

Precious Faith (part 2)

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- [0 : 00] Well, we're studying Octavius Winslow's book, The Precious Things of God. I said there was a sign-up sheet. There isn't and won't be. If you'd like a book, you can go online.
- I think Amazon had them starting at \$6 on up. Octavius Winslow is taking us on a treasure hunt in the Bible to find the things that God says are precious.
- Because that's what defines us. What is precious to our hearts is what we orient our lives around, what drives us, what we seek after, what we live for.
- So we need to be sure that we are living for the true jewels, the real treasures. And that's what this book is about. And so chapter 1 pointed us to the preciousness of Christ.
- To you who believe, he is precious. And now chapter 2 is on the preciousness of faith. 2 Peter 1.1. Peter says, It is a faith as precious as ours.
- [0 : 59] Your faith is as precious as the apostle Peter's faith. It will do for you what it did for him. And therefore, it is precious. And so we're looking at why is faith precious?
- Well, it's precious because of what it is. It's a gift of God. And all of God's gifts are precious. But secondly, it's precious because of what it does. Well, what does it do?
- Well, so far we've seen three things that faith does for us. First of all, it saves us from sin and wrath and hell. Because faith receives the perfect righteousness of Jesus.
- His perfect obedience. And puts that on my account in heaven. So that when God judges me, he sees perfect righteousness that saves us from the wrath to come.
- Yes, it's a precious thing because it saves us. And then secondly, we saw that faith receives the promised spirit. How did you receive the spirit?
- [1 : 59] Galatians 3 wants to ask. Was it by the works of the law or by faith? It was by faith. When we trusted in Christ, we received the promised Holy Spirit. And so we thought about all the things the Holy Spirit does for us in our daily lives.
- And how precious to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. And how precious then is that faith that received this promised comforter within.
- And then thirdly, we've seen that faith is precious because it enables you to see things that the world cannot see. Hebrews 11.1.
- Faith is being sure of what we hope for and being certain of what we cannot see. The Bible speaks of faith in terms of sight.
- That's why we see the phrase, I once was blind, but now I see. Faith is another way of seeing. Not with the eyeballs of the physical body, but with the eyes of the soul.
- [3 : 10] As we look at the Word of God. We see things that we otherwise would never see. We would be blind to. And so he's given us faith.
- That's the opening of our eyes to a whole new world of reality. And so faith in God's Word is a way of knowing these unseen things.

And one of the first things that faith shows us that's unseen is the preciousness of Christ. And that's where we see the connection of chapter 1 and chapter 2. We once were blind to his preciousness.

And then we were given faith to see. And our eyes were opened. And we saw how precious Jesus is. Well, what did the Gentile centurion see?

With his great faith that amazed even the Lord Jesus. Well, he saw what few others saw. That all things created are controlled by Jesus Christ.

[4 : 09] And so, Jesus, you don't have to come to my house and heal my servant. You just speak the Word and he'll be healed. Because disease must go when you say go.

And health must come when you say come. What did faith allow Elisha to see that his servant could not see? Oh, the angels of the Lord that encamp around the people of God.

What did faith allow Moses to see? Well, he saw him who is invisible. And therefore, he persevered. And so, by faith, we too see him who is invisible.

We see the Lord Jesus. I've set him at my right hand. And because he is there, I've set him before me. And because he's right there, I will not be shaken. We see the Lord Jesus.

Crowned, now crowned in glory and honor. We see all these invisible realities of prayer. That when we speak to God, we believe he exists.

[5 : 11] And that he is the rewarder of those who earnestly seek him. And so we pray. Faith does all this for us. How precious is that faith, then, that enables us to see the unseen?

Without faith, we're not dealing with even half a deck of reality. We're just dealing with a few things. But faith opens up all the rest of the world.

Heaven, hell, God, Satan, angels, demons. All that is unseen. The preciousness of faith. So faith allows us to see unseen things.

Now, there's a subset of unseen things that Hebrews talks about. And that's future things. Faith is being sure of what we hope for.

And certain of what we do not see. So it's what we hope for is something future. And the Bible talks about future things. And faith sees those future things as certain as the present or the past.

[6 : 16] And so we have, as I said, another way of knowing. How do we know the present? How do we know the past? Well, we see it. We experience it with our senses. How do I know that you're here this morning?

I see you. How do I know that this is a podium? I see it. I feel it. I touch it. By senses, we can tell the reality of present and past things.

But how do we detect the reality of future things that we can't see? Well, by faith. As we look to what God says is coming. And by faith, those things are as certain as these things and past things.

So how precious is faith to us because it shows us future things. Now, an unbeliever can read the same book that you're reading, but they see no reality in future things.

And so it doesn't change the way they live. You mean they can read about all the future judgments and hell that's coming for everyone outside of Christ and be unmoved?

[7 : 21] Exactly. Because they don't have faith that makes it real, that makes them say, that is as certain as I am sitting here this morning.

The natural man, that's man without the Spirit, cannot accept the things of the Spirit of God. He doesn't accept future things. He doesn't accept what God says. Why? Because he can't understand them.

He cannot perceive them as realities that would govern his life. Blessed thing to have faith given us that sees the unseen.

Turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 4 for just one text. There's many, many, many that point out this ability of faith to see the future. But 2 Corinthians chapter 4.

Verses 17 and 18. And this is the thing that renewed the Apostle Paul day by day. Though outwardly he was perishing, yet inwardly he was being renewed day by day.

[8 : 26] Verse 16. Now 17. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.

For what is seen is temporary and what is unseen is eternal. You see again, the language of sight is being spoken of, of faith. We fix our eyes on what is unseen.

If you don't understand the sight of faith, that's gobbledygook. It doesn't make sense. How can you fix your eyes on what you cannot see? You do it by faith, is what he's saying.

So, we're saying that faith is able to see the future as realities. Now, what is it in these two verses that is seen?

What is the seen thing? That which our senses can see. You see it? Our troubles.

[9 : 29] Don't you see your troubles? They're very visible, aren't they? They affect you. Oh, but don't let that be the focus of your eyes on your present troubles, your light and momentary troubles.

You say they aren't light and momentary. They're every day and they're big. Well, that's because you're not looking by faith on what is unseen. But if you see that, it will make your troubles light and just brief.

Well, what is that? What's the unseen in the passage? Eternal glory. Heaven. Eternal state. So, what's your trouble?

Don't ever look at it alone without casting the eye of faith on the future eternal glory. Because that's what will make it smaller and lighter in your eyes.

I can live with this trouble because I know that it will be no more in just a few years. And I will enter into that eternal state. So, faith, you see, in the future.

[10 : 40] In what God has said about my future. What a glorious thing is faith. That it sees future things as realities. So real that it changes the way that I view my own troubles in this life.

And so, by faith, Noah. You know that we keep going back to Hebrews 11 because that's the chapter on faith. And we see it in practice in Noah's life. By faith, Noah, when warned about things not seen.

What was the things not seen that Noah was warned about? Pardon? A coming flood. How bad of a flood? Global.

And what's it going to do? It's going to destroy all life on earth except that which is in the ark. So, when warned about things not seen. It's future.

What did he do? Here's where faith makes the difference. By faith, he saw the coming flood as real. And so, what did Noah do?

[11 : 43] He built the ark. And that's what Hebrews 11, 7 says. In holy fear, he built an ark to save his family. There's a flood coming. Don't see it. But God said it.

And faith sees that that is as real as me standing here. So, I'm going to start building the ark that he told me to be prepared for when it comes for my family. Well, why didn't the rest of humanity build their own ark or help him build his?

They didn't see it. Oh, but he preached to them. He warned them. They didn't see it. It was fairy tale stuff.

Sure, Noah. Sure, a flood. Build that boat. Hee, hee. Ha, ha. Same message. No faith to see the reality of the coming flood. And so, by faith, he condemned the world.

Because they heard the same message he received. And if they're condemned, it's their fault. Because Noah heard the same message and believed.

[12 : 48] They didn't. Faith sees what unbelievers cannot see. So, why do you see? Why are you preparing for the coming judgment?

Because you see what's coming and it's real. The worldling may nod the head. Oh, yeah, there's a coming judgment. It's not real to them. Not real enough to wake them up to how they're living, unconscious of God and of the things to come.

How precious to Noah and his family was his faith that saved their lives. Well, faith can see, then, the future. And that's what this whole chapter of Hebrews is about.

Some things, just unseen things. But some of the unseen things are future things. And so, you have this whole list of martyrs. They were tortured. They were stoned. They were sawed in two.

They were beheaded with the sword. They were imprisoned. They lived in caves and holes in the ground. Why did they surrender to torture and refuse to be released when all they would have had to do is compromise a bit and deny the truth?

[13 : 57] Well, verse 35 says, so that they might gain a better resurrection. A better resurrection. What would that be?

Well, Jesus said that the time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear the voice of the Son of God and come out. There's coming a resurrection. But not everybody's going to be raised to a better resurrection.

Those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. And those who have done good will rise to eternal life. And it was the reality of a better resurrection for God's people that enabled them to be tortured and torn in two.

That was so real to them that it made them willing to suffer persecution. Amazing what faith in the future can enable an ordinary person like you and me to endure in this life.

Pilgrim's Progress. Bunyan has Christian and Hopeful on their way to the celestial city. And they spend some time with the Lord's shepherds. And they gave them some very important instructions.

[15 : 11] But before Christian and Hopeful resumed their journey to heaven, the shepherds took them to a top of a high peak called Clear. And one of the shepherds said, let us show you now the gate of the celestial city.

You may be able to see it through this. This looking glass. And the name of the glass was the Eye of Faith. Look far away yonder on the east.

The way your road leads. Do you get the picture? Believers need to often look to what is at the end of the road that we're on.

This road doesn't wind on with its troubles forever. There is an end to the road we're on. And it leads to heaven. And the Eye of Faith enables us to look at the destination.

And oh, how that will cheer us along the way and keep us persevering in holiness. Keep us from quitting. That at last the march shall end. The wearied ones shall rest. The pilgrims find their father's house.

[16 : 22] Jerusalem the blessed. I see it there. How do you see it, Christian? With the Eye of Faith. And that's why it's the shepherd's task to remind the journeyers often, the pilgrims often, of the celestial city.

And so two weeks ago on Sunday night, our shepherd showed us that the book of Joel ends with the looking glass focused on the celestial city.

And we saw it, didn't we? Oh, we saw it, that we're going to be there. The story ends with us wholly forever. Satisfied forever.

Different from the world forever. And we need that look. The look of faith. That sees those things not as fairy tales, but as realities.

Faith makes the coming glories of heaven certain to us. And we see ourselves there. With the Savior there.

[17 : 25] And all that he has prepared. In that prepared place for a prepared people. Blessed are the eyes to see what you see by faith. Does that not make faith precious?

So that's the third thing that makes faith precious. It enables us to see unseen things. And some of those unseen things are future things. The fourth reason that faith is precious is because it works.

It works. And here we're back in James 2. I preached on something of this last Sunday, so I'm not going to take much time. The whole test in James chapter 2 is whether you have genuine saving faith or not.

Remember, Winslow says the reason people don't count faith as precious is because, in their minds, all faith is, in some minds at least, is that all faith is, is just a head knowledge that, yes, God exists.

Jesus died on the cross. He rose again. They know all the facts. And that's what they think. That's all that faith is. Well, no wonder they don't see it as something precious. No, the real faith, genuine faith, works.

[18 : 31] It's an active, powerful principle that changes the way you live. And that's what James 2 is saying.

Faith is an active thing. It's one of the active ingredients in a believer. Find a believer, open him up, and you'll find one of the active ingredients inside his faith.

A faith that works. And then we're given two examples. There's Abraham. He's the father of those who have faith, the faithful.

And what did he do? Whatever he did, he did by empowering faith, the things that are listed in Hebrews. And the thing listed in James 2 and verse 20 and following is that he offered his son Isaac upon the altar, although that son had been the son of promise, that through this son, you're going to have a whole nation and descendants more than the stars in the heaven.

Through this son, Isaac. Now go out and sacrifice him on Mount Moriah. And Abraham, believe God. God, you are faithful.

[19 : 42] You are trustworthy. And so whatever you tell me, I can step out and obey. Because you are faithful, you will keep your promise. If I slay this son, you will do something.

You will raise him from the dead, Hebrews says. He had faith that he would raise him from the dead so that he might live on and have descendants. Because he didn't have any descendants when Abraham was told to kill him.

And so by faith, he offered his son Isaac on the altar. It was only the Lord stopping him at the last minute. But it showed that faith works. Faith is active.

It moved him to do something he otherwise would never do. Obey God in offering his son. And then there's another example given to us in James 2.

And she's as different from Abraham as you can be. Abraham's the father of the covenant people of God, Rahab the harlot. She's a Gentile, a pagan, and an immoral one at that.

[20 : 38] She is a woman, he's a man. In every way, these two are contrasted. And yet, what James is saying is that if you have eyes to see, it will make you different whether you're the father of the faithful or a prostitute in Jericho.

And so, how did Rahab the prostitute's faith work itself out? What did it cause her to do?

Well, she received the spies from Israel. She hid them. She lowered them in a basket over the wall. She sent them off in a different direction so they would not be detected.

What was she doing? She was changing loyalties. Born, lived, bred a Jericho pagan.

And now she's changing. She's doing what Ruth did. These will now be my people. Your God will be my God. And your people, my people. And that's what Rahab is doing. What would cause a Canaanite to change her loyalties from Jericho to the God of Israel?

[21 : 52] Well, she believed the revelation that was given to her. Now, she didn't receive the revelation you and I have received. But she received the word of what God had done for his people Israel down in Egypt.

And how he had come and redeemed them out with a mighty hand. And what he did at the Red Sea in destroying their enemies. And she heard the revelation of this God of Israel. And she put her faith in him.

And that faith was a living faith. And it caused her to change her whole identity from Canaanite to Israelite. I want to belong to the people of Israel who have a God who saves his people.

It's an active faith. Galatians 5, 6. Some people were saying, you've got to have circumcision in order to be saved. And Paul answers in Galatians 5, 6.

No, not so at all. The only thing that counts is faith that works by love. The only thing that counts with God is faith.

[22 : 56] Do you have faith? Faith that looks away from yourself to what Jesus has done for sinners. Do you have faith? Real faith. Faith. Well, how would I know if it's real? It works by love.

What is love? Love is the summary of all the commands of God. In other words, do you have a faith that obeys God's commands? Because all of his commands can be summed up in loving God with all your heart.

And loving man, your neighbor as yourself. That's what counts. That's what counts. A real faith. A faith that's active, that works by love. What is strong enough to break my love affair with self?

That makes me love myself and not love God and not love my neighbor? James says, faith. Faith. Paul says, faith.

Faith that works by love. The gift of God. This faith. Powerful thing. Wonder-working power in the life of the believer.

[23 : 53] It enables you to do things you otherwise never, ever would do. Like joyfully accept the confiscation of your goods. Which is what these Jerusalem Christians had to do when they fled persecution.

They just came and collected all the stuff. What will enable you to joyfully accept the fact that when you get home today, the state owns it and no longer do you.

You joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. Oh, here we're back at the future, aren't we?

Back to the future, as they say. How do you know that you've got better and lasting possession? Because this book tells me if I'm in Christ, all things are mine.

A new heaven, a new earth, everlasting life. And by faith, I count it as a certainty. So certain that they can have my stuff.

[24 : 56] And I will joyfully go on. Because I've got better stuff coming. You see, this is what faith does. It will enable you to build an ark when there's no body of water near it to float it in.

Faith, it's a powerful thing. It will enable you to expect children when you're 100 years old and barren. It's a powerful thing. Well, does that not make faith precious to us, brothers and sisters?

It draws down the extraordinary power of God on very ordinary people. Like you and me and these others listed in Hebrews. A faith as precious as ours, Peter can say.

And then faith is precious in the fifth point because it overcomes the world. Turn to 1 John chapter 5 and verse 4. 1 John 5, 4.

Why is faith called precious in the Bible? Why is this something that I need to value so highly? Well, because 1 John 5, 4 says, For everyone born of God overcomes the world.

[26 : 15] This is the victory that has overcome the world. What? Even our faith. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world.

Now, there's no such thing as someone who's born of God that does not overcome the world. Do you see that here? The first statement. Everyone born of God overcomes the world.

Everyone who's been born again will have this mark about them. They overcome the world. Seven times in the Revelation 2 and 3, Jesus Christ promises his heaven to overcomers.

Not once, twice, seven times. Heaven is promised by Jesus to those who overcome. Everyone born of God overcomes the world.

Because the new birth secures for us resources to overcome the world. And especially faith. Because faith is the victory that overcomes the world.

[27 : 17] Now, what is the world? It's worldliness. It's worldlikeness. Worldlikeness. That's what worldliness is. It's not just a few externals. It can be expressed in externals. But it's thinking like the world.

It's desiring like the world. It's prioritizing like the world. It's treasuring like the world. It's living like the world. And everyone born of God marches to the beat of a different drummer.

They overcome the world. Now, how do born-again people overcome the world? Well, it says, by faith. This is the victory. Even our faith.

So Japan was our fierce enemy in World War II. But we had a secret weapon, didn't we? We were in a hurry to develop it and test it. To have it ready. If needed, the atomic bomb.

And in the end, this is what won the victory. It took that. Even so, John says here, there is a weapon that wins the victory over the world every time in the people of God.

[28 : 24] And it's faith. Faith. Faith. That looking away from self to Christ. That looking away from self and all of our thoughts to God's word and what he says and the unseen things.

And so Hebrews 11 introduces us to a score of people who overcame the world. Every one of those ordinary people in Hebrews 11 overcame the world by faith.

27 times the weapon is identified by faith, by faith, by faith. And the same weapons that Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the apostles fought with is the weapon that God gives to everyone who is born of God.

And when faith enters the field, the victory is won. The temptations resisted. So how does faith win the victory over the world? Well, it sees what is unseen.

That's one of the ways. Okay? So we're fishing. Only you are the fish this time. Okay? So you're in the water. And the world is fishing for you.

[29 : 31] It wants you. It wants you to be conformed to it and to live for the very same things that it lives for. So there you are in the water and down comes the line.

And the world's got a big juicy worm dangling in front of you. And it's just the kind of worms that you like. And you're tempted to be overcome by the world.

But you've got special x-ray vision that can see what's inside the worm. What's hidden.

And it's an iron hook with a barb on it that won't let you go once you bite it. And suddenly that x-ray vision is the victory that overcomes this worldly temptation.

And you swim away. You no longer are interested. You'll find worms without hooks. You'll find things to satisfy that don't damn you. That don't curse you. That don't bring the discipline of God in your life.

[30 : 31] You've got this x-ray vision to see the hook that's hidden by the world. Well, that's one way you see that faith is the victory that overcomes the world. It sees these things.

There's Moses. And he's in the palace of Egypt. And he's got all the wealth of Egypt at his fingertips. And all the pleasures of sin that Pharaoh's household can provide.

There's more than one worm in the pond here. It's just covered with worms. And what enabled Moses to say, you know, rather than that, I want to go out and be identified with these Israelites and be despised and rejected.

What is strong enough to make a man choose that? Well, by faith. He was looking ahead to his reward.

Oh, that's something future. How would he ever know what that is? Because the word of God promises the reward to those who follow him. And by looking to the reward of those who by faith follow, he overcame the world.

[31 : 43] And he despised its treasures, its pleasures. And he identified himself with the people of God, indeed with the Lord Jesus, whose people they were.

Moses overcame the world by faith. He's not going to be seeking after the same things that the world is. He says, why?

Because he's, by faith, seeing the reward that's his. And that's far more precious than anything here. Far more valuable than anything here.

It's worth far more than any immediate pleasures of sin that are just for a season. Those are eternal pleasures. Eternal treasures. And so he's willing to pass on a bite of cheap hamburger because he's got steak forever coming.

And he says, they don't even compare. You see how faith overcomes the world. It overcomes the world by looking to Christ and seeing him as fighting for us.

[32 : 51] And seeing him as dying for us. And faith sees these things and it changes the battle entirely. You can read that in Psalm 73. How Asaph was tempted to be like the world.

And wish I could trade place with those worldlings that are prospering. What cured him of that? Well, it was faith. It's what he saw when he went into the temple. And he saw the end of the wicked.

Again, that saved him. His feet were slipping. He was almost gone. But faith overcomes the world in everyone that's born of God. So, how precious is faith in a world that's daily bombarding us and out to beat us.

And then, really right along the same line, sixthly, faith is precious because it quenches all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And here we're in Ephesians 6, 16.

The armor. The Christian armor. And he's listed a good many pieces of armor. And he says in Ephesians 6, 16. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

[34 : 06] So, sometime the enemy would dip their arrows in pitch and light it on fire.

And then on the mark, the count that was given, the whole row of archers would let them fly like hail. And here's this incoming flaming fiery arrows.

How precious is it to have a shield in the day of fiery arrows? That's what faith is. It's a shield. It's something that comes between me and the oncoming temptation.

And I'm told that some of those shields were made of wood. And this seems to be the picture here. And they had these leather skins that had been soaked in water and other retardants and stretched over their wooden shields.

So, here they are. And here comes the fiery arrows thick as hail. And they just hide behind their shield. Thut, thut, thut, thut, sizzling out.

[35 : 12] Extinguishing the fire. And then they go on in the battle, you see. Now, that's what faith is to the Christian. This is how faith overcomes the world. We've got a shield.

Come to bed with me, Joseph. Come to bed with me, Joseph. Not once. Not twice. Every day. Day after day. And now it's just the two of you in the palace or in the house.

And she's actually laid hold of him physically. Come to bed with me, Joseph. Now, that's flaming arrows dipped in hell.

Shot at Joseph. Where's the shield of faith, Joseph? Oh. How can I do this wicked thing and sin against God?

Extinguished. She might have said, God? Who said anything about God? I don't see any God. Oh, but I do. It's faith that sees God.

[36 : 18] And I live before him. I walk before him. I think before him. I go to bed with him. If I go to bed with you, I go to bed with you and God. He's with me. He's for me.

And he's blessed me. He's not only great and holy in my judgment. He's been so kind to me. This is the shield of faith. It sees his God for all that he is.

And it extinguishes the flaming, fiery dart of the evil one. So, why is faith precious? How precious is a shield that puts out the flaming darts of hell?

That's why it's precious. It quenches the flaming darts of hell. Another verse, Acts 15, 9. He purified their hearts by faith.

Faith purifies the heart. And that's right in line with this. It overcomes the world. It extinguishes the flaming arrows of the devil. It purifies the heart. Faith, Wenslow says, looking to Christ, beholding him who is invisible, will mold and influence the believer's entire walk.

[37 : 27] And then, lastly, why is faith precious? Because it glorifies God. It glorifies God. Excuse me. It pleases God.

And both of these are true. It pleases God. So, here's a man out in the forest and he's chopping down a tree. And God is taking pleasure in that. Because with every chop, he's exercising his faith.

It's Noah. And he sees the flood coming. And the very swinging of an axe pleases the Lord. Whatever is not done by faith does not please the Lord.

But whatever is done by faith pleases him. Even the swinging of an axe. Whatever faith does. Whatever you do because you are conscious of God is pleasing to him.

Whatever you do. Because that's faith. That's faith that sees him where others don't see him. And it changes the way you live. And whatever you do just because faith lays hold of the reality of God.

[38 : 29] But that pleases him. And is that not our great desire? To find out what pleases the Lord. And to make it our goal every day to please the Lord.

As the apostle teaches us. So, when you submit to those in authority over you as unto the Lord. God says, oh, that smells wonderful. That's a sacrifice of praise.

Look at that wife submitting to that husband. Look at that man submitting to the one in authority. Because they are conscious of God. When you suffer unjustly because you're conscious of God.

And do not rile back against the one who's mistreating you. And you don't because you are conscious of God. And you see the way Jesus did not revile his persecutors.

God's pleased. Look at her. She's enduring suffering. Just because she's thinking about me. When we faithfully obey his word.

[39 : 28] Just because he said so. You see, faith is looking to him. And so, these little things. Winslow says, the smallest thing you do because you're conscious of God.

That is pleasing to the Lord. And then also, it glorifies God. It glorifies God. Speaking of Abraham, he was strong in faith, giving glory to God.

You see how your faith glorifies God? It says, this God is so great. That just hearing him, seeing him, being aware of him, changes the way I live.

And, well, what must that God be like? It holds out a high view of God. And so, it brings glory to him.

Well, let me just close with one quote from Winslow. It follows then that faith is the instrument of salvation. It is the instrument of salvation.

[40 : 34] This goes back to point number one. Why is faith precious? Because it saves us. And it saves us not because it is itself the Savior, but it points us to the Savior.

It brings us to Christ. Your weak faith is no reason why you should stay away from Christ. And your strong faith is no plea recommending you to Christ.

It is Christ and Christ only from first to last that saves. And your faith is precious and valuable only as it brings you to him. So, Christ is precious to those who believe.

Faith that lays hold of this Christ and sees him as precious, that too is precious. May it be that today as we spend time in the Word of God that our faith would be strengthened.

You can see why the Word of God is so important to the Christian. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, the Word of Christ.

[41 : 36] We're here. We have the Word of Christ. We have each other. Let's ask God. Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. We're dismissed.