Growing Faith

We all love results. We love heroes who make things happen. Superman didn't inspire us with his ability to change clothes in a phone booth. He got results! He conquered a new enemy each week and he was one of my favorite heroes of my childhood.

Fast forward to adulthood. Reality sets in. Superman is not real!!! But daily challenges are. Hard work, real enemies from without and within. Roadblocks and temptations abound and have no end! We are all looking for the answer to meet those challenges, regardless of type or source.

Fast forward to Hebrews chapter eleven. God defines faith, "...Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Then the Hebrew writer goes on to say and to show that by faith people gained the approval of God (v. 2) and by faith accomplished amazing things (all through the chapter).

Obviously, faith is the food and the muscle of accomplishing things for God and to His glory. Since that is the conclusive reality taught in Hebrews 11 (and throughout both Testaments) I want to know how to increase my faith. It becomes amazingly obvious why the apostles said to Jesus in Luke 17:5, "Increase our faith!"

Problem: Jesus is not here in the flesh today so I can't ask Him the same question in the same way the apostles did. So where do I go from here? Directly to Romans 10:17, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." So we come to a wonderful and precious realization. The best way to "hear" God's word is from your own lips and in your own mind as you simply read scripture.

Amazing that something as simple as reading – that little skill you began to learn in the first grade – can have such an unspeakably profound impact on your daily life and repeatable success. Reading! That simple task you do dozens of times a day, from traffic signs to TV commercials – from recipes to recitals. Reading!

Memorize it now, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." – Romans 10:17. And remember the reality and the success of the faith you gain by hearing. Go through Hebrews 11 and underline "by faith" as you read the wonderful things God's people (as individuals) accomplished by faith!

One last process: Venture forth upon the journey of Bible reading. Find a plan or use the one we publish in the bulletin – but find and use something! Read the Bible in a year. Or read the New Testament in three months or six months. Perhaps read chronologically. Perhaps read book by book. But read! Why? Faith comes by hearing! And by faith you accomplish great things for God in your own life – even today! Let's grow our faith!

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