

**PREMINISTERIAL AND CHRISTIAN WORKERS'
BIBLE COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE COURSES
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COURSE NO. 1: HEALTH - HEALING - HOLINESS

LESSON 5

THERE ARE HINDRANCES TO FAITH

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Heb. 11:6

“But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.” James 1:6, 7.

“That your prayers be not hindered.” I Peter 3:7

These Scriptures teach us that faith is an absolute necessity in order to receive anything from the Lord. In fact, without faith it is even impossible to please Him.

Why?

Because faith, expressed in its simplest terms, is simply believing that God meant what He said.

There are many who cry, “I am trying to believe. Surely God should do for me the thing I have need of! Surely, if He answers prayer at all, He should answer mine! For no one ever tried harder than I to have faith.”

What are you trying to believe?

“I am trying to believe that my prayer will be answered.”

It is not so much WHAT you believe, as WHOM you believe.

Jesus said, “Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Mark 11:24

Satan says, “Yea, hath God said it? Do you think for a minute He really will do such a thing? People have always had to do these things for themselves, or not have them done. You can’t bank too much on the truth of those things you see written in that old black book! After all, remember dear old Sister So-and-So. You know full well that if anyone ever was a Christian, she was, but God didn’t answer her prayers.”

Now, WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE? Without any disrespect to Sister So-and-So, for I am not her judge, may I say that at best I can only look upon the outward appearance, while God looks on the heart. GOD I KNOW! He cannot lie. He is truth. He has proved His power and His love many times over. He said He would give me whatsoever I ask, and I know He will do it, for He is true to His word.

“It has been so long since you first asked Him! Are you not becoming weary with waiting? It is not written that hope deferred maketh the heart sick?”

“Satan, it is none of your business how long I have prayed, not how long I have waited. I don’t want your sympathy, and I don’t believe a word you say! I BELIEVE GOD!”

Suppose you have promised your son a weekly allowance, but you have instructed him that once each week, he is to come into your office and remind you of that promise. Then suppose that for a week or two, he does not find this convenient. You did not promise to hunt him up to give it to him – only to give it when he came in to a certain place on a certain day and asked for it. Would you not feel greatly grieved to hear him say to a friend: “My father promised me a given sum of money. Now I need it. I would go and ask him for it, but it might not do me any good. He hasn’t given me any for the last two weeks. Of course, he said he would do it, and I am trying to believe, but I just don’t know whether he will do it or not!”

IT IS AN INSULT TO GOD TO SAY: “I AM TRYING TO BELIEVE!”

To think of inferring that God cannot be believed! It isn’t WHAT you believe!
IT IS WHOM YOU BELIEVE!

You cannot possibly please God while you judge and choose WHAT to believe of His promises! You can only please Him when you believe Him – every promise, every command, every warning!

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO BELIEVE HIM?

Perhaps this is the reason you have trouble believing. Perhaps there are some things that you don't want to believe. You would like to believe the promises, but do you want to believe His commands?

Are you trying to believe, "I am the Lord that healeth thee," Ex. 15:26, while trying not to believe, all the tithe is the Lord's? (Malachi 3:10.)

Are you trying to believe in heaven without believing in hell? Are you trying to believe in the love of God and the grace of God without believing in His holiness and His judgement?

Do you want to believe His "thou art made me whole," without believing His "sin no more lest a worse thing come unto thee?" John 5:14

You can't do it! Either YOU BELIEVE GOD or YOU DON'T BELIEVE GOD!

There are many hindrances to our faith, which we will consider in this lesson. It is well to examine each one of them and look into our own heart and life. And then see whether any one or more of them might constitute the reason our faith has been ineffectual and we have not received from God the healing, or other petitions, we have so much desired.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17.

SOME HINDERANCES TO FAITH ARE:

1. FAILURE TO ABIDE IN HIM

This may well be placed first on any list of hindrances to faith, for it nullifies God's guarantee.

Abiding in Christ is not church membership. It is not being kind to your neighbors. It is not even singing in the choir, teaching a Sunday School class, preaching or praying, but it is living in the Word of God, by the Word of God, and in joyful fellowship with God.

"There is no . . . condemnation to them which are IN Christ Jesus," Rom. 8:1.

When you became a Christian, you began a new life. In the words of Scripture, the old man DIED! A new life began. When you were baptized in water, fulfilling the command of Christ, you were buried with Him, and rose to walk in the newness of life. Then you were to have crucified the old man, with his affections and lusts. Your interests were married to those of your Lord. Your desires are now His desires. You are more concerned with the salvation of souls, sick bodies healed, deliverance of all who are bound or oppressed by the devil, and advancing the cause of the Kingdom of Christ in the world than you are with new hats, new cars, comfortable dwellings, fame, success in business, or any other concerns of this life.

God has never indicated in His Word that He would deny His people these comforts. But He declares, “seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matt. 6:33.

His promise to those who will do this, delighting themselves in the success of His kingdom, is “Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” Psalms 37:4.

You are living day by day IN Christ – abiding in Him.

Then you are living in the place to claim the promise recorded in John 15:7: “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

This promise could never have been made to those who do not meet the conditions, because they might use this power indiscriminately, for their own lusts, and it could be very dangerous.

“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts,” James 4:3, describes the kind of asking that can never be done in faith. There may be a desire to be well, and even a hope that “it may work.” But there cannot be faith, for there is no promise upon which faith can be based.

There are those who desire healing only to be able to better carry on their sinful pursuits. God does not give faith to such people. It is only given to those who abide in Christ, and in whom His Word abides. Only those can be trusted to use such mighty power.

2. Condemnation

Condemnation is certainly one of the greatest hindrances to faith. those who abide in Christ are not condemned.

“If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” 1 John 3:21,22.

This is God’s formula for faith. Until you have met this condition, you cannot have faith. You may be persuaded that God is able to heal you, but you can only hope that He will, for He has not promised to do it while you live in sin, under condemnation.

I may know a millionaire, who could easily give me a thousand dollars. I know he could do it. He may even have given one of my friends a thousand dollars. I may even have seen the check. I may need it very badly, and hope fervently that he will somehow decided to give me a thousand dollars, but I have no real reason to believe that he will do so unless he says that he will.

God’s power is sufficient to heal, as well as to save, EVERYBODY, but His promise is to heal those who keep His commandments and walk in the statutes, and those who believe Him, and believe that all His words are truth.

Anything that is of a disobedient, ungodly, or unholy nature is a hindrance to faith. Enumerated below are only a few of the things that will cause condemnation and therefore hinder faith. You can no doubt think of others, perhaps in your own life.

Causes of Condemnation

(a). Unscriptural Relationships in the Home.

Peter exhorts Husbands and wives: “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” I Peter 3:1,7.

The faith of many is hindered because of unscriptural relationships in

the home, but unscriptural attitudes toward our fellow men outside the home can also be great hindrance to faith.

This is indeed a sensitive (touchy) subject. It seems that each person, each couple, each family feels that their home life, their private life, is nobody's business but their own, and, in a sense, this is true.

God, however, does not hesitate to place his finger upon misguided home life as one of the principal hindrances to prayer and to faith as well.

Many wives have mistakenly assumed that they can become more spiritual by disregarding the wishes of their husbands, neglecting their natural care for their husbands to follow more lauded spiritual pursuits. They may indeed win the praise of some by doing so, but God's command is not thus.

"But," she may say, "my husband is unsaved. Surely I am not expected to remain in subjection to him." Please not the first verse! "that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;" I Peter 3:1

(The word "conversation" at the time of the translation of the King James version meant general behaviour or deportment rather than talk as the word is generally used now.) Thus the passage does not mean that she is to attempt to talk him into the kingdom! Rather, he is to be won by observing her gentleness, meekness, kindness, longsuffering, love, joy, peace, and faith.

Surely, any wife whose husband is unsaved – doomed to spend eternity in hell unless he repents – will be praying for her husband's salvation! If her conduct toward him is not that which is set forth in Scriptures as proper for a wife, her prayers in his behalf are of little value. And her faith will not operate when she is not obeying the Word of God in her home life.

This is equally true of the husband. Cruel, harsh, overbearing, unkind treatment of his wife and children will certainly stand between him and the answer to his prayers and will cripple his faith to receive the thing for which he asks.

Faith that moves mountains springs from the depths of a soul that is at peace: at peace with God, with itself, with the members of its household, and with those that are without.

No matter how strong and how spiritual a man may be, it is a tremendous battle to try to pray in faith when he is constantly annoyed and irritated by the scolding and lamenting of a nagging wife. Solomon declared: "It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house." Prov. 25:24.

Courtesy in the home is a matter of great importance and not to be lightly regarded. God says, "be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be COURTEOUS:" I Peter 3:8.

True courtesy is only the concern for the welfare of others that we ought to feel in the home. It is putting others first. It is kindness. It includes respect for the person and privacy for every member. It allows for each person to have his own time alone with God. It does not embarrass other members of the family because of their failures, their aspirations, their consecrations, their dreams. Real love cannot be discourteous, for "Love worketh no ill." Rom. 13:10.

Compassion and love are also necessary in a home if that home is to be in order as God wishes it to be. Compassion is defined as "sympathy, pity, mercy, tenderness, sorrow for the distress of another."

How easy it is for the husband and wife both to assume the attitude that the partner has everything easy, and has no cause to complain. The husband feels that in the shelter of the home, his wife is not buffeted by the world. She has every modern convenience and does all the work, and furnishes all the money. All she has to do is to spend it! Meanwhile the wife struggles all day long with the varied emergencies that small children can create. She longs for adult conversation and adult interests. She envies her husband who goes out into the big, bright, interesting world every morning!

Of course, neither the husband nor the wife has things all good or all bad, but each can make the lot of the other easier by being compassionate, by understanding the heartaches and annoyances of the other, and by going out of the way to ease the strain whenever possible.

Remember, Jesus Himself made the statement that where two of you agree as touching anything, it shall be done. Then, there is nothing beyond your grasp. As the two of you join hands together across the breakfast table, in full harmony and agreement—not hindered by the breakdown of any of these important home virtues – you can ask of God whatsoever you will, and your

faith will be able to claim the answer. It will not be hindered.

(b). Unscriptural Attitudes Toward our Fellow Men.

“What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” Mark 11:24,25.

An unforgiving spirit hinders faith. It condemns the soul, and renders believing prayer impossible.

A Christian should be a good a good citizen.

In the time of Christ, pagan Rome ruled over the Jews. The Jews hated Rome and all it stood for. They hated the governors that Rome sent to rule over them, and the Roman soldiers who enforced the Roman rule. Most of all, they hated those of their own people who had hired themselves out to Rome as tax collectors.

As the popularity of Jesus grew, the religious leaders of the Jews became very concerned. They wanted to discredit Him, so they tried at various times to ask Him embarrassing questions in public.

One of these occasions, they asked Him a question designed to trap Him: “Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?” Matt. 22:17.

They hoped He would denounce the Roman government, and involve Himself in such difficulties with the law that He would be out of their way. On the other hand, if He should answer “yes” to their question, this should make Him unpopular with the people.

Since God was their real King, many of the Jews reasoned that they should not pay tribute (taxes) to a heather emperor – that it was treason to God. Jesus answered: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.” Matt. 22:21.

In effect, He said to them: “Circumstances have placed you in subjection to the Roman government. It protects your lives and your property. It builds

your roads and furnishes other public services for you on a material plane. It is only fair, then, that you pay taxes to help support this service. You should be loyal to this government as long as it does not claim service that belongs to God.

“But that which belongs to God, worship, honor and tribute which He demands, render unto God.”

Paul's Teaching - Rom. 13:1-10

1. Our Duty

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher power” (RSV “The governing authorities”) Verse 1.

The spirit of lawlessness is the spirit of the Antichrist, but a Christian will have no part of it. He voluntarily subjects himself to those who are lawfully over him.

Can you reconcile this teaching of obedience to the law with the attitude some Christians take that “It’s all right if you get away with it”? There are Christians today who actually mock policemen, teaching their children contempt for the officer of the law. They laugh when they speed without being caught, and act as if the policemen were their enemies.

Such children grow up with the idea that the “governing authorities” are enemies, to be outwitted if possible. Christian parents should solemnly examine themselves if they have thus started their children on the road to juvenile delinquency. What is juvenile delinquency but contempt for constituted authority? And where do most of these juveniles learn this contempt?

2. The Reason for Submitting to Rulers

“For there is no power but God: the powers that are ordained of God.”
Rom. 13:1

God has instituted the governmental system and those who rule are doing it upon his authority. Does this mean that God approves of every ruler? Does it excuse us from obeying the duly appointed authorities just because they do not rule as we think they should?

No person is a law unto himself. If he were, we would live in a constant state of anarchy and revolution. This is the reason God instituted law and government, and upholds it.

3. Refusing to Obey

“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” Rom. 13:2.

Does Paul mean by this that we must obey, from a ruling authority, a command that is morally wrong? No! In spiritual matters, things which pertain to our relationship to Christ and His Church, we are to “obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29-42

But when the laws of the land do not violate the laws of God, the Christian who refused to obey them is, according to Paul’s words, actually resisting and disobeying God!

4. Vindication of Rulers

“For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

“For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” Rom. 13:3,4.

Twice in these verses, the “ruler” is called a servant of God. this applies even though he may not be a Christian, (Paul was writing to the church at Rome, and their rulers were almost entirely pagan.) The ruler is a servant of God because God has ordained the powers that be the governing authorities.

Two things are taught here:

- (a). Those who obey the civil laws need have no fear of rulers. (It is the man who exceeds the speed limit who fears to hear a police siren.)
- (b). God intends that those who violate the laws should be punished, for the magistrate does not bear the sword in vain. (Romans 13:4).

5. Citizenship and Conscience

“Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.” Rom. 13:5,6.

It is contrary to our conscience to break a law. Paul said, “herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.” Acts 24:16.

To violate civil law can be a major hindrance to faith!

We are also instructed to show a Christ-like attitude to those who are not Christians. Of course it is much easier to love the good, kind, sincere Christian who is obviously a brother in Christ.

In I Thess. 4:9-12, we are taught on this subject. Paul commended the Thessalonians for their fulfilling of the command to love the brethren, but he had some suggestions to offer toward their conduct as Christian citizens of their community, especially with regard to their relationship with “them that are without,” Verse 12.

In Gal. 6:10, Paul exhorts us to “do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Thus, we see that those who are “within, that is, our brethren in Christ, are accounted worthy of first concern to the Christian, but this does not relieve that Christian of his obligation to “them that are without,” – the non-Christian among his neighbors, his family, and all citizens of the world.

It is disturbing to note that the habit some Christians have of treating with contempt anyone who is not (in their opinion) a Christian, or whose religious beliefs do not coincide with their own. Contrast this attitude with Christ’s love for all, His kind but uncompromising fellowship with sinners, His willingness to forgive even those who nailed Him to the cross, His assertion that He “came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Mark 2:17.

Our attitude and responsibility toward our fellow men may be summed up as follows:

To “Provide things honest in the sight of all men.” Romans 12:17. To deal fairly with others in all business transactions, whether with Christian or

sinner. To do good. To be kind and gentle at all times. To be courteous (1 Peter 3:8). The heart of true courtesy is kindness and thoughtfulness to others; to live and witness in such a manner as to win them to Christ.

Unscriptural attitudes toward our fellow men can constitute a great hindrance to faith. If you find in your life any of these attitudes, they may account for your failure to believe God and receive your healing or other requests.

(c). Failure to Tithe, and to Give to God.

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.”
Mal. 3:8-12.

The wrong financial attitude can be a great hindrance to faith. Many professed Christians live under constant condemnation because they refuse to give God the tithe, which is His. “The tithe ... is the Lord’s:” Lev. 27:30.

Yet there are those who feel that they cannot spare more than a few pennies, or perhaps a dollar or two, for God when they are earning from fifty dollars and up every week! They declare that tithing was “under the law.” It would be too costly for them to remember that Abraham paid tithe to Melchizedek, and that Jacob pledged to return a tenth of all that God gave to him, before the law began. The tithe IS the Lord’s – before the law, under the law, and after the law!

Although the Pharisees were strict tithers (Matt. 23:23) Jesus declared that our righteousness must EXCEED theirs, if we are ever to enter heaven (Matt. 5:20).

In Mal. 3:8, God calls those who withhold the tithe “thieves.” Many of these so-called “saints” help to make up the healing lines. If you have been robbing God, do not expect Him to heal you until you have first asked forgiveness and become a tither.

Remember, God’s promises are still true. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith,” Mal. 3:10.

In addition to the law of tithing, the Word of God has much to say about giving, and about God’s promises to those who give generously. Even a selfish person who reads and truly believe those promises would not withhold from God!

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” Luke 6:38

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Acts 20:35

Do you consider an investment that would earn 10 percent interest, with no risk, a good investment? Those who have tried giving liberally to God have many times testified that God has returned, not 10 percent, but 100 percent, or even more, within a few days, from unexpected or seemingly impossible sources.

However, we dare not leave his lesson without pointing out that money cannot buy the gifts of God. Simon, the sorcerer of Samaria, thought he could buy God’s gift with money, but Peter told him, “Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God can be purchased with money . . . thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore . . . “ Acts 8:20-22.

This writer has been in a position to handle mail from all parts of the world, asking prayer for physical healing. Some years ago, a woman wrote asking prayer for the healing of a badly crippled foot. She enclosed a dime with the remark that when she had received healing for her foot, then she would remit the test, whatever was required.

My heart was moved within me as I read it, for I perceived that this poor woman was desperately in need, but that, not knowing the ways of God, she was in the gall of bitterness. I immediately returned her dime, explaining God's plan for her healing, and exhorting her to repent, as Peter did the sorcerer. A few weeks later, another letter arrived from the lady, thanking me for the faithful words of warning, and informing me that when she had repented and asked God to heal her, the work had been done!

Your money itself, even if it were millions, can never buy the favor of God, and a stingy, selfish, unbelieving heart can keep you from His favor. A generous, loving, outgoing, believing heart seems to be peculiarly in tune with the heart of God.

If you have condemnation in your heart about these things, do not expect to be able to have faith until you change your attitude about finances and bring your life into conformity with the Word of God.

(d). Failure to Right Wrongs

It is useless for us to expect to have real working faith and to be able to get anything from God until we have ourselves made everything right, as far as it lies within our power, with our fellow men.

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

“Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Matt. 5:23,24.

These are the words of Jesus. When the Jews came to the temple, they brought a “sin offering” as a sign of their repentance and desire for forgiveness. This is the “gift” Jesus referred to.

Notice that the Scripture quoted above says, if “thy brother hath ought against thee.” It does not say just to be reconciled to those you have something against. That comes under forgiveness, and is necessary, of course, but this is to make the wrongs right which you have committed against someone else.

Failure to do this brings condemnation to your heart, and may well be a real hindrance to your faith.

(e). Failure to Confess Faults

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” James 5:16

Many of us see faults only on others but never in ourselves. We should examine ourselves, and see wherein we have failed God, and if our sin has been a public one, it should be confessed publicly.

Few people claim to be perfect, yet when confronted with the idea that confessing of faults may be necessary for their healing, there is usually not one fault that they are willing to confess. While many receive immediate healing as they come in the healing line, it is a well-known fact that there are folk over the land today, who have passed through many healing lines and yet are not healed.

These are the people who need to call in help – according to James 5:14, the elders of the church and with much heart searching and prayer trace out in their lives the reason the healing has been withheld. Then when the light of God has revealed to their honest, seeking hearts the reasons for their failures to be healed, they should confess those faults to those who are praying with them, asking their prayers that the faults may be overcome. Then, in answer to the united prayers of the sick persons and the elders, Satan can be driven from the field, and double victories won. The bondage of both sin and sickness will be broken.

Those who hear such confession MUST remember that in the cause of Christian brotherhood they are under obligation to speak to no one but God of the faults that have been so confessed.

Unwillingness to confess faults usually indicates an unwillingness to forsake them, or else a lack of confidence in the power of God to deliver them from them. This is one of the greatest hindrances to faith.

(f). Wrong Motives

“Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” James 4:3.

There are those who desire healing in order to be better able to continue in a life which does not glorify God, or their chief motive is selfish in some

other way. If you desire to be healed, but that desire is bigger than your desire to serve God, your motive is wrong and you cannot ask in faith.

Are you asking for something God does not want you to have? Does He give drought instead of rain, poverty instead of provision, sickness instead of health, because it is “better” for you?

No! That is not the reason . The answer fails to come because your heart it NOT RIGHT. Because the good thing God wants to give is asked for the purpose of using it to depart farther and farther from God.

When we pray with selfish motives, it brings condemnation to us and thereby our faith is hindered.

3. LACK OF SEPERATION UNTO GOD

There are many that deny that there is any supernatural power in operation in the world today. They advise good resolutions, church membership, or baptism instead of conversion by means of a new birth, but those things cannot change the heart.

Jesus said to one such religious man who had come to recognize the futility of his own doctrine and sincerely sought God’s way, “Ye must be born again.” John 3:7. Some who call themselves “Fundamentalists” accept this much of the miracle-working power of God, but no more. They agree with Mark 16:16, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;” but they deny the power of verses 17-18. “These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; THEY SHALL LAY HANDS ON THE SICK, AND THEY SHALL RECOVER.”

They gather together in churches and sing their hymns; preach their sermons, pray their beautiful prayers, some even baptize with water and take the Lord’s Supper. They have all the outward from of godliness. They are recognized by the world and by the government as “the church,” but they absolutely DENY THE POWER JESUS PROMISES TO LEAVE WITH THE GODLY.

In the same verse with the warning quoted at the beginning of this thought, God has told us clearly what to do if we are associated with such a group of people. “FROM SUCH TURN AWAY.” 2 Tim. 3:5.

Many fail to receive healing because they have not heeded this warning. The spark of faith has begun to glow in their hearts, but instead of assembling themselves together with others of like precious faith, who will encourage and guide them into an even greater faith, they insist upon remaining in the company of those, who not only do not believe in the miracle-working power of God, but openly deny that there is any such power.

Your personal faith has as good a chance of surviving in such circumstances as a coal of fire has in a tub of ice water. God has not called you to remain in such an environment. It is very well to tell them of what you have found in God's word. If they also believe, you have won a friend in Christ, but if they will not believe, the Word of God is plain. Turn away from them, for they have turned away their ears from the truth, and will turn you away from the truth also, if you continue in their company.

Search the Scriptures! Build your faith upon the word of God, and then get into a church that has done the same. Many, many people are hindered from receiving faith because they have failed to heed this important warning of God's Word.

The only way that Satan can prevent you from receive healing God has promised you is to keep you from asking in faith. This he accomplishes through tricking you into allowing some one or more of these hindrances to remain in your heart and life today.

4. NO WORKS

“Faith without works is dead?” James 2:20.

A life of faith is demonstrated to the world by Christian works. You will do for the Lord and for others, as well as believe. A lack of works is a definite hindrance to faith.

I like to paraphrase the statement: “Faith without works is dead” and say “Faith that doesn't work is dead.” Many Christians are so like the recluse in New York who had lived, for many years, alone with her sister. The time came when neither of the maiden ladies had been seen for several days. Neighbors forced their way into the home, fearful that some accident might have occurred. One of the sisters had died. The other, fearful that her sister would be taken from her, had barricaded herself in the house with the body. Are you afraid that you and your

neighbors will learn that your faith is dead; that it doesn't work, and that it will be taken from you?

5. Disobedience

When ten lepers came to Jesus for healing, He told them to go to the priest (this was correct procedure under the Mosaic law), and show themselves to him. They turned from Him just as leprous as they came, but the Bible says, "It came to pass, that, as they went they were cleansed." Luke 17:14.

Another time He told a blind man who came to Him for Healing to "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." John 9:7. (He had placed clay on the eyes of the man and he was to wash this off.)

There he went groping and perhaps stumbling in his blindness as he went away from Jesus through the streets of the city to the pool of Siloam. Only when he had washed the clay from his eyes were they healed. This obedience, in faith, brought about the healing in these cases. If they had not obeyed, they would have been able to believe and they would not have been healed, in all probability.

If you have fulfilled all other conditions for your healing, and you pray in faith, then "believe that ye receive it." ACT LIKE IT! This may be the final act of faith that God requires of you.

Remember, disobedience to any command of God hinders faith, and you cannot expect to receive from God under those circumstances.

6. ERRONEOUS TEACHINGS – the Traditions of Men

Among the greatest hindrances to faith are the erroneous teachings many folk have received throughout their lives.

If you will take the Word of God and read it as though you had never heard it taught nor preached, you may discover that some of the teaching you have listened to is not in line with the thought and intent of the Scripture. If you will let the Holy Ghost guide you in understanding it, you may find that your faith has been hindered because you have received teaching that was not simply a variation of doctrine. It was actually a trick of the devil to deprive you of God's blessings by hindering your faith.

We have built our faith on what we believe is taught in the Word of God; if we believe wrong, we cannot have the faith that will produce the results.

Among the most faith-hindering of incorrect teachings are the following:

That one may be sick for God's glory: This teaching is based on two misinterpreted incidents in the ministry of Christ – the death of Lazarus and the account of the man born blind. God receives no glory for continued sickness; the only glory He received from sickness is when He heals it. (See Lesson #3)

That sickness is chastening from God and therefore God will not heal: It is true that sickness may be a chastening from God for disobedience or sin, but a loving Father does not punish His child more severely than is needed to correct that child. Even though you may be sick as punishment or penalty for sin, heartfelt repentance removes the reason for punishment, but if your sickness is a punishment for sin, God will let you know what it is for, and when you repent, you can expect healing. (See Lesson #3)

That it May Not Be God's Will to Heal: Five little words, “If It be Thy Will” have hindered the faith of more people and rendered their prayers ineffectual than any other words in the English language. (See Lesson #3)

When you pray for something and then say, “If it be thy will,” it may appear at first thought to indicate submissiveness to the will of God. Instead, it is just like disconnecting the clutch on your automobile, and stepping on the brake. All the might and power of God are waiting and ready to be used on your behalf, but your “if” has disconnected you!

I know this is going straight against the way that many have been taught to pray. You have not had the answers you wanted, if you have been praying that way, because your faith is hindered by the fact that you do not have the certainty in your soul that it is God's will. So about all you can do is pray and HOPE instead of pray and BELIEVE.

The “If It Be Thy Will” method of prayer has not been followed by any of the heroes of faith either in the Bible or in the church age!

When George Muller began to feel that it was in the will of God that he should build an orphanage, he did not just begin crying out to God, “Lord, if it be thy will, send me the money to build orphanages.” He knew the first thing was to find out God's will in the matter. He began first to pray for guidance. He KNEW God wanted to guide him, for God desires to guide every one of His children. As he prayed day after day for guidance, he began keeping a record of his impressions,

and of God's dealings with him, until he had prayed for twenty-one days. By that time, he was positive of God's leading in the matter. Then he began praying, "Lord, send me the money!" He didn't have to say, "If it be they will," for he felt certain of God's will. He could ask with confidence. He could ask without wavering.

You know the result. He built three great orphanages costing more than \$350,000.00. With the houses filled with orphans, he paid all the expense of housing, feeding, clothing, educating, and sending them out when they were grown, with money for a little start in life, for more than half a century, and all that time he never asked any man for a penny!

As far as healing is concerned, we know it is the will of God! This we have studied in previous lessons. It is suggested that you review Lesson #3 of this course, as all of the misconceptions regarding healing are likewise hindrances to faith.

**WHEN THE HINDRANCES TO FAITH IN YOUR OWN LIFE
HAVE BEEN MET AND CONQUERED, YOU WILL REALIZE A
REVITALIZED PRAYER LIFE AND RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.**

**YOU CAN RECEIVE YOUR HEALING AND WHATEVER ELSE
YOU DESIRE FROM GOD ACCORDING TO HIS WORD!**