

“Roots” (Faith) (Gospel Sanctification III)
(Study 9 of “Getting Personal with God: Sonship A” Series)

The Scripture Passage (The Book of John 6:25-32)

English Standard Version Translation (ESV)

John, Chapter 6:25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” 26 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.” 28 Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” 29 Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” 30 So they said to him, “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” 32 Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” 34 They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” 35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

New Living Translation (NLT)

John, Chapter 6:25 They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" 26 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. 27 But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval." 28 They replied, "We want to perform God's works, too. What should we do?" 29 Jesus told them, "This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent." 30 They answered, "Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? 31 After all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, 'Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" 32 Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, Moses didn't give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. 33 The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 "Sir," they said, "give us that bread every day." 35 Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. "

“What Faith Feels Like” (2 Stories)

Faith Feels Like a Leap

The phrase “leap of faith” is sometimes used poorly- as if Christianity has no or requires no reasonable basis. But describing faith in God as a leap is sometimes appropriate. For instance, Christianity often feels like a “leap of faith.” One could illustrate “faith” as follows:

“Imagine a little girl is trapped upstairs in a building that’s on fire. She sees her father calling out to her to jump. But before she’ll jump, what has to happen? First, she needs the **knowledge** that her father is strong enough to catch her. Second, she must also **believe** that it’s true: that her father is right there willing and able to catch her. (He is not just some lie she has invented inside herself or her neighbors have invented outside her.) Finally (third), she has to **trust** that her father will indeed catch her. Only then will she jump from the fire to her father.”

This story could describe us- whether we feel like we have never “leapt” to Jesus or even after we have “leapt” to him many, many times. Leaping into the outstretched arms of God is just another way of saying faith is an emotional, social, mental, and spiritual action. And the Bible and Christians often imagine this mostly internal movement of the heart physically: knowing-believing-and-trusting in Jesus looks like letting go of _____, then flying to and holding fast to him- with the weight of our lives.

Faith Feels Like Rest

From our story of the little girl and the explanation of her and our process, it is clear that faith is the opposite of self-reliance. It is giving up on our own resources and fleeing to Jesus. It is accepting who Jesus is, what He has promised, and who we are in Jesus Christ. It is receiving these truths into our lives and hearts- by our thoughts, feelings, actions, and words. Ultimately, faith is about God’s work more than ours. It is less about the strength of our, subjective faith and more about the strength of the object of our faith. And this feels like resting the weight of our lives more and more on God. Therefore, one could also describe “faith” as follows:

Suppose I’m standing on the edge of a lake during the first cold weeks of winter in the Northeastern part of America. The lake is frozen over with a very thin sheet of ice. Being filled with faith and confidence I take a step to walk across the newly formed layer of ice. Unfortunately, even though I am extremely confident and “full of faith” the result would be a cold, wet shock. As long as the ice is thin, it doesn’t matter how much faith I have. The ice is not reliable.

Now imagine a few months later, after the cold winter has taken effect. The ice is now several feet thick as I stand at the edge of the lake. Because of my past experience, I’m extremely cautious as I think about walking across the ice. I’m not sure whether the ice will hold me. After all, it didn’t before. Even though I’m frightened and have “less faith” than I did before, the smallest, most hesitating step will be rewarded by the feeling of a firm footing. What’s the difference? The object is more reliable. It’s true that the power of faith rests in the reliability of the object. (Dave Lowe)

Group Prayer

Ideas for Communal and Personal Prayer (Choose 1-2 topics to share about and pray for):

1. What’s one *burden* you need prayer for- for relief or healing?
2. What’s one *sin* you’d like to (re-)confess to God?
3. What’s one *deed* in your life or community you’d like to praise God for?
4. What’s one *desire* stirred by this time together with God that you can pray for?