

# FAITH



## 6. Developing Faith (2)

*(Leader's Notes)*

Faith! Have you exercised your faith this week? In our previous study we learnt that faith grows through testing. These tests may come in the form of delays in answers to God's promises, or it may be circumstances that seem impossible for God's word to come to pass. When we face these tests, God's purpose is that our faith is strengthened. There are two other things that are important in our faith being developed, and they are prayer and praise.

### 1. Faith grows through prayer

- ♥ How does the man in the story Jesus told, show real faith? Luke 11:5-8  
*(The man in the story did not give up asking because he believed his friend would give him the bread he needed, so he kept asking. Real faith is like this. It believes God will give what he has promised and does not give up.)*
- ♥ Often spiritual warfare is necessary before God's word is fulfilled. How was this true in the life of Joshua and the Children of Israel when they entered the Promised Land? Joshua 1:2-3, 11:18-20  
*(God had promised to give them the land, but before they could enter it they had to overcome the enemies who lived there.)*

The enemy will try to destroy the seeds of faith that have been planted in our lives, so that God's word cannot come to pass. However as we stand against the enemy in faith, his plans are brought down, and God's promise will be fulfilled.

- ♥ What else is an essential part of prayer according to Philippians 4:6?  
*(Thanksgiving)*
- ♥ How does thanksgiving help in the development of our faith? Share your thoughts.  
*(When we thank God, even before seeing the promise fulfilled, we are confessing that God has heard our prayer and is going to answer it. Our own confession strengthens our faith.)*

We are to pray in expectation, until the Holy Spirit gives us the assurance that the answer is on the way. This assurance produces faith in our hearts, and once we have received faith, we need to begin thanking God for what he is going to do.

### 2. Faith grows through praise

- ♥ Why do you think David calls God the 'Praise of Israel'? Psalm 22:3-5  
*(The reason is because when his people cried out to him, he did not disappoint them.)*
- ♥ What does thanksgiving and praise do in our lives according to Psalm 50:23 and Psalm 8:2?  
*(Praise prepares the way for God to show us his salvation and it silences the enemy.)*

- ♥ How would you feel if you were in Paul and Silas' situation? Read Acts 16:22-24
- ♥ What effect did praise have on Paul and Silas, and the situation they were facing? Acts 16:25-26  
*(Praise lifted Paul and Silas above their circumstances and helped them focus on the Lord. This enabled God to work in their situation and the power of the enemy was broken.)*
- ♥ Is there any situation you are facing right now where you need faith? Share.
- ♥ How can you strengthen your faith in this situation you are going through? Discuss.

Faith begins as a tiny seed that comes from the Word of God working in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. It grows as we continue to hold onto God's promise, with thanksgiving and praise. As it says in Psalm 106:12 'Then they believed his promises and sang his praise.' Praise builds our faith up further and prepares the way for God to work.