



THE CHURCH AT ELLERSLIE
SUNDAY SERMON NOTES

ERIC LUDY

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2014

THE TWO TREES

A Study in the Anatomy of Faith

A Three Part Series



The Church at Ellerslie

Presented by Eric Ludy

Sunday Morning
October 12, 2014

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SESSION ONE

THE BREAKING OF THE JAR

Understanding the Action of Faith

The Importance of Faith

Christianity is built on one very basic thing. Faith. And without faith there isn't much left in the whole operation, because everything in Christianity that matters operates with it. If you want grace, you need faith. If you want to know God's love and live in God's love, again it's faith that provides the passport. Salvation? Yep, faith. Victory? Uh-huh, faith. Holiness? Faith. Righteousness? Faith.

It says in Hebrews 11:6 that "without faith it is impossible to please God." Then again in Galatians 5:6, "the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself in love." Oh, and yet again in Ephesians 2:8, "You are saved by grace through faith." It would appear that a lot rests on this idea of "faith", and in fact, a lot does. In this whole Gospel schematic, faith is the linchpin. If faith is absent then the Gospel is rendered powerless in a human life. Faith is the soul fuel upon which the Gospel spark kindles and sets aflame.

E.L. - The Bravehearted Gospel

Faith Needs Something in Order to be Faith

It needs an object of faith;

It needs something to look upon and consider impressive;

It needs something to trust, something to put its confidences in;

It needs an object of salvation.

The Girl and Her Treasure

The beautiful picture of Faith in action

And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He (Jesus) sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask (jar, container) of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask (jar, container) and poured it on His head.

Mark 14:3

Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

John 12:3

The Indignation of the Onlookers

But, that spikenard is some valuable stuff!

And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

Mark 14:4

Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

John 12:4-5

What is Spikenard?

The Healing Juice - Nardos

Spikenard, the head of a fragrant East Indian plant, which yields an oily juice of delicious odor which the ancients used (either pure or mixed) in the preparation of a most precious ointment. It is a healing juice, used for an extraordinary number of ailments. It is a skin tonic that helps to cure fungal and bacterial skin infections and provides relief from various types of inflammation. It helps cure constipation; it provides relief from insomnia, stress, and anxiety; it is a perfume and is also an effective deodorant. In addition to that, it treats allergies, fevers, hemorrhoids, angina pain, and varicose veins. This healing juice aids in cell regeneration, the healing of wounds, the circulation of blood and lymph, and the secretion of hormones and enzymes. It's the cure-all substance.

A Quick Lesson in the Greek

Three Words to Help us Understand Faith

Introducing Mary of Bethany and Her Treasure

- Mary had something quite special in her possession . . . a big jar of very expensive healing juice
- This big jar of very expensive healing juice was the ideal thing to keep stowed away in her pantry. For if ever she fell upon hard times, she could always sell her extremely valuable healing juice in order to survive. So, without even knowing it, she put her trust in this big jar of very expensive healing juice.

Greek Word #1 - Pistis (noun) πίστις

translation = **faith**

*Mary had **faith (pistis)** in her big jar of very expensive healing juice*

- Mary was introduced to Jesus Christ. When she saw Jesus, she realized that HE indeed was the proper object of her faith. So, she believed in Jesus Christ.

Greek Word #2 - Pisteuō (verb) πιστεύω

translation = **to believe** (it's the action of faith)

*Mary, in seeing the ability of Jesus to save her, **believed (pisteuō-ed)** in Him
and trusted that He, indeed, was her salvation*

- Mary realized that to believe in Jesus, she needed to give up her trust in her big jar of very expensive healing juice and transfer all of her confidence to the Master of her salvation.

Greek Word #3 - Pistikos Nardos (adj + noun) πιστικός νάρδος

translation = **the object of one's faith** (the expensive liquid in which one trusts)

- Mary broke open her big jar of very expensive healing juice on the head and feet of Jesus. She gave up her soul allegiance to her previous **pistikos nardos** and transferred her loyalties to a new **Pistikos Nardos**.

Four Key Truths About Faith

1. Faith, to be genuine faith, must have action - it must believe

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1. Faith, to be genuine faith, must have action - it must believe
 2. **Faith must have an object (a focal point) in which to direct its confidence**
- Mary had an object. She believed her big jar of expensive healing juice could save her. But when she met Jesus, she repented of her faith in her sweet-smelling earthly liquid and transferred her confidence to something greater - the “healing juice of Heaven”, the precious and priceless blood of Jesus Christ poured out for her.

The Healing Juice of Heaven

The Blood of Jesus

And He (Jesus) took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Matthew 26:27-28

What is the precious Blood of Christ for?

It's for **atonement** for sin (Romans 5:11); a **propitiation** (Romans 3:25); it for our **justification** from sin (Romans 5:9); for the **forgiveness** of sins (Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, Hebrews 9:7); for the **remission of sins**. (Matthew 26:28, Romans 3:25, Hebrews 9:22); for the **cleansing, washing from all sin** (1 John 1:7, Revelation 1:5, Revelation 7:14); for the **purging of our consciences** (Hebrews 9:14); for **peace** (Colossians 1:20); for **reconciliation** unto Christ (Colossians 1:20); for **righteousness** (Romans 3:22, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 3:9); for the purpose of **saving us from the wrath that will come** (Romans 5:9); for the **destruction of the devil** (Hebrews

2:14); for **overcoming the Devil** (Revelation 12:11); for **redemption**, eternal redemption - for **the purchase of our very beings** (Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, Hebrews 9:12, Revelation 5:9, Acts 20:28); for the purpose of giving us **life within, eternal life** (John 6:53,54); for the **bringing back to life** (Hebrews 13:20); for **sanctification** (Hebrews 10:29; Hebrews 13:12); for **spiritual and physical healing** (Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24); for **boldness to enter in to the Holy of Holies**, the very presence of God (Hebrews 10:19); for the purpose of enabling us to make our daily, hourly, minute-by-minute **home in Christ Jesus** (John 6:56)

Jesus Points to Mary's Action

And makes it clear that her behavior is the essence of the Gospel

Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.

Mark 14:9

What Did this Woman Do?

She showed us how faith works

Repent and Believe

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Mark 1:14-15

It's not pouring out earthly spikenard that saves. It's faith that saves. It's believing that Christ is our rightful Pistikos Nardos that truly supplies us salvation. And when we see Jesus as our lone source of Salvation, like Mary, we will gladly grab our jar of earthly spikenard and, as an evidence of our faith, repent of putting our confidences therein, and pour it out upon Him as an offering of worship.

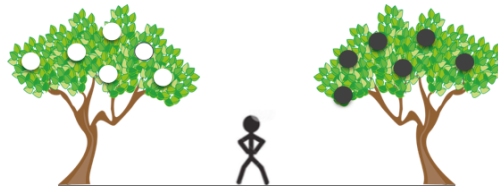
The Cup Illustration

Pouring out the poisoned water inside in order that it might be filled with living water

Welcome to the Garden

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil . . . And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eats thereof thou shalt surely die.

Genesis 2:9,16-17



The Wooing of the Liar

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

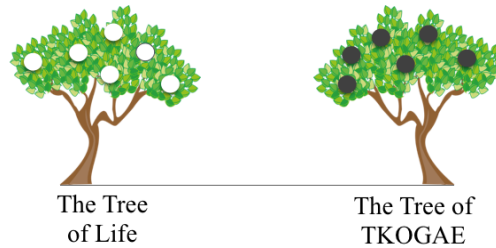
Genesis 3:1-6

The First Adam's Failure

We are IN Adam's Failure

We are born clinging to our very expensive big jar of earthly healing juice

The Two Trees



First, What is a Tree?

It's a place of decision, a place of judgment

The Law of the Forbidden Tree

If you eat . . . you die!

. . . of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, **thou shalt not eat of it:** for in the day that thou eats thereof **thou shalt surely die.**

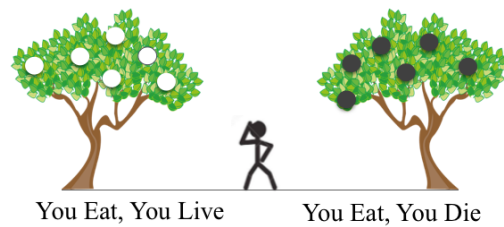
Genesis 2:9,16-17

The Law of the Second Tree

Unless you eat . . . you cannot live!

. . . Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Unless you eat** the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, **you have no life** in you.

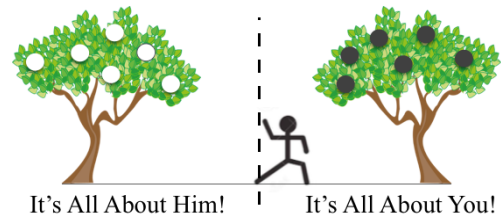
John 6:53



The Two Trees and Their Fruit

The Forbidden Tree - a promise of self-glory, the Word of the Liar

The Second Tree - a promise of salvation, the Word of God, the Word of Truth



SESSION TWO

THE DANGERS OF DOUBTING

Straight-talk about the Sinfulness of Spiritual Wavering

Abraham

The man who had no children

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but **thy name shall be Abraham**; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

Genesis 17:5

Abraham

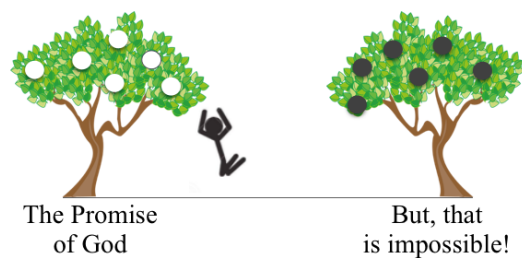
Father of a numberless multitude - father of so many you can't even count them

Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

Genesis 17:17

He **staggered not** at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And **being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.**

Romans 4:20-21



What's Happened To This Sort of Faith?

... When the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?

Luke 18:8

Little Boy Certainty

The shape, the size, the weight of the box were all perfect . . . it simply had to be . . .

Faith Under Siege

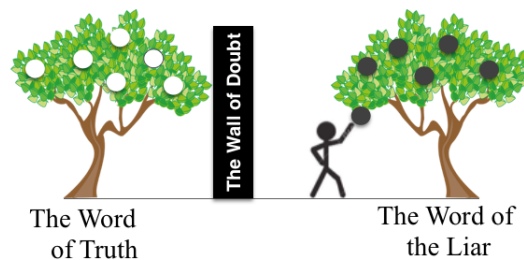
- The Trending of Hip Doubt
- Doubt Nights

The Triumphant Return of Faith

Understanding “Fact, Faith, and Experience”

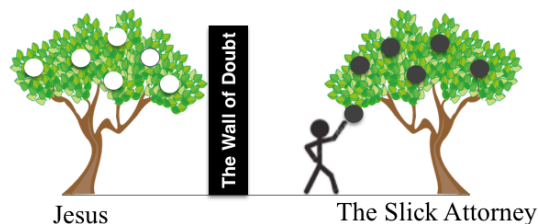
Doubt - Diakrinō [dē-ä-krē'-nō]

To side against, to ally with one over against another, to forsake a previous allegiance, to waver in support of one candidate and vote in support of another



Introducing the Slick Attorney

He's that one over here with the pungent cologne, the slicked back greasy hairdo, the disturbing toothy grin, that never stops yammering



Weighing the Evidence

of the Liar

And when the woman **saw** that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat . . .

Genesis 3:6

of the Truth

Behold (*to see - discern, inspect, examine*), what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God . . .

1 John 3:1

No Diakrinō!

Do NOT examine the Lying Lawyer's evidence

For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does **not doubt (has No Diakrinō!)** in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.

Mark 11:23

He **staggered not (had No Diakrinō!)** at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Romans 4:20-21

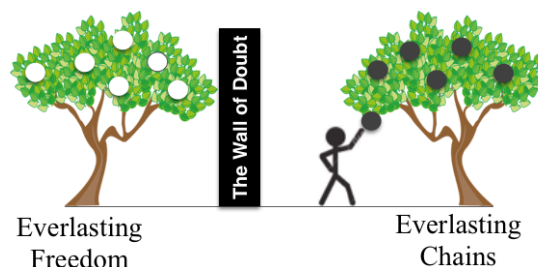
Doubting God's Word

The Barrier to Truth

. . . the Truth shall make you free.

John 8:32

The Lie shall lock you away in everlasting chains!



The Seriousness of the Command

- To entertain doubt is to stand against the Truth
- To show hospitality, in the slightest degree, to the pleas of the Lying Lawyer is to make place for the Enemy
- To fix the eyes of your soul on the Deceiver's evidence is to lend it credence and power in your life

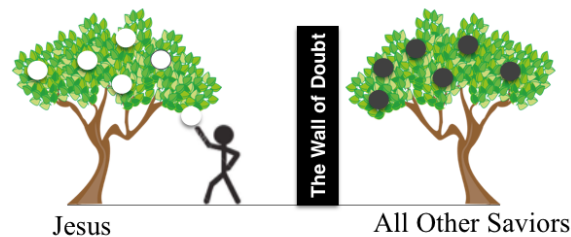
Doubt should never be cherished, nor fears harbored. Let none cherish the delusion that he is a martyr to fear and doubt. It is no credit to any man's mental capacity to cherish doubt of God, and no comfort can possibly derive from such a thought. Our eyes should be taken off self, removed from our own weakness, and allowed to rest implicitly upon God's strength. A simple, confiding faith, living day by day, and casting its burden on the Lord each hour of the day, will dissipate fear, drive away misgiving, and deliver from doubt.

E.M. Bounds

And he that doubts (shows diakrino) is damned if he eat, because he eats not of faith: for **whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**

Romans 14:23

How Does Faith Function?



- Faith is an exclusive covenant relationship between the eyesight of the human soul and its lone source of Truth - the Word of God.
- Faith can allow no reticence to remain, no lawyerly remonstrance from the flesh to be heard, no evidence from the natural to be brought before the judge of the mind.
- Faith is exclusivity of thought, deliberate choosing to deafen to the lawyerly council, railings, accusations, and concerns of the Flesh.
- Faith is the spiritual discerning of God's way and then the bold movement forward in it.
- Faith is complete and utter confidence in the ability of God to perform that which He has promised to perform. It does not waver or hesitate, cower or retreat even in the face of the most gross and insurmountable natural obstacles.
- Faith is wholly given to the opinion of God and trusts it implicitly.

- Faith is fiercely loyal to the Word of God, and even at the risk of public ridicule, it is willing to put all its chips on God and live.

Grabbing Ahold of the Promiser

And not letting go

Jacob wrestled, not so much with a promise, as with the Promiser.

E.M. Bounds
(67, Complete Works)

The Promiser

- He Cannot Lie (Titus 1:2)
- He Will Not Change (James 1:17)
- He is the Same Forever (Hebrews 13:8)
- He is Eager to Answer (Luke 11:13)

Four Key Truths About Faith

1. Faith, to be genuine faith, must have action - it must believe
2. Faith must have an object (a focal point) in which to direct its confidence
3. **Faith, if it be real faith, will not waver from its focal point**

SESSION THREE

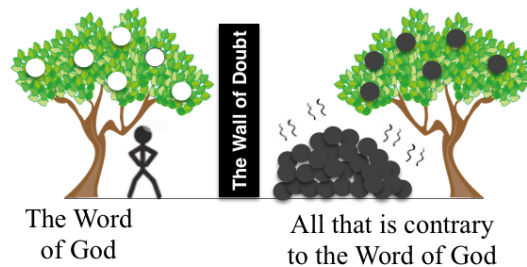
The Growl of Faith

The triumph of the vigorous soul

The Spiritual Growl

Don't live your Christian life without it!

Putting Doubt in its Place



Ready for the Test, Eager for the Fire

For Real Faith Doesn't Stagger at the Seeming Impossibilities

The Motto of the Chinese Underground Church

真金不怕火炼

“Zhen jin bu pa huo lian!”

(jen jin boo pow who lin)

Real Gold Fears No Fire!

The Christian

The Original Tree Hugger

Trial by Fire

- Noah tested by a cloudless sky for 40-70 years
- Abraham tested by both the sheer impossibility of the promise and the interminable passage of time
- Jacob tested by the long dark night
- Caleb tested by the 31 hostile giant empires
- David tested by the lion, the bear, and the 12 1/2 foot tall man-beast
- Mary and Martha tested by Lazarus' four days in the tomb
- The disciples tested by the boat filling up with water
- Peter tested by the natural laws of water and men walking upon it
- John tested by the sight of the Messiah suffering, dying, and being buried

That **the trial of your faith**, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, **though it be tried with fire**, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:7

Four Key Truths About Faith

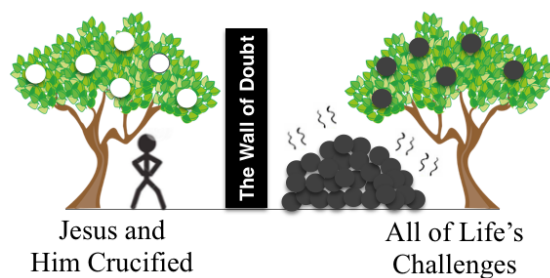
1. Faith, to be genuine faith, must have action - it must believe
2. Faith must have an object (a focal point) in which to direct its confidence
3. Faith, if it be real faith, will not waver from it's focal point
4. **Faith must be proven authentic, and therefore, it must be tested with fire**

The Two Trees

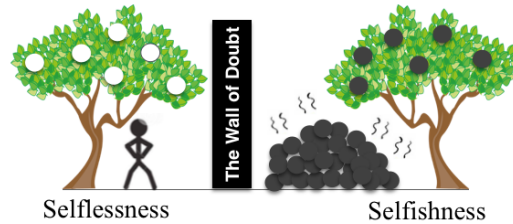
In the Midst of the Garden and in the Midst of our Souls

. . . whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

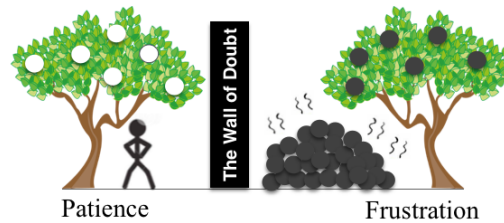
Romans 14:23



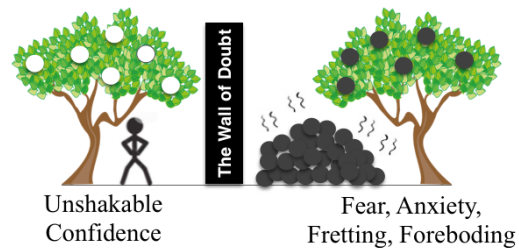
In the Midst of our Marriages



In the Midst of our Families



In the Midst of our Financial Challenges



- In the Midst of our Health Impediments
- In the Midst of Danger
- In the Midst of our Spiritual Calling

The Great Quote of the Faith-filled Soul

“Watch what my God will Do!”

