STRONG FAITH

Intro: After Jesus’ teaching on forgiveness the apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith; Luke 17:5 “And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.” We should each desire to have our faith increased so that we will have a strong faith.

I. FAITH’S ORIGIN.
   A. Faith does not come by:
      1. The direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon a person.
      2. An answer of prayer.
   B. Faith comes from God by means of His Word.
      1. Rom. 10:17 “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
      2. Mat. 13:8-9, 23 “But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. 8Who hath ears to hear, let him hear....23But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”
      3. John 20:30-31 “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 30But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”
      4. Acts 15:7 “And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.”
      5. Acts 17:11-12 “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. 11Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.”
      6. Acts 18:8 “And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”
   C. Faith is our conviction, trust and confidence.
      1. Heb. 11:1 “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
      2. Upon the appropriate evidence; man obediently responds to God’s Word, thus placing his trust in Him.

II. RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF YOUR SOUL.
   A. The soul is our most valued possession.
      1. Mat. 16:26 “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
      2. The soul is far more valuable than all the money, power prestige, etc. one might gain.
      3. It is the only thing that deals with the eternal destiny of man.
   B. In the kingdom the needs of the soul are meet.
      1. Thus we should desire the kingdom as is seen by Christ’s parables.
      2. Mat. 13:44 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”
3. Mat. 13:45-46 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: “Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

4. Mat. 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

C. It is by living righteous lives, we save our souls,
1. Mat. 25:46 “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
2. Heb. 11:25-26 “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;”
3. “Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.”

III. Determination; Tenacity; Stick-to-itiveness.
A. The Scriptures teach us to endure.
1. 1 Cor. 15:58 “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
2. Heb. 12:1 “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”

B. Only those who persevere to death will be saved.
1. Mat. 10:22 “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”
2. Mat. 24:13 “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”
3. Rev. 2:10 “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

IV. Fellowship of Brethren.
A. We all need the help and aid of faithful brethren.
1. Rom. 16:1-2 “I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: "That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.”
2. 2 Tim. 1:16-18 “The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: "But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.”

B. Faithful association with faithful brethren, will aid in overcoming Satan’s temptations.

Conclusion: We can have a strong faith. Let us ever work to that end.