

The Word of Truth

The Firm Basis for a Grounded Trust in God that Leads to Triumphant Living

Part Four – The Problem with Unbelief

[A]nd without trusting it is impossible to please God: for it is necessary for one who comes to God to believe because then He becomes a rewarder to those who seek Him out. (Heb. 11:6; The Power New Testament by William J. Morford)

1. Two “Impossibilities” Concerning Faith

- a. Matt. 17:19-20
- b. There are some who believe that God no longer works miracles today and this promise was meant only for the Lord’s twelve apostles.
- c. Mark 9:23 refutes this: “*Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*”.
- d. In both promises there is a contrast of two “impossibilities.” One says nothing is impossible while the other implies that something is impossible.
- e. The connection between the two promises is “faith.”
- f. Faith makes all things possible. God's Word produces “possibility thinking.”

2. Unbelief Has the Power to Hinder God

- a. Jesus said, “because of your unbelief.” The word “because” is stating that there is a *cause* or a *reason* for something happening or not happening.
- b. The idea that prayers not being answered based on God’s sovereignty is not present in Jesus’ explanation.
- c. Mark 6:5-6
- d. It does not say that He *would not* do any mighty works but that Jesus *could* do no mighty works there. The word “could” is in reference to “ability” or what a person “can do.”

3. God Limited by Unbelief

- a. Unbelief actually has the ability to hinder the omnipotent almighty power of God in our lives.

- b. Psalm 78:19-22
- c. In verse 22 we once again we come across that word “because” which explains the reason for the things that happened to Israel.
- d. Psalm 78:32
- e. Unbelief is a sin and it is responsible for our inability to receive from God: *“your sins have withholden good things from you”* (Jer. 5:25)
- f. Psalm 78:40-43

4. Israel’s Consistently Provoking God

- a. Num. 13:1-2
- b. Notice that God said that He had given them the land. It was a done deal, but they questioned the veracity of His Word
- c. Num. 13:31-32
- d. They accused God of lying. The Bible calls this “an evil report.”
- e. Scripture says, *“He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD”* (Psalm 112:7)

5. Unbelief is a Refusal to Believe God’s Word

- a. Num. 14:11.
- b. Heb. 3:18-19
- c. God’s will is revealed through His Word. God told His people what He wanted to do for them but they refused to believe this Word.
- d. Heb. 4:1, 2

. 6. Unbelief is Questioning God’s Integrity

- a. *“he that believeth not God hath made him a liar”* (1 John 5:10b).
- b. John 5:38-39

- c. Why don't they believe? The failure is from not having the Word *abiding in* them. The word "abiding" means "continuing" and "remain."
- d. Many people hear God's Word and receive it. Sadly, they do not allow the Word to become rooted in them and they so quickly fall back into unbelief when they are confronted with adverse situations (Mark 4:16-17).
- e. 1 John 1:8-10
- f. One who expects God's remission of their sin must agree with Him. One cannot receive any of God's promises by calling Him a liar.
- g. Rom. 3:3-4
 - 1) "*the faithfulness of God and His fidelity [to His Word]*" (The Amplified Bible),
 - 2) "*True, some of them were unfaithful; but just because they broke their promises, does that mean God will break his promises? Of course not!*" (New Living Translation)
 - 3) "*A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies*" (Prov. 14:5).

. 7. Unbelief Keeps Us from God's Blessings

- a. Sadly, there are some Christians who claim that because God is sovereign, He can break His promise.
- b. "*Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?*" (Rom. 9:19)
- c. This was not Paul's statement. Paul was simply repeating a question by his objectors.
- d. God's extension of mercy and His rejection of others has nothing to do with a mysterious sovereign decree. It is extended to *anyone* who asks for it and receive it by faith.
- e. Romans 9:30-33.
- f. "*But **without faith it is impossible to please him**: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*" (Heb. 11:6).
- g. "*And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again*" (Rom. 11:23).
- h. *Unbelief* hinders God's revealed will in the lives of people, not "sovereign decrees."
- i. Unbelief has a negative power, not because unbelief makes God weak, but because He respects our free choices