WHAT FAITH IS...

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Chapter 1

The Difference Between Faith and Hope

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

— Hebrews 11:1

In Moffatt's translation of the New Testament, Hebrews 11:1 reads, "Now faith means that we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see."

The first part of this verse in *The New English Bible* reads, "Faith gives substance to our hopes." Another translation says,

"Faith is the warranty deed that the thing for which you have fondly hoped is at last yours."

The Spirit, through Paul, is simply telling us that *faith is laying hold of the unrealities of hope and bringing them into the realm of reality.*

You hope for finances to meet the obligations you have, but faith gives you the *assurance* you'll have the money when you need it. You hope for physical strength to do the job you must do, but faith says, *"The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"* (Ps. 27:1).

Faith, we know, grows out of the Word of God: *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Rom. 10:17).

Faith says the same thing the Word of God says.

Unbelief, on the other hand, is taking sides against God's Word.

It is sad that there are so many "believers" who talk unbelief, thus taking sides against the Word of God. Then they wonder why God's Word doesn't work for them.

One of the best ways to find out what something *is,* is to find out what it is *not.* Let's follow that approach in these lessons.

First, *faith is not hope.* Too often people are just *hoping* they will receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, or an answer to prayer. But it's not *hoping* that gets the job done; it's *believing.*

Now faith is. If it's not *now,* it's not faith.

When someone says, "Well, I believe I'll get the Holy Spirit sometime," that's not faith; it's hope. *Hope is always future tense*

— pointing to the future— *but faith is always now.* Faith says, "I'll receive right now. I have it now."

When it comes to receiving what you need from God, the principles of faith are the same in any area, whether for receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, an answer to prayer, or finances. If you learn the principles of faith, it is easy to receive whatever you need from God.

Years ago, I conducted a tent meeting in Waco, Texas. On the third night I preached on laying on of hands and had a healing service. Back then, I always put people in the same line to receive healing or the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The first man in the line had come to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

I asked him, "Will you receive now as I lay my hands on you and pray?"

"Well, Brother Hagin," he answered, "I sure *hope* so."

I replied, "You won't."

That made him angry. I had meant to help him, not anger him, so I added, "You don't receive from God through hope; it's by faith that you receive."

He said, "I don't know whether I'm going to receive or not, so I'm just not going to say I am."

Then I asked him, "If I offered you a dollar bill, would you say, 'Well, I don't know whether I can receive it or not'?"

"No, certainly not," he replied.

"God offers you a gift which is just as easy for you to receive as a dollar I might offer you," I said.

"But I have been seeking a longtime," he said. "In fact, it's been about 13 years, and I haven't received yet. I don't know whether I will receive."

He got quite upset about it, so I hugged his neck and said, "Brother, I'm here to help you. It wouldn't do a bit of good for me to lay my hands on you and pray for you. In fact, under these conditions, I could lay my hands on your head until I wore every hair off, and you wouldn't get anything. I suggest you sit on the front row to watch and listen to what is going on, and you'll see the difference between believing and hoping."

I prayed for several people for healing, and then came to a young woman who wanted to receive the Holy Spirit. I asked, "Are you a Christian?"

"I'm a member of the Baptist church," she said.

I said, "You could belong to any church and not be a Christian. It's not being a member of a church; it's being born again."

"Yes," she declared, "I know that. And I have been born again."

"Well, fine," I said. "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? And do you believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit?" (Having a Baptist background myself, I know they don't all believe that.)

"I certainly do," she said. "It's in the Bible."

Then I asked her, "Will you receive the Holy Spirit now when I lay my hands on your head and pray?"

"I certainly will," she responded. "You know, I sat here tonight and followed every Scripture you gave as you preached, and it's all in there. It's in the Word—the laying on of hands to receive the Holy Spirit. I certainly will receive."

I saw she was ready. I saw faith in operation. I reached out my right hand to lay it on her forehead, but before I could touch her, she threw up both hands and started speaking in tongues.

Then I turned to the man who had been observing on the front row. I asked, "Now do you see the difference between just hoping you will receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit and really believing you will?"

"Yes," he said, "I guess I do."

He returned three nights later. That night we had another service for laying hands on the sick and for receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Again, he was the first man in line.

I said, "I see you're back."

"Yes," he replied, "I'm back. And I'll tell you something—I've changed my hope into faith. Just put your hands on me and I'll be filled with the Holy Spirit right now!"

I reached out my hands and had hardly touched him before both of his hands went up and he began speaking in tongues.

It makes such a difference when you really *believe* God and don't just *hope* you'll receive from Him. You see, that man hadn't actually been seeking for 13 years; he had just been hoping he'd get the Holy Spirit. And you don't receive by hoping.

Jesus said, *"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, BELIEVE that ye receive them* ___" (Mark 11:24). He did not say, "HOPE that ye receive them"; He said, *"BELIEVE that ye receive them.* "

Here is how to tell whether you are really believing God or just hoping: Hope is

future tense. But if you are seeking healing, it's not in the future you want to be healed; it's right now—especially if you are in pain.

If you are seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you don't want to be filled in the future; it is now you want to receive.

If it's salvation a person wants, it's not in the future he wants to be saved; that may be too late. In days gone by, I've talked to men about their salvation and I've had them tell me that they *hoped* to be saved. I say with tears that some of these men are in hell today. They left this world unsaved because salvation which is based on hope never comes to fruition.

It seems that we always stumble over the same stumbling stone when it comes to receiving things from God: We *hope* He hears our prayers. We *hope* to be healed. We *hope* to receive the Holy Spirit. Even if you say, "I believe I'll receive it sometime,"

that is still hope. You're calling it belief, but it's hope because it's in the future.

Notice what our text says: *"NOW faith is....* " That's present tense. If it's not now, it's not faith. Faith is present tense. Hope is future tense. Get in the right tense; get in the present tense.

Some people are always believing God is *going to do* something for them, but faith believes that He *has done* and *is doing.*

Even when it comes to healing, many people say, "Brother Hagin, I don't understand why I haven't received my healing. I know God promised to heal me."

"God has not promised to heal you at all," I tell them.

They reply, "Doesn't the Word of God say, *'Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses'?* Isn't that a promise?"

No, that is not a promise. It is a statement of fact which tells us something that has already happened.

Some will quote First Peter 2:24: *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by*

whose stripes ye were healed. " Then they'll ask, "Doesn't that promise me healing?"

I have to tell them, "No, that doesn't promise healing. It tells you what belongs to you."

I have learned this: As soon as I can get people to quit hoping and start believing, they are healed immediately.

I was preaching several years ago in Oklahoma and a woman in her 70's who hadn't taken a single step in four years was brought to the service. The doctors had said she would never walk again. Her knees had simply worn out and wouldn't function to carry her weight. Having sat around with no exercise, she had grown quite large.

When it came time for the healing line, they brought her forward and sat her on the altar. I knelt in front of her and prayed. Then I said, "Now, Sister, arise and walk in the Name of the Lord Jesus."

That dear soul did her best to arise—and all the time she was crying and praying, "O dear Lord Jesus, please heal me. Lord, I know You promised to heal me. You know what a burden I've been to my family. I can't do one thing for myself. Dear Lord, please heal me. Please heal my limbs. Please let me walk. Oh, please, please, please!"

"Wait a minute, Sister," I said. "I have a word for you. I can help you."

But instead of listening, she just got louder and louder. I said the second time, "Wait a minute, Sister. I have a word for you. I can help you." She got still louder.

The third time I said, "Wait a minute, Sister. Wait a minute.

I have a word from God for you. I can help you."

She had gotten almost hysterical, so I took hold of her shoulders, shook her firmly, and said, "I command you to shut up in the Name of the Lord Jesus!"

She stopped and looked at me. Then I realized that the congregation had "put the brakes on." The same thing happened to Jesus in his hometown of Nazareth. The

Bible says so! *"And he could there do no mighty work* [it doesn't say He *wouldn't;* it says He *couldn't*] *save that he laid his hands on a few sick folk, and healed them"* (Mark 6:5). The original Greek reads that He laid hands on a few people with "minor ailments." Why? Mark 6:6 gives us the answer: *"And he marvelled because of their unbelief* "

Before I could do anything to help that woman, I had to get the brakes of unbelief off. I had to go to work on the congregation first.

I said, "Some thought I was being rude to this woman." And some spoke right out and said, "Yes, we surely did."

I replied, "Now I want to ask you a question. If you were walking down the street and someone in a car stopped and asked for directions and then turned around and started back the way they had come, wouldn't you try to stop them and get them straightened out?"

"Well, yes," the crowd agreed.

"All right," I said. "This woman was on the wrong road. She wasn't on the road to healing. I've done nothing but flag her down, and now I have her attention."

I continued, "If you'll just take your feet off the brakes long enough, we'll get this woman healed." I sensed a release and went back to dealing with the sick woman.

"Sister," I said, "did you know you are healed?"

She looked up at me wide-eyed and asked, "Oh, am I?"

I opened my Bible to First Peter 2:24, handed it to her, and asked her to read the verse aloud.

She read, *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."*

"Read that last clause again, please," I said.

"By whose stripes ye were healed, " she read.

"Now I want to ask you a question," I continued. "Is *were* present tense, future tense, or past tense?"

"It's past tense," she replied.

"Then if you were healed by Jesus' stripes, you *are now* healed, aren't you?"

"Yes," she answered, "I am!"

"Now will you do what I tell you?"

When she indicated she would, I said to her, "Just lift your hands and look right up to Jesus and begin to praise Him. Praise Him because you *are* healed—present tense—not *going to be*—you *are."*

She looked up, and in a simple, childlike manner she said, "Dear Lord Jesus, I'm so glad I'm healed." She hadn't walked a step yet—she had no evidence of healing whatsoever—yet she said, "I'm so glad I'm healed. Dear Lord, You know how tired I got sitting around. Thank God, my knees are well. My limbs are healed. I'm so thankful!"

Then I said to the congregation, "Let's thank God with her because she is—not going to be—but *is* healed."

Most of the crowd raised their hands and praised God with her because she was healed.

Some probably said, "She's not healed; she hasn't walked yet. She hasn't taken a step."

Our text, however, says, ".. .*faith is the evidence of things not seen.* " (If you're going to wait until you see something before you believe it, that isn't faith at all.) Turning to her, I said, "My Sister, arise and walk in Jesus'

Name!" Immediately that woman jumped off the altar like a 16-year-old girl and walked, leaped, and ran, praising God.

Dr. Lilian Yeomans said something which I read years ago and never have forgotten. It's been a blessing to me through the years. She said, "If I pray just once for something and don't get it, I start changing. I start changing because if I

pray and that prayer isn't answered, there will have to be a change before the answer comes. And I know there can't be any change with God; He never changes. So if there's any changing, it has to be on my part. Therefore, if I pray and do not receive, then I start changing."

I have followed this policy through the years and have found that it works 100 percent of the time.

We need to realize that we cannot substitute hope for faith and get answers from God. But don't misunderstand me: If you keep hope in its rightful place, it is blessed, wonderful, beautiful, and a reality to you.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, *"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity"* (1 Cor.

13:13). He did not say that the others aren't important; he said the greatest of the three is love. Each one of them has its place.

You can't substitute love for hope, and you can't substitute hope for faith.

Yet I know from dealing with so many thousands of people during my ministry that most people are trying to receive an answer to prayer on *hope* instead of on *faith.* The reason I know is because of what they say to me.

Some say, "If you take my hope away from me, I won't have anything left."

"No," I reply. "I'm not taking your hope away from you. I'm just showing you that you have your hope misplaced."

Thank God, we have a blessed hope! The *blessed hope* of the Church is the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ—the resurrection of the saved dead—the Rapture of the living saints—the hope of heaven—the hope of seeing our loved ones and friends. Thank God for that hope. We are rejoicing in it. But it is all *future tense.*

We know Jesus is coming again. Whether a person believes it or not, He *is* coming, because the Word says so. The resurrection is going to take place whether we have faith or not; whether we believe it or not.

Loved ones and friends who have died have gone to heaven if they were Christians—regardless of what we believe about it—and they will come back

with Jesus when He returns.

My faith is not going to bring Jesus back. That is, my believing that He will return today won't bring Him back today.

If that were true, then the Church could believe and bring Jesus back by their faith. But He is coming, isn't He?

His return is future tense. I don't know if He is coming today, tomorrow, or next week, but I do know He is coming.

This is a blessed hope. It is also a purifying hope, for John said, *"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure"* (1 John 3:3).

When I say that I believe He is coming, it is a combination of believing what the Word says and hope (future tense). But if I say, "I believe I'm going to get my healing sometime," that's not believing at all; that's hope, and it won't bring healing.

I have seen good people die saying just that; people who were wonderful Christians. I wouldn't speak disparagingly of them at all. They are now in heaven. They just didn't know what faith is.

They said, "I believe God is going to heal me *sometime."*

And that's not faith; it is hope.

Anything that points to the future or looks to the future is hope and not faith.

Chapter 2

Faith Is an Act

Some years ago, a friend of mine told me about a woman evangelist who preached in the early days of the Pentecostal Movement.

In one of her meetings, she ministered to four people in wheelchairs. To all four she said in a quiet voice, "Arise and walk in Jesus' Name!"

And they all got up and walked—except the fourth one.

"I can't walk," she said.

"The others couldn't walk, either," the evangelist pointed out, "but they did."

The woman replied, "I know they did, but I can't walk. I haven't walked in years. I can't walk."

And the evangelist had to walk away and leave her sitting there, still in unbelief.

You see, when those first three began to *act* upon what was told them, results were forthcoming. When you *act* upon what God's Word says, or *act* upon what the Holy Spirit may speak to your heart, results are forthcoming. That is faith!

A woman in one of the churches I pastored had arthritis and was in a wheelchair. The doctor had told her some years before that her body eventually would become rigid and she wouldn't be able to move. She would become confined to a wheelchair, her body fixed in a sitting position. This came to pass. Her body was stiff as a board.

She and her husband never missed a service. Now, I could pray for this woman and she would receive instant healing for such minor ailments as the flu or a cold. But it bothered me that she never once asked to be prayed for for healing from the arthritis.

There were people in that church who had been healed of very serious ailments, and I knew it was God's will to heal her, too.

Some might argue, "Well, it may not be God's will," but I know it *is* God's will to heal people! (That doesn't mean that Christians who don't get healed aren't going to heaven. It just means they are robbed of a blessing while on this earth.) One afternoon a small group of us from the church went to this crippled woman's house to pray with her, determined to see her delivered from that wheelchair. As we prayed, I saw exactly what God wanted me to do.

I said to everyone, "Get back away from her." We were in a large room. I went across the room from her and said, "Everybody watch, but I don't want anyone to touch her. Stay away from her."

Then I pointed a finger at her and said, "Now, my Sister, arise and walk in the Name of Jesus Christ!"

My wife and I and the members of that prayer group are witnesses to the fact that the power of God lifted her up out of that chair. She sat suspended in mid-air above the wheelchair!

She could move her arms and immediately she reached down with those little, crippled hands for the wheelchair. The moment she did, she fell back down into the chair.

As she did, without thinking—I know it was the Spirit of God in me—I pointed to her and said, "Sister, you don't have an ounce of faith, do you? You don't believe you'll ever be healed of this arthritis, do you?"

She blurted out, "No, Brother Hagin, I don't. I'll die and go to my grave with it." And she did.

You cannot receive from God beyond actual faith. Do you know what would have happened if she had cooperated with God's healing power? She would have been healed. Every joint in her body would have been loosened. She would have begun to walk!

Too many people think that God's power—healing power, Holy Spirit power—is going to move on them and make them do something whether they want to do it or not. No! That wouldn't be the Holy Spirit; that would be an evil spirit.

Evil spirits force, drive, and compel you to do things. But the Holy Spirit urges, prompts, or gives a gentle push. Then it is up to you to respond. It is up to you to obey.

While I was conducting a meeting in Texas, a woman in that town wrote a friend in another city, telling her how many were receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the services. She invited her friend to come down for the weekend services.

The friend drove down and was in two of our services before coming forward to receive the Holy Spirit. I laid my hands on her head, prayed, and the Holy Spirit came upon her. The utterance came. But I couldn't get her to respond or receive.

In the next service, which was Sunday morning, she came again for prayer. Once again the Holy Spirit came upon her and gave her utterance, but again she did not yield and receive.

I knew exactly what was wrong, but I knew it would take time to instruct her, and it was getting late. I turned the service over to the pastor.

Then I slipped through the side door and was walking across the parking lot toward the parsonage when I saw her sitting in her car. She looked so disappointed as she sat there a moment before turning the key on to begin her journey home.

I asked the Lord to let me help her. Instantly the Spirit of God showed me how to help her quickly. I walked over to her car, opened my Bible to Acts 2:4, and as I handed it to her through the window, I asked her to read it aloud.

She read, *“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”*

"Sister," I asked, *"who* does the Scripture say did the speaking with tongues?"

She replied, "It says the Holy Ghost did."

I asked her to read it again. She read it again. I asked her the same question. She gave the same reply. So I repeated the question. Finally, on the fourth time around, she caught on that something must be wrong, so she began to read slowly, "And—they—were—all—filled—with—the—Holy—Ghost—and—began—to speak ...."

Looking astonished, she said, "Why, THEY did!"

She took my Bible out of its case and examined it. She said she thought perhaps I had a different Bible from hers, but it was the same; a Scofield reference edition.

"You know," she said, "I always thought the Holy Spirit did the speaking."

I told her I had known that. Then I said, "Let's read several other Scriptures. God's Word says that out of the mouth of two or three witnesses shall a thing be established."

We read Acts 10:44-46: *"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also*

was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard THEM speak with tongues, and magnify God. "

"Oh," she exclaimed, "I see it!"

"That's two witnesses," I said. "Let's get three."

So we read Acts 19:6, *"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and THEY spake with tongues, and prophesied.* "

The woman said, "You know, Brother Hagin, if I had been called to testify in a court and the lawyer had asked me who did the speaking in tongues, I would have said the Holy Spirit did—and I would have thought I was telling the truth."

I said, "I want to ask you something. When I laid my hands on you, did you sense the Holy Spirit? Did the power of God come upon you?"

"Absolutely," she answered.

"Did your tongue want to say something that wasn't English?"

"Why," she said, "it was all I could do to keep it from it."

"You're not supposed to keep it from it," I told her. "You're supposed to cooperate. When the Holy Spirit gives you utterance, you must have faith to act."

Immediately she began to speak in a most beautiful tongue.

Once I chatted with a fellow who had been "tarrying" for the baptism in the Holy Spirit for 15 years! After we'd talked a little, he said, "You can't tell me *one thing* about tarrying. I know all about seeking God." Yes, he may have known all about *seeking*— but he didn't know anything about *receiving* from God! There is a difference.

Early one morning, an evangelist friend of mine went to pray at the church where he was preaching. While he was there, a man came in, recognized him as the visiting evangelist, shook hands with him, and immediately said, "You know what?"

"No."

Grinning, as if he were proud of the fact, he said, "I've been seeking the Holy Ghost for 19 years!"

"You haven't done any such thing," my friend told him.

"Jesus said, 'They that seek shall find.' If you'd been *seeking,* you would have found. All you've been doing is hanging around the altar."

And that's all some people are doing—just hanging around.

It's time to quit hanging around and to start acting on the Word of God, because *faith is acting.*

I was in one church where there was a man who had been severely burned over the lower part of his body. He couldn't walk; he just scooted along.

In one of the services, the Holy Spirit told me to have everyone who had something wrong with them from their hips down to come into the healing line. This man was the first in line.

I waited until they were all in line before I told them what else God had said for me to tell them to do. I went up to this man and asked, "Can you run?"

It took him by surprise. "O my God, no," he said. "I can't even walk, much less run."

I said, "That's what the Lord has told me to do—to tell you to run."

The man didn't even give it a second thought. He turned and started scooting up the aisle as fast as he could. The third time he came around, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I jumped off that platform, grabbed the man by the hand, and ran around that building with him. When we got back to the front, he was walking normally; not scooting. He was perfectly healed.

However, if I hadn't been able to get him to cooperate and act on his faith, I couldn't have helped him. Faith, you see, is acting on God's Word—doing whatever He says to do in His Word, or whatever He may say to us in the Spirit.

Chapter 3

Faith Takes the Answer Now

Faith says, "It's mine—I have it *now!"*

Hope says, "I'll get it *sometime."*

As long as you *hope,* the answer will never materialize. But the moment you start *believing,* it will work.

That's the lesson I learned on the bed of sickness many years ago. I had lain on that bed for 16 long months. In fact, I had been sick all my life. I never had run and played like other children. I did not have a normal childhood.

At the age of 15, I became totally bedfast. Five doctors were called in on my case. One of them had practiced at the Mayo Clinic and was considered one of the best doctors in America.

They agreed there was absolutely no hope for me. As far as medical science knew, no one in my condition had ever lived past age 16.

Thank God for all the good books and tapes we have today on faith and healing. There wasn't too much written about the subject in those days, and what there was I didn't know about.

When you're bedfast 24 hours a day, you can do a lot of praying. I prayed hours on end, day after day, week after week, month after month. I cried and prayed, "Dear Lord Jesus, please heal me." I begged Him to heal me. Several nights I prayed all night long.

I was thoroughly saved, but my praying brought no results.

I'd pray—and I'd be certain God had heard me, because I had a spiritual feeling of some kind. I'd just *feel* that this was it. Then I'd feel my pulse. My heart wouldn't be beating right. My legs were still paralyzed, lifeless bones with a little skin stretched over them, no meat, no muscles in the thighs or calves.

I would start crying and say, "Lord, I thought You were going to heal me. I felt like You did. I just knew it. But You didn't!"

I couldn't understand it. For a while—about a month—I wouldn't even look at

the Bible. I decided I might as well give up.

Then I'd go right down to death's door—right down into the throes of death. You could see where I'd worn all the varnish off the headboard of my bed as I held onto it, fighting death with every fiber of my being.

Then I would come back to the Word of God, and although I couldn't see where I was missing it, I would try to act on God's Word. I would get some help and somehow get over the attacks, but still I did not receive my healing.

Finally, on the second Tuesday of August 1934, after being on the bed of sickness for 16 months, I was praying at about 8:30

in the morning, and I said to the Lord, "Now, dear Lord Jesus, when You were here on earth, You said in Mark 11:24, *'What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.* ' Dear Lord Jesus, I desire to be healed.

"You said, *'When you pray.* ' I have prayed.

"You said, *'Believe.* ' Dear Lord Jesus, if You stood here by my bedside in the flesh, like my mother does; and if I could see You with my physical eyes as I can see my mother; and if I could reach out with my physical hand and lay my hand on yours, as I can my mother's hand; and if You were to say to me, 'Son, the trouble with you is you're not believing,' I would have to reply to You, dear Lord Jesus, 'You are lying about it—I do believe.' " (And I said this in kindness and not with arrogance.) When I said this, He spoke to me.

I discovered the secret of faith that day.

Now Jesus did not speak to me literally, physically, as another human being might speak. He's not here in the flesh. But the Holy Spirit is here. And the Holy Spirit shall not speak of Himself. Jesus said, *"but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak* ...." (John 16:13).

The Holy Spirit heard Jesus say it, and He spoke it to my spirit. On the inside of me these words were spoken: "Yes, you believe all right—as far as you know. But the last clause of this verse of Scripture is *'believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.'"*

Then I saw it! It was just as if someone had turned a light on inside me. I saw it instantly!

I exclaimed, "Dear Lord Jesus, I see it! I see it! I have to believe I receive my healing. I have to *believe I receive* healing for my heart while my heart is still not beating right. I have to believe I receive healing for my paralysis even though I am still paralyzed from the natural standpoint. And *if I believe that I receive it, then I have it!"*

I had never seen that before. I had wanted to receive my healing first, and *then* believe it. But you don't have to believe it then; you know it then. I saw what I had been doing: I had been hoping all those months to receive healing, and it didn't work.

If you follow the Word and the Holy Spirit, you will do things automatically. Although there had been some times in my long illness when I couldn't use my hands too well, at this time I had fairly good use of them; it was my lower body that was paralyzed. After receiving this revelation of God's Word, I immediately lifted my hands. Nobody told me to. I can't explain why I did it; I just did it.

"Heavenly Father, dear Lord Jesus, thank God I am healed,"

I prayed. "I believe I am healed."

Now I had it in the right tense. Now I had it working for me.

Now faith is. If it's not *now,* it's not faith. Believing I was *going to get* my healing wouldn't be present tense; it wouldn't be faith.

"Thank You, dear Lord Jesus," I said, "for my healing. I believe that my heart is well. I believe that my paralysis is healed. I thank You for the healing of my body."

I did not time it—and I realize that a few moments can seem like a long time—but I think I must have praised Him along those lines for about 10 minutes. I spent those 10 minutes thanking Him because my heart was well and my body was healed.

Satan challenged me almost instantly, of course. Yes, he will contest every inch of ground you take. Immediately he said, "You're a pretty looking thing. You

claim to be a Christian, and now you've started lying."

Any other time he would have denied there is a hell or a lake of fire, but this time he said to me, "Don't you know the Bible says all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone?"

"Yes, I know that, devil," I answered, "but I didn't lie." I knew it was the devil, because *anything that is doubt or discouragement is of the enemy.*

He replied, "Yes, you did! You said you were healed and you're not. Feel your heart."

I was in the habit of feeling my heart to check it, and I unconsciously reached to feel it. When I did, I slapped my hand and said, "Don't you do it! Now, Mr. Devil, I didn't say I *felt* as if I were healed. If I said that, I would be lying. And I didn't say I *look* like I'm healed. If I said that, I would be lying. I didn't say anything about how I look or feel. I said I *believe* I am healed. I *believe* I am, and I *receive* the answer to my prayer. If you say I don't believe it, then you're lying. Besides that, you're a liar anyhow—Jesus said you are.

"Jesus Christ, the Son of God, when He was on the earth, said in Mark 11:24, *'What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.* ' Jesus said it—and what He said is so! I believe it. If I believe it, then I'll have it. I believe Him right now.

"If you want to argue and fuss about it, go argue with Jesus.

I didn't say it; He said it."

That put a stop to the devil. I went back to my business of thanking and praising God for the answer.

I think I had been praising Him for about 10 minutes more when from within my heart, my spirit, these words were spoken:

"You believe that you are healed. But healed people—well people—haven't any business in bed. They need to be up."

"That's right," I answered. "Yes, Lord, that's right. I'm going to get up. Praise God, I'm going to get up!"

You see, I was *believing,* but faith is having. Believing is taking a step up—and you have to take all the steps.

I didn't look any better, and I didn't feel any better.

Physically, I had no feeling from my waist down. I was still partially paralyzed. I had about two-thirds use of the upper part of my body.

I was propped up on big pillows so I could read the Bible. I pushed myself to a sitting position and pulled my knees up against my chest. Then I made an effort to twist my body, and I pushed my feet off the bed.

I got hold of the bedpost at the bottom of the bed and pulled myself off the bed. My feet fell on the floor like chunks of wood.

I knew they were down there, not because I could feel them, but because I could see they were there. My knees sagged. There I stood, hugging the bedpost, my knees almost touching the floor.

The room started spinning.

The devil was fighting me every inch of the way. Thoughts were coming into my mind as fast as machine gun bullets can fire: "You can't walk and you know you can't. You're not healed and you know you're not. You're lying about it. You're going to fall right here on the floor and you'll just have to he there."

One of the best ways in the world to handle the devil is to completely ignore him. So I ignored him. I acted as if he hadn't said anything.

Hanging on to that bedpost the best I could, I lifted one hand a little and said, "Thank God, I'm healed. I want to declare in the presence of Almighty God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the angels in heaven, in the presence of the devil and the evil spirits, that the Word of God is true, and I believe I am healed! I believe it."

That old room was spinning, for I'd been lying flat for 16 months. I shut my eyes. In a few minutes I could tell things had quit spinning. I opened my eyes. Everything was back in place.

I said again, "Thank God, according to the Word I'm healed." I believed it.

Then I felt something like a warm glow dropping on my head from above me. It seemed to flow down over me, as if a jar of warm honey had been poured over my head. It ran down my whole body.

When it reached my waist, feeling began to return to the lower part of my body. For a few seconds I felt excruciating pain. My legs felt like 10 million straight pins were pricking them. I would have cried if it hadn't felt so good! When you haven't had any feeling at all, it even feels good to hurt! Then I felt normal. The paralysis was gone.

I said, "I'm going to walk now," and I did. And I've been walking ever since.

That is how I learned this principle of faith I'm teaching you.

It works in receiving all of God's provisions.

Chapter 4

Hope Changed to Faith Brings Results

An 83-year-old man came to a meeting I held in 1950 in California. He told me he had been "seeking the Holy Ghost" ever since the Azusa Street outpouring.

He said, "Brother Hagin, my wife received the Holy Ghost in the revival 50 years ago here in Los Angeles at the old Azusa Street Mission. Some have said everybody who went there received the Holy Ghost. But I went through that whole meeting, three services a day for three years. I was in nearly every service and I sought the Holy Ghost every time, but I didn't receive."

The second time I laid hands on this man I knew in my spirit by revelation exactly what his trouble was, but I also knew I couldn't get him to accept help just then. Sometimes you know what's wrong with people, but that doesn't mean they will be helped. They have to recognize their problem and do something about it.

I began to teach on faith during that meeting, and the old gentleman came night and day. It was strange to me that he heard the truth for more than a week and still didn't understand it. He had to hear it over and over again. (That is the reason I keep teaching certain truths over and over again. People don't always grasp something the first time you say it.) But after about 10 days of being in

every service, he came to me at the close of the morning service. He said, "Brother Hagin, I just caught it this morning. I see now why I haven't received.

I've never believed! For 50 years I've just been *hoping* to get the Holy Ghost."

"I knew that, Brother," I replied. "The second time I laid hands on you and prayed, it was revealed to me. I also knew I couldn't get you to see it just then, but if you'd keep coming, eventually you would see it."

"You're going to have to give me a little more time," he continued. "You know I've been on this road for 50 years, and it's going to take me a little while to get turned around and headed back in the other direction."

"That's all right, Brother," I said. "Take all the time you want, but keep coming to the services."

"Oh, we'll be here every service," he assured me.

I told him that when his hope changed to faith, I would know it, he would know it, and then he'd receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

About three days later, after we'd dismissed the evening service, this man came up to the pastor and me.

"I wonder if I could get you brethren to lay hands on me?"

he asked. "I've changed my hope into faith. I'm ready to receive!"

"Are you expecting to receive?" I asked.

"Yes, just put your hands on me and I'll receive right now,"

he said.

The pastor and I laid our hands on him and almost immediately his hands went in the air, his mouth was opened, and he was speaking in tongues. For nearly 50 years he'd just been hoping—but now he had received!

Years ago when I was traveling in the field ministry, some alarming symptoms developed in my body. They continued for three nights, interrupting my sleep.

Some people can't tell the difference between when God talks to them and when the devil talks to them. The difference is that the devil talks doubt and unbelief; God won't cause you to doubt His Word. So it was the devil who kept telling me, "This is one time you're not going to get your healing. You won't get it this time!"

When he persisted, I started to laugh at him. I didn't feel like laughing, but I made myself do it. I laughed aloud, because I knew if I laughed long enough the devil would ask me what I was laughing about. Sure enough, in a little while he asked, "What are you laughing about?"

"I'm laughing at *you,"* I replied.

"Laughing at me?"

"Yes, I'm laughing at you."

"What are you laughing at me about?"

I told him, "You said I wasn't *'going to get'* my healing. But why would I want to *get it* when Jesus *already has gotten it* for me? I'm not planning to *get* healed—ever!

"Mr. Devil, the Bible says in First Peter 2:24, *'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.* ' I was healed nearly 2,000 years ago by the stripes of Jesus, and that belongs to me. I'm not trying to get it; I have it!"

The symptoms stopped and never returned. I overcame the devil by the blood of the Lamb and the word of my testimony (Rev. 12:11).

Going a step further, let us look at two passages of Scripture:

JOHN 20:25-29

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him

[Thomas], We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the

nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

ROMANS 4:17-21

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb.

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Can you see any difference between Abraham's faith and Thomas' faith? Decidedly yes!

Thomas said, "I won't believe unless I can *see* the print of the nails and the wound in His side." Jesus told him, *"Because thou hast SEEN me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed"* (John 20:20).

Abraham, on the other hand, is one who *"calleth those things which be not as though they were"* (v. 17).

What faith is Bible faith? Abraham's, of course! Our text says in Hebrews 11:1, *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* " Abraham is mentioned in this same 11th chapter of Hebrews. His faith was based on *"being fully persuaded that, what he* [God] *had promised, he was able also to per-form"* (Rom. 4:21).

Here is a little formula of faith patterned after Abraham's faith which you can make work for you:

First, Abraham had God's Word for it.

Second, Abraham believed God's Word.

Third, Abraham considered not the contradictory circumstances.

Fourth, Abraham gave praise to God.

Follow those four steps and you'll always get through to God. They are four steps to certain deliverance, healing, or whatever you are seeking.

Notice Thomas' faith. It was not based upon what God said; it was based upon Thomas' physical senses. He said he wouldn't believe unless he could *see.*

So many people are like that. They say, "When I *see* it or *feel* it, I'll know I have it." But that isn't Bible faith. That's natural human faith—and any sinner already has that kind of faith!

Real faith is based upon God's Word. Real faith in the Word says, "If God says it is true, then it is." Believing God is believing His Word!

I like something Smith Wigglesworth said: "I can't understand God the Father by feeling. I can't understand the Lord Jesus Christ by feeling. I can understand God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ only by what the Word says about them."

He went on to say, "We need to get acquainted with God the Father through the Word. He is everything the Word says He is.

We need to get acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ through the Word. He is everything the Word says He is."

Too many people try to get acquainted with God through their feelings. When they feel well, they think God heard them.

If they don't feel well, they think He's not hearing them. Their faith is based on their feelings.

My faith is based on God's Word. If God's Word says He hears me, then I know He hears me, because He said so and His Word cannot lie. If my faith were based on my feelings, I would be using natural human faith, and I can't do that; I have to use scriptural faith—Bible faith.

Furthermore, if my faith is based on the Word of God, I will believe the Word regardless of evidence that would satisfy my physical senses. Too many people are trying to get Abraham's blessing with Thomas' kind of faith—and it just won't work.

We believers have the Abraham kind of faith, because Galatians 3:29 says, *"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* " Galatians 3:7 says, *"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.* " That means we have the Abraham kind of faith. We're not trying to *get* it—we *have* it!

Anyone can believe what they feel, hear, or see in the physical realm—and we operate in the physical most of the time

—but *when it comes to spiritual matters, we don't walk by sight.*

If medical science heals, it heals through the physical.

If Christian Science heals, it heals through the mind.

When God heals, He heals through the spirit.

Spiritual healing—divine healing—is received from God the Father in the same way the New Birth is received: in the human spirit.

The New Birth is the rebirth of the human spirit. When you were born again, it

was not your *body* that was born again; it was your *spirit.* You still have the same body you've always had.

Second Corinthians 5:17 is not talking about your body's being made new:

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

When you are saved, it is the man on the inside—the inner man—who is born again and made new; your physical man remains the same. Jesus said, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"* (John 3:6).

You can't tell simply by looking at a person what has happened to him on the inside, although, in the process of time, it will show up on the outside.

We've been fooled at times. Some have come to the altar, prayed, cried, jumped up and hugged everybody, acted happy, and then we never saw or heard from them again. We really thought they had gotten something, but it was just an emotional something and not the New Birth.

Others weren't emotional at all. Looking at them, you might wonder if they got anything; they didn't seem to have been at the altar long enough for much to happen. Yet we've seen them become outstanding Christians.

Too often our faith is based on the physical—on what our physical senses tell us. Certainly I believe in feeling, but I place it last.

God's Word comes *first.* Faith in God's Word comes *second.*

Feeling comes *last.*

Too many people turn it around and allow feeling to come first; faith in their feeling second; and the Word of God last.

That kind of faith never will be successful in anything.

"Well, I'm hoping and praying," some say about prayer. "I'm praying and

hoping."

Hope is a good waiter, but a poor receiver.

Years ago I stayed in the home of a pastor who was the world's worst to say, "I'm a-hoping and a-praying." He'd say it up to a dozen times a day.

What amazed me was that he sat in every service as I taught on the difference between hope and faith. But it ran off him like water off a duck's back. He sat right there and didn't get it.

One day while we were alone in his car the pastor said, "Brother Hagin, I want you to pray with me about something."

"All right," I said, "what is it?"

"Well, there's a businessman here, not a member of my church, who wants to give me the equity in a cabin on the lake.

It's got a few acres with it. He only owes $900 on it. He said I could take over his monthly payments or else he'd pay it off and I could pay him back without any interest. His wife has objected a little, so now he's to let me know in 30 days if he can work it out."

When he added, "I'm just a-hoping and a-praying he'll be able to work it out," I spoke up.

"Brother," I said, "if that's all you're doing, you're wasting your time!" I didn't say this to act smart. This was the second meeting I had held for this pastor, and he still hadn't caught on to what I was preaching!

For a minute I didn't know what he was going to do. He batted his eyes and I thought he was going to drive off the road.

Then he caught on. "You know, that's right!" he said. "Yes, that's right. I'm wasting my time and God's time, too. Come to think of it, though, I'm just wasting *my* time. God didn't hear me to begin with, so I'm just wasting my own time."

The pastor got the acreage and cabin when he quit hoping and started believing.

Faith is so simple, whether in the spiritual realm, the financial realm, or the material realm. *Faith is present tense!*

Now faith is!

Faith says, "I have it now." Hope says, "I'll get it sometime"—and that won't work.

Set a watch on your lips. Instead of praying and *hoping*, start saying, "I'm praying and *believing."* And if you say it, it will work for you— *now!*

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