifest great visibility, and so that you can do this, and you can do that, and you can have all insight with regard to prophecy, past, present and future, and you can do all of these things—but what are you? He classified those who do nothing more than that as tinkling cymbals and sounding brass. What do you have? A lot of garbled noises—and that's what human beings are. But what he showed us was that self-mastery—which is love, compassion, understanding, mercy, kindness, and all of these things—is awesome in its significance.

Just the ability, brethren, to keep guard on the doors of our mouths is perhaps the most significant thing—the most significant responsibility—that has ever been given to us. None of us have done it perfectly. It is a terrible trial. How many times I have to apologize to God, and I just get sick of this nature. But I—and I've never given it up—intend to master it, and to think good of people, and to always have an optimistic and a right spirit and outlook concerning human beings. I want to have that. I do not want, by nature, to be critical—I'm sick of it. I've seen too much of it—not only in the self, but in others—and what a dirty blotch in the life of anybody. I don't want it.

You know, we have seen people—and we all make mistakes, but we have seen some—who just seemingly have perfect control over that mechanism of the body. And nobody dislikes them. You like them, sure you do, but sometimes we don't want to put forth the effort to be like them. That requires effort on the part of

some of us—and a lot of effort. We have to struggle against it. But we would rather sit down and justify it. We will justify it by saying things like, "Well, now, I'm not going to be led about by a ring in my nose, and I'm not this, and I'm not that." You know, "I'm going to speak my mind, because God didn't give me a mind for nought." No, He didn't. He gave you a mind with which to consider what you are, and to bring about the necessary mastery. That's why He gave you one. But no, we will turn it around. So we justify our disagreeable natures, our hatefulness, and our contempt by assuming that we have a right to evaluate—to employ the basic Biblical principles, and thereby evaluate times, conditions and circumstances. We don't have that right, at all. We *do not* have that right.

But what did Paul say? "For we through the Spirit [that power that was given to us by which we are to manifest the character of God] wait for the hope of righteousness . . ." Is that what you are waiting for? Is that what I am waiting for? I am not waiting around to manifest my own ego—I am not waiting around to see how I can criticize somebody else—I am waiting with glorious anticipation for the effected mastery in my life, mentally, emotionally, and in every other respect, and that by faith. So, righteousness is a future consideration. We are looking for the day of that kind of control in our lives.

Notice verse 6, now: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Faith which worketh by love. Love is what? It is a compassionate feeling; it is understanding; it is mercy; it is the nature of God, and yet, I have even seen some attempt to justify critical natures within the concept of love, and you talk about the proverbial blotch—or the pigsty, or whatever term you want to use—on a beautiful setting, that must be it. How in the world can we ever desecrate the concept of love by the concept of bitterness and contempt on our parts? No, by "faith which worketh by love." Love, then, is a foundational principle of faith—for the real manifestation of faith is love. When we really have faith, it means that we are the most loving, compassionate, kind and merciful people of all. We do not ridicule others, even though they may warrant it. We just don't tear people to pieces. We do not use position; we do not use knowledge; we do not use anything to our advantage, personally, to tear people down. It is not our right, and it is not our privilege.

Why can we not remember the concept of Jesus Christ of the mote and the beam? Do you know why we don't remember it? Because we don't agree with

Him—we don't believe that it is a beam in our eyes. Oh, yes, most of us will say that we sin, but our sins are probably minute in comparison to what we think some are doing. And if we think that, then our sin is the greatest of all, for the sin of self-righteousness is unbelievably iniquitous, but we had better face it for what it is.

Alright then, faith does look forward, and the substantiation of that faith is love, and love is the manifested character of God. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." How much will you give for someone called of God, even though you do not agree with what they are doing? What kind of love will you tender? What kind of compassion will you tender? Or, would you rather rip them apart, justifying it by saying, "Well, somebody has to get them informed."

Well, you know, I'm reminded of what Jesus Christ said, when He said: "There are things that I would like to tell you, but you can't bear them yet." You know, there are some things that should not be said when some people think they should be. It's better to wait, for it's a whole lot better for somebody to grow slowly than to turn them around so that they don't grow at all. So, let us then manifest that forward-looking faith in love, and in compassion, and in mercy.

In 2 Thessalonians, now, and the first chapter. 2 Thessalonians the first chapter and noting verse 11, but let's read verses 9 through 12:

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power . . .

We are looking forward, now, to that ultimate day (and is not that what he is talking about?) "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints . . ." And how is He going to be glorified in them? Because we have brilliant minds? Is that the basis of it? No. Why is it that He has chosen the poor and the weak in this world, but rich in faith?

We place such an emphasis upon mental acquisition. Now, I can't say anything, and emphasize anything, anymore but what people will take it out of context. It's just like my constant emphasis upon faith, because of the Faith once delivered, and the fact that you cannot technically prove it from God's Word, so people have now assumed that I have said that you should never read nor study God's Word. Would any of you kindly tell me when I ever said that? I don't even believe it. I believe in personal study, every single day, as a must. But what I am saying is that all of the personal study in the world will never bring you to the knowledge of God's Truth. Never. It is given by faith, and then you substantiate it by your reading. That's the only way you are ever going to get it, and I can give you all the historical examples of it.

You know, ancient Israel didn't get the Truth of God because down in Egypt they suddenly decided that "you know, we have been missing our God for a long time. Now, there are some excellent libraries, both here in Memphis, as well as down in Thebes, and up in Alexandria. So why don't we get up now to those excellent libraries, and let's start studying and see if we can find out about God." So Israel went up to the great libraries of this world and they started studying, and lo and behold, they found God. Now, you know as well as I do, that's how they found God, didn't they? Or, did they? How in the world did Israel come to the knowledge of God? God, by a set of circumstances, sent a man out into the wilderness, and then He came down, and He didn't bring any books that I know of—at least the Bible doesn't tell me that He did. He didn't bring any books, whatsoever, to lay them out before Moses. He came down and He said, "Moses, Moses, I am the Lord—the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and I have come down because I am going to give something to you." Oh, it is stated in many ways. And God gave it to them—not only the Ten Commandments, but if you will recall, He even carried all the statutes and the judgments when He came down and sat between those two cherubim upon the mercy seat, when Moses came before Him, and God taught him. Remember Exodus 25 and verse 22? That's how he got it; then God said, "I want you to go and teach them." Now, did that mean that Israel should never look at a book? No, I didn't say that, at all. That is not how they got the Truth, however.

Now, Jesus Christ came into this world as an infant, and was it not a marvelous thing that He was born in a time of great erudition, so that He could easily go either to Greece, or to Rome, to all of these tremendous libraries in those

two areas, and over to Athens and some of the other areas of Greece? That was an area of tremendous learning—all of Greece, as well as over in Rome. So Christ had beautiful opportunities so that He could go over to these great libraries, and He could sit before the great and the learned of this world and learn tremendous things. And as soon as He learned all of these things, He came back and taught His twelve, and then turned around and told them, "Well, you go teach others, now." Now, you know that is how Christ got it, or did He? No, Christ was given the Truth. He said, "The Father gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak," and He said, "I did not deliver one word that the Father did not give to me." I didn't say it, Christ said it. So, how did Christ get it? Well, maybe they did have a great university up in heaven, I don't know. I highly doubt it, however, because He said the Father gave it to Him. So even His own endeavor didn't have anything to do with it. The Father gave it to Christ, and He came down and taught it. When will we hear? That's what Christ said; I didn't say it.

Now, how in the world did the twelve get their knowledge? What God gave to Christ, Christ, in turn, gave to them, and then He said, "Go out and teach it." Well, now, we can say that Christ was a great teacher. Oh, indeed He was, don't take any exception with that, whatsoever. But how did they get it? Christ gave it to them. They didn't go to any universities. And I am not saying that they shouldn't go to a university, please don't misunderstand me. What I am saying is that all of the study in the world is never going to give you the Truth of God, because that comes by spiritual means.

Now, you can support it, sure. Two things will support it: number one, living it, and number two, it isn't any different than what He had recorded. So it is recorded here, but you are not going to find out what is recorded here by your own endeavor. It's going to be revealed, and *then* you will see it.

Now, the Apostle Paul—there is a classic example, because he was a learned man. He had great mental capacity and brilliance, but he was doing his own thing up until Christ called him, and then taught him for three years as one born out of due season. He didn't get it through any university. He didn't even know the Truth up until that time, and then God gave it to him. And then he turned around and a number of times said, "That which has been delivered to me, I have delivered to you." That's how Truth comes.



So, people will take things right out of context—they lift them right out of context—because they want to be critical. I've never said, "don't study," but what I have said is that you are not going to get the Truth that way. You are going to get it because God has called somebody and sent that individual, and you heard it, and then it requires faith in order to be faithful to it—and lots of faith at that.

Now, once God calls us, the most significant thing, as I said before, that can happen in your lives is personal mastery. But people do not want to work on those things. What they want to do is to satisfy the natural demands of arrogant human minds. So they want to sit down, and they start sorting things out, and they think they can come to the knowledge of God's Truth by their own great skill and capacity of mind. Oh, sure, they will then turn right around and say that they believe God revealed it to them, and that God is directing their minds, and so on. It is amazing, isn't it, how diverse the mind of God is? This one who believes something, doesn't believe what the other one does, and he thinks that he got it from God. And yet, the only thing that will ever make you any different than any other human being—if you are called and chosen of Him—is the mind of Jesus Christ. Now, how many minds did Christ have? Is it not tragic that we will turn right around and accuse Christ of being so schizophrenic? And we believe that with a straight face. I say it's tragic. The Christ that I serve, and the God in whom I believe, has one mind, and one mind only. There is one Lord, one doctrine, and one baptism, and we had better find it. And you are never going to find it by your own endeavor. Even the one chosen of God has to have it given to him, and then he preaches it. He didn't find it by his own capability, not at all. But it is supported and substantiated by living it, and by the written word of God—which is the letter of the Word.

There is a faith that looks forward, and I want us to understand what that faith is, because that faith will keep us pure in our relationship. We are looking forward to something, because when we really see it, and the obvious manifestation of the real operation of God's Holy Spirit—no longer tainted and polluted by the arrogance and the conceit of human minds—it is in personal mastery. You are going to see it. When you see somebody who has given up the arrogance of his own mind, and he is simply trying to master himself, you will see it. When somebody begins to ridicule or to criticize somebody else, he says, "Well, I'm sorry, I don't have time to involve myself in the concerns and the affairs of other people's lives. I've got too much to overcome, myself. I just simply ask

you, please, to pray for me. All I must do is master myself—I've got to. And then, knowing how difficult it is to master myself, give me tolerance for somebody else, because I know what he is up against also." That person will make it. That's what the Bible clearly shows.

So, we find here in verse 11 of 2 Thessalonians the first chapter, once again:

Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power . . .

What is that work of faith? The ability to go down to a university? To sit and to study, and to absorb? Or, is it personal mastery and putting on the character of God? Oh, don't jump to any conclusions; there are at least dozens of texts that will show you that the responsibility is in personal mastery.

"That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." In other words, what he is showing is that the glory is the manifestation of that character in our lives—which is the laws, the statutes and the judgments of God manifested in the character of Jesus Christ, and written within us. It has nothing to do with the arrogance of one's own natural mind.

Now, what about that faith that looks back? I want to be rather specific about it. We have looked at the faith that looks forward. We have even talked, in times past, about the faith which looks back. But let's now see if we can positively identify it.

Here in Galatians the third chapter, and let's begin in verse 8. Galatians 3 and beginning in verse 8: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham . . ." The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen *through* faith. *There* is that forward-looking faith, now—the fact that they were to be justified.

But let's see, now, how it applies to those who are called: "God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham . . ." Now we are looking back. Who does it involve? Both Jew and Gentile—both

Israelite and Gentile is the better expression. Both of them are looking back, but particularly Gentiles here.

And, "preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Now they are looking back to a promise that God gave to Abraham, and within that promise was found the very heart and core of faith. Yet, Israel did not comprehend it, because we turn to Hebrews the fourth chapter, verses 1 through 3, and we find that they could not obey, because the Gospel that was preached to them was not mixed with faith. So they didn't have it. Why did they not have it? Because the Holy Spirit had not been given. Faith is not an indigenous characteristic of human beings. Faith comes through the gift of God's Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit had not yet been given, even in the days of the training of the twelve apostles. Not until after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ was it given, when Christ said, "I want you to tarry here until you be endued with power from on high." And that power is positively identified as the gift of God's Holy Spirit in Acts 1 and verse 8.

Now, what did he say here? Looking back, then, to the time of the promise that was given to Abraham, but forward to the fulfillment of that promise: "In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Looking forward, now, each generation of those called are blessed with faithful Abraham. Are we a part of it as we look forward to our time?

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse"—that is, the natural, physical, letter application, which involved the penal system.

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

The curse was upon disobedience. How in the world was that curse going to be lifted? By the destruction of the Law? Not at all, but by the destruction of Christ, who took our responsibility. No place does it say that the Law was destroyed. Christ was destroyed. That Law put Christ on the stake and He paid the price, totally. So we now look forward in anticipation to the intent and purpose of that faith, which looks back to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

And what is the object of that faith with which we look forward? Mastery and overcoming. Why did Christ die? He died so that we might be made like Him. He died so that we might have our pasts forgiven and that we might become like Him. That's the intent and the purpose.

And so he said: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." He didn't say that the curse was done away. It did away with Christ.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident . . ." You can't be. How can you be justified by the thing that tells you that you need to be justified? You see, I wouldn't have known that I needed to be justified in the sight of God if it hadn't been for the Law, and the statutes and the judgments of God. Then, how in the world can I justify myself by the very thing that tells me that I need to be justified? It isn't possible.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." What faith? The faith that that price was paid. That's it. The faith that that price was paid in Christ. That's why I have my optimism and my hope; that's why I struggle against myself today; that's why I make the personal sacrifices that I do. If in Christ Jesus we have hope only at the present time, we are, then, of all men most miserable. We are looking forward to something far greater than that. Our hope lies in tomorrow. "The just shall live by faith"—faith that goes back to the past (that Christ paid the price totally), and faith that goes forward into the fact that we are going to be glorified like He is when He returns. That's our hope and our confidence.

And the law is not of faith [Of course it isn't, but is there anything here that says you are not supposed to obey it? Why, of course not.]: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them [said the Apostle Paul]. Christ hath redeemed us [not from the Law but] from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us [so we are looking back, now, to what happened for us]: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles . . .

Now we are looking forward again. So we look back to what happened through Christ, as we look forward to what will be fulfilled in Christ. It's all going to be in Christ.

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

It is all written in Christ, totally—Christ, as we look back in faith, who paid the price for us (and what a relief that is), and as we look forward in Christ to the receipt of that glorious mastery and overcoming that He has promised.

"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul." We are talking about something else, altogether, that came years afterward—after the very commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments that Abraham kept. This is something that was added four hundred and thirty years later. Obviously, it has to be, then, the physical manifestation, with the physical penal system.

"[T]hat it should make the promise of none effect [Why? The promise was in faith, not in letter application]. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise." In other words, if our claim is the fact that we are the possessors by birth of the Law, then it is no longer a matter of faith, nor of promise, it's a matter of inheritance—it is a matter of birthright. And we are not going to inherit it by any physical birthright; we are going to inherit it by a spiritual birthright when we have crucified the self and have become one in Christ. And when you become one in Christ, remember Christ was a Jew. He came unto His own. Christ was a Jew—I don't care what people are saying. All kinds of people are trying to tell you that Christ wasn't a Jew. Why don't they read the Bible in plain language? It says so: "the lion of the tribe of Judah." I don't know how in the world you can misinterpret that one.

"For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." So, you and I, whether Gentile or Israelite, are looking back to the time of Abraham, to something that was delivered by promise, and a promise that is yet to be fulfilled. It has never been received. But that doesn't do away with, nor establish the Law, either one. The Law is established in its own right, but the Law does not give us the right of inheritance of life.

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions [Then whatever it was, it was added because of transgression, and how do we know what transgression is? By the Law. So obviously, we are talking about two different things, then, aren't we?], till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

No law is going to give us righteousness. Remember now what we are looking forward to? If you will recall Galatians 5 and verse 5, we are looking forward by faith to the hope of righteousness. The Law cannot deliver that. Righteousness is a gift through the power of God's Holy Spirit, by which Christ lives within us. But are you going to be keeping the Law? Indeed you are. We are talking about two different things, altogether.

Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ . . .

So we are looking back, then, to the time of Abraham, and remember, we are called the children of Abraham—every one of us. So we are the children of Abraham, whether Jew or Gentile, it doesn't make any difference. We are all going to become the children of Abraham, and that was before there was any Judah.

But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law . . .

You see, faith wasn't back there. That's why they didn't obey. And our problem today is that we sometimes can't obey, because faith still doesn't have that much meaning to us.

"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." They just couldn't do it because it was shut up. Why was it shut up? Because it wasn't given. God didn't even allow it or permit it. There was no salvation offered at that time.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ [Yes, it brought us to Christ, but do we do away with it? Why, of course not.], that we might be justified by faith." So the Law brings us to that relationship with God, but our justification is going to be by faith. It isn't in our obedience to God. Our obedience is as filthy rags. We are justified by faith in Christ, if we are called and we have that faith and that confidence. But we are talking about two different things. Justification, put in a proper relationship with Christ, has nothing to do with the Law. That's a separate entity all of its own. Now, once we are put into a proper relationship with God, should we continue keeping God's Law? Yes, indeed. Or maybe, in some cases, we *begin* to keep God's Law. Indeed we must.

So we find, then, that faith looks back to something that God had transpire long before even the time of Christ. I'll tell you, there were some historical events in times past that were awesomely significant, and yet, how many people really realized it? How many people in the days of Abraham knew what was occurring in his life—in the birth of that child, and the promises that were given to him, and the actions that Abraham took in his life? How many of them realized that? Well, no one seems to ever understand in his own day, and yet, how many people today—because now it is recorded and they have somehow become impelled, or convinced, that they should believe it—look back and lay claim to all of these promises and assurances? But they violate every one of the principles. Isn't it amazing? They lay claim to the name of Christ—they will lay claim to the name of Abraham, or of Moses, or whoever—and then turn right around and do whatever they want to do. This Christ didn't do. This Abraham didn't do. No, they were faithful and obedient. That's exactly what you and I must be.

Alright, next I want us to notice Hebrews 11 and verse 3. Hebrews 11 and verse 3: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed." That seems to be a far cry from what science does. You see, they won't take anything that they say they can't prove, or demonstrate, by some physical means, and so they won't accept a world brought into existence by a divine force or power. But the called believe through faith. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed"—not by evolution, not by any natural processes, whatsoever.

"[T]he worlds were framed by the word of God [that is, God brought them into being], so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." *There* is really the foundational principle. Now you get right back to the fact that God brought everything into being—that is, into existence—and He did so for a reason. What did He say in Isaiah 45? He created the world, but He created it not in vain. He created it to be inhabited. Then, what He is saying is that when God created this world, He had a plan in mind, and you are a part of it. It was created for human beings—human beings who had already been listed in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, and it would be the hope and the glorious expectation of every one that would ever be born on the face of this earth, for they are all going to be given an opportunity at some time. For God is not partial, "but who will have all men to come to the knowledge" of His will, of His Way, and be brought to repentance.

So God created this world to be inhabited by human beings and He put everything else here for man's benefit, and for man's good—animals, air, water. He made it habitable. So far as we know, it is the only planet, it is the only sphere—in all of this great, vast universe—that is habitable by man. That is, it is not foreign to him—it will not take his life.

You know, any time man leaves this earth, he has to take a great deal of it with him or he would never live. God created this world, then, to be inhabited. And so, the entire plan and the purpose of God goes all the way back to that Creation, and by faith we understand that God created, or framed, the worlds by His own Word "so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear"—they were made out of something that you and I do not comprehend. How in the world, then, will scientists ever come to understand the basis of that Creation? They can't see it—they never will. They have to accept it on faith. That faith, brethren, is the faith that looks back and also to the future. It is the faith that



says God created this world for a purpose, and it is also the faith, then, that looks to the future, that God is going to bring to the ultimate realization His plan and His purpose. What a glorious, magnificent faith. That is the faith, brethren, that Jesus Christ gave us through the power of the Spirit, if we can give up the self. And that seems so hard to do—so hard to do.

Now, man's manifestation of faith is deficient—it needs to be perfected. We don't start out with perfect faith. Faith is a gift, but by circumstances, that faith can grow—it can be polished, it can be made more effective, more powerful, more all-pervasive in our lives.

Here in 1 Thessalonians. 1 Thessalonians 3 and I want to quickly read about four texts here, and then we will have to bring this tape to a conclusion today. 1 Thessalonians 3 and beginning in verse 8, with specific mention in verse 10. 1 Thessalonians 3, verses 8 through 11: "For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." Now, how did we get Him in the first place except through faith? Has anybody ever seen Him? Then, how do we know, unless we just carry on with argumentation and say, "Well, I'm a part of it too," you know. We can lay claim to all kinds of things, but that doesn't mean anything. Those who are really called of God *know* who they are, and that's that. Others will merely make a claim, but they are known hypocrites, and the manifestation of that will occur in its own time.

For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith? [Might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.] Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

Next I want you to notice 2 Thessalonians 1 and verse 3. 2 Thessalonians 1 and noting verse 3: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." So you see, even faith grows. That is our implicit confidence and our trust, manifested in our straightness, our consistency, our lack of change, and our perseverance in God's Way. That is the evidence of real faith.

James 1 and verse 3. James 1 and noting verse 3: "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." In other words, the manifestation of that faith, then, is predicated upon various experiences and trials. So, there is a perfection of our faith that occurs. It is deficient and it must be made stronger.

1 Peter 1 and verse 7. 1 Peter 1 and let's note verse 7:

That the trial of your faith [it has to be subjected to that trial of experience], being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

So, there are all kinds of things that are going to happen to our faith. It is going to be tried so that when we stand in that day (remember the faith that looks forward to the coming of Jesus Christ?), we will stand with a firm faith and a firm resolve, for we know who we are, and we have manifested it in consistency of life, in determination and in dedication.

Next time, brethren, we are going to pick up more of the characteristics of that faith and what it means to you.