

#1



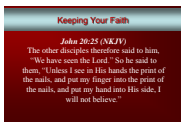
Faith, Part 1 - Keeping your Faith

John 20:27 (Amplified) Then He said to Thomas, Reach out your finger here, and see My hands; and put out your hand and place [it] in My side. Do not be faithless *and* incredulous, but [stop your unbelief and] believe!

Along with all of the others, Thomas' faith had been under attack.

John was tracing the development of unbelief that had attacked the disciples and others Jesus had ministered to.

#2



John 20:25 (NKJV) The other disciples therefore said to him, (Thomas) “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

The events of life had robbed Thomas of his faith.
His ability to believe was challenged.
Satan had come to do his work.

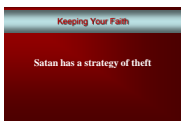
#3



In John 10:10 (NKJV) Jesus said: “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.”

Notice the degrading effect of Satan’s work.
He moves in to steal.
Once he has managed to steal, he moves on to kill.
He is not satisfied until he destroys.

#4



Satan has a strategy of theft.
He is in the business of ripping us off.
That is his nature.

***From the start, Satan tried to take what was not his.
Satan does not want your car, food, or possessions.***

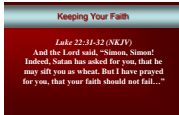
He is a spirit being.

He is not interested in your investments.

Money means nothing to him.

Satan is interested in your spiritual treasures.

#5



Luke 22:31-32 (NKJV) And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail...”

Jesus recognized that Satan’s attack on Simon was after his faith.

***Satan wants to rob you of your relationship with God.
He wants to steal your first love.***

#6



Revelation 2:2-5 (NIV) I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance... Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

#7



***Where does “first love” and “faith” go?
Our zeal and intensity do not evaporate.
Satan steals the fiery hot devotion and consecration.
Some have said: “I have just mellowed out over the years.”***

Do you really believe that?

#8



What is God's plan for us?

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV) We... are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

That is God's plan for your life and the church. He expects your faith and love to continue growing as you continue being exposed to Him. We need to be honest and admit what has really happened.

#9



Our zeal and intensity for God do not evaporate.

Jesus told Simon Peter that Satan wanted to sift him as wheat.

Jesus was concerned about his faith. He knew that if everything was left to Satan's devices, Simon's faith would fail.

The Devil is trying to rob us of something that God has blessed us with.

When he succeeds, spiritual gifts seem to fade. When he succeeds, material things occupy our attention.

#10



Where does "faith" go?

It does not just evaporate.

At the core of our spiritual life is our faith in God.

#11



What is faith?

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV) "without faith it is impossible to please God"

Faith is total dependence upon God. People with faith in God trust Him with all their heart. There is no other foundation for Christian living. No self-effort, or energy spent can make up for a lack of faith.

#12

Keeping Your Faith

1 Samuel 29:30
David and his six hundred men of
valor have their faith in God
extremely challenged.

1 Samuel 29-30 David and his six-hundred men of valor have their faith in God extremely challenged.

This obscure story describes this in vivid detail.

It is one of the low points in David's life.

In the past David demonstrated great faith in God on many occasions.

He had conquered Goliath.

The people of Israel sang about him in their dances:

*'Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands'*

Now David was on the run from King Saul.

He has faced so many threats and close calls.

He actually goes to live among the Philistines for a year.

He has run out of places to hide in Israel.

#13

Keeping Your Faith

*David and his six hundred mighty men
of valor set up camp in Ziklag
...to go to battle against Saul and Israel*

David and his six hundred mighty men of valor set up camp in Ziklag.

Achish, lord of Gath had complete confidence in David.

Saul and the armies of Israel took up positions at Jezreel to attack the Philistines.

David and his men joined with Achish and were prepared to go to battle against Saul and Israel.

The Commanders of the Philistines had heard the song about David and they feared that in the heat of battle, David would defect to Israel.

So David and his men were sent back home.

When they begin to get close to Ziklag, they started seeing smoke on the horizon.

Soon they discover something dreadful.
 Every wife, son, and daughter was gone.
 Every cow and lamb was taken.
 Someone had made a secret raid and burned the city
 and stole everything.
 Everyone was stunned and devastated.
 Everything was lost.
 They wept so loud and long they had no strength left to
 weep.
 David became distressed, because his men were talking
 of stoning him.

#14



1 Samuel 30:6 (NIV) David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters.

#15



***But David found strength in the Lord his God.
 As the bottom was falling out from under his life, David must have found a place where he could call out to God.***

No matter how low you get...
 No matter what collapses around you...
 No matter who rejects you or slanders you...

God is able to encourage you.

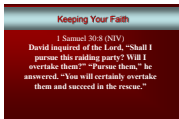
God knows how to get you through.

He will strengthen you.

He can reach where no one else can reach.

***After David is strengthened by the Lord
 His God, he called for Abiathar the priest.***

#16



1 Samuel 30:8 (NIV) David inquired of the Lord, “Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?” “Pursue them,” he answered. “You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue.”

#17



David was successful when he inquired of God first.

God knows the way you should take.

He knows how to lead us into victory.

David and his six hundred men started out in hot pursuit.

Two hundred of his men became too exhausted to cross the Besor Ravine.

So, David continued with four hundred men.

Along the way, across the desert, they found an Egyptian slave in a field.

The man said he was with the Amalekites who raided the area and burned Ziklag.

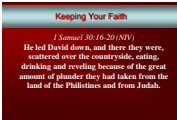
His master abandoned him when he got sick.

In exchange for his life, he was willing to lead David and his men to the enemy's camp.

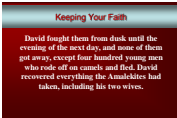
Soon they came to a ridge and saw the Amalekites having a big party.

1 Samuel 30:16-20 (NIV) He led David down, and there they were, scattered over the countryside, eating, drinking and reveling because of the great amount of plunder they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from Judah.

#18

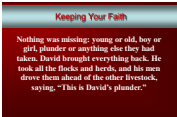


#19



David fought them from dusk until the evening of the next day, and none of them got away, except four hundred young men who rode off on camels and fled. David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken, including his two wives.

#20



Nothing was missing: young or old, boy or girl, plunder or anything else they had taken. David brought everything back. He took all the flocks and herds, and his men drove them ahead of the other livestock, saying, "This is David's plunder."

#21



***David and his men came back with more than they lost.
What an amazing victory!***

Why am I telling you this story?

I want you to see this critical point.

David and his men came to a moment in time when they chose to get up and go after stolen property.

The moment must come when we say, "I am not going to take this from Satan any longer."

We have to stop feeling sorry for ourselves and decide to reclaim what has been stolen.

David had to say, "we are not going to give up on our children, or grandchildren."

You need to say:

"In the name of the Lord, I am not going to give up on my calling.

I am not going to give up on my potential in life.

Satan, you are going to have to give back what you have stolen.

I come against you and resist you in the Name of Jesus Christ my Lord."

You can recover faith that the devil stole.

God can revive fresh faith in our souls if we ask him.

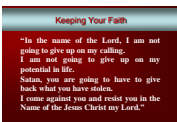
He will bring faith alive in us through His Word.

Nothing is impossible with God.

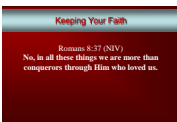
You can recover more than you lost.

Romans 8:37 (NIV) No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

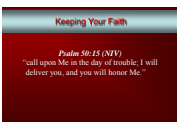
#22



#23



#24



Psalm 50:15 (NIV) call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me."

Jesus is more powerful than the thief who steals.

This moment is crucial.

Satan has cleverly been stealing from you.

He wants to break down what God has established.

He wants to destroy what God has given.

The zeal and love for Christ you once had can be recovered.

God wants to restore your first faith and love.

The calling on your life can still be fulfilled.

It is not too late to reach that son or daughter.

It is not too late to reach that loved one.

It is not too late to do what God wants you to do.

It is not too late to draw close to the Lord your God.

God is ready to deliver you.

You will have new victory.