

Enemies to your FAITH

2 Cor 4:4 “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ.”

The god of this world = satan, who blinds minds, hearts, people so that they cannot see the truth.

His job is to oppose faith, to oppose the light of God to keep us stumbling in the darkness.

But now, the glorious light of the gospel has shined into our hearts.

Eph 6:10-13 “Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. ¹² For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy/STAND in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.”

- God doesn’t tell us to quit, give up, or surrender to circumstances.
- Stand your ground and stand on the Word of the Lord, stand against the devil in the authority of Jesus Christ.
- Too many quit, let go of their ground when answers don’t come quickly: their finances, healing, breakthroughs, provision.
- But God’s Word says: “Having done all – **STAND!**”

1John 5: 4 “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—**our faith.**”

- Faith is the victory that overcomes the world – so we need to understand what hinders that victory.
- Satan being the god of this world, he blinds, he distracts, he resists, he wrestles.
- If you don’t recognize the hindrances to faith, you’ll live in constant defeat!
- But if you know them, expose them and resist them, you can walk in constant victory.
- So, we are to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.
- We must have a foundation to be victorious against the hindrances to our faith:

Faith is God’s method – satan’s method is hindrance.

- God's way is **light** – satan's way is blindness.
- God's way is **victory** – satan's way is defeat.
- We must choose to stay with God's method – the Word works when you work the Word – the Word never fails when you stand on it.

1. Ignorance of God's Word

If you don't understand this point, the rest won't matter.

- Faith is not optional for the believer or a side subject, it's not a Pentecostal doctrine.
- Faith is God's method of bringing His promises into your life – Rom. 10:17 "So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ."
- Faith comes, not might come, or someday come, or come if you beg God enough.
- It comes by hearing, what? The Word of God.

"No Word – No Faith, Little Word – Little Faith, Much Word – Much Faith

- Faith is not floating out in the air - you must have faith as your foundation.
- It's not built on feelings, goosebumps, someone else's testimony, FAITH is built on the unchanging – eternal Word of the Living God.

Bible faith is different from mental faith:

- The world talks about believing in yourself – believe in your mind, believe in positive energy.
- That's not Bible faith: Bible faith is believing what God said simply because He said it.

Num 23:19 "God is not a man, so he does not lie. He is not human, so he does not change his mind.

- If God said it- He'll do it, If He promised it – He'll bring it to pass – that is what faith rests on, not feelings or logic, or your circumstance – but on what God said.
- People will ask others to pray for them – that's good.'
- But when you ask them what scripture or promise you are standing on, they usually reply "nothing in particular." Well, that's what you're going to get "**Nothing in particular.**"

Faith begins where the will of God is known!

- We know the will of God by the Word of God; His Word is His will –

Psa. 119:89 “Your eternal word, O LORD, stands firm in heaven.”

- Stands firm, settled, not debated, not shifting.
- When you settle His Word in your heart – faith rises.

Ill: **Medicine** If the doctor prescribes a medicine and you set it on your shelf, it will not help you.

- If you believe the bottle exists but don’t take the medicine, it won’t help you.
- But if you take it as prescribed, consistently daily, it will begin to work in your body.
- The Word of God is medicine”

Prov 4:20-22 “My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to My words. Don’t lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body.”

- The Word is life to you and health to your flesh.
- Faith comes by hearing the Word and not by wishing, not by crying, not by begging God.

This is why the enemy wants to hinder the Word in your life:

- He doesn’t care if you sing, shout, speak in tongues, or clap your hands; but he will fight you when you open your Bible – **WHY?**
- He knows faith comes one way – by hearing the Word of God
- So, we must Believe the Word, Hear the Word, Speak the Word, and Act on the Word.
- If faith comes by the Word, then the first hinderance to faith is the Ignorance of the Word.

If you don’t know what God promised – you can’t believe for it!
If you don’t know what the covenant says – you can’t stand on it!

Hosea 4:6 “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

- God’s people are destroyed: not because the devil is so big, but because their knowledge of the Word is so small.
- When we’re ignorant of the Word – the devil can take advantage of us.

2Cor 2:11 “Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

When ignorant of the Word – you are a wide-open target for the enemy.

You can't believe for something you don't know belongs to you, you can't claim a promise you've never read, you can't stand on a scripture you've never heard.

Ignorance is curable – you don't have to stay ignorant, you can know the Word, study the Word, Meditate on the Word, Speak the Word, Hear the Word daily until it becomes part of your spirit.

Joshua 1:8 “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

Notice: The word in your **Mouth**, The Word in your **Mind** – Your **Actions**, that's how ignorance is cured and faith established.

2. **2nd Hinderance is UNBELIEF**

There is a difference between not knowing and refusing to believe!

Ignorance is not knowing what God said – **Unbelief** is knowing what God said but refusing to accept it is true.

Ignorance can be cured with teaching – **Unbelief** must be confronted with decision.

Heb 3:12 “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an **evil heart of unbelief** in departing from the living God;”

- Writing to believers, it's possible for Christians to have an evil heart of unbelief.
- Unbelief is not a weakness – not a sickness – the Bible calls it **EVIL**.

Unbelief is Evil - Faith is Holy!

Heb 3 & 4 Israel in the wilderness after the Lord brought them out of Egypt and provided for them with signs, wonders, miracles. The Red Sea opened, Manna fell from heaven, water flowed from a rock.

But when they got to the edge of the Promised Land, God said “go in and possess it I have given it to you; “they said: “We are not able, the giants are too big, the walls are too high, we cannot do it.”

That's **UNBELIEF**: Heb. 3:19 says: “So we see that they could not enter in because of **unbelief**.

- Not because God didn't want them in, not because it wasn't His will, not because the land wasn't theirs, **THEY COULDN'T ENTER IN BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF**.

Unbelief will keep you out of your **promised land**, unbelief will keep your **sick** when healing belongs to you, unbelief will keep you **broke** when provision belongs to you, unbelief will keep you **bound** when deliverance belongs to you.

You Need To Declare:

**UNBELIEF WILL NOT ROB ME – I BELIEVE GOD – I BELIEVE HIS WORD –
I ENTER INTO HIS PROMISES!**

Mark 6:5-6 “And because of their unbelief, He couldn’t do any miracles among them except to place His hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶ And He was amazed at their unbelief.”

- It does not say HE would not, but HE could not because of their unbelief.
- Unbelief ties the hands of God; unbelief stops the flow of His power.

Doubt and unbelief are not the same: Doubt is in the mind - Unbelief is in the heart!
Mark 11:23 Jesus didn’t say you shall not doubt in your head, but do not doubt in your heart.

- Thoughts will come and they will persist, fiery darts will be shot at you, but if you refuse to let it get down into your heart, you will still believe in God.
- People who say they are just waiting on God to heal them if it’s God’s will – that’s not faith, that’s unbelief.
- Gods’ Word says we are already healed by His stripes He bore – 1Peter 2:24.

**Unbelief is not the absence of faith,
it’s the presence of contradiction against God’s Word!**

Unbelief is knowing what God said but refusing to accept it is true.

Faith says, I know what God’s Word says and I believe it!

3. Closely related to unbelief is **PRESUMPTION**

Presumption is trying to act like you’re in faith when you’re not.

It’s trying to believe beyond the Word of God.

Psa. 19:13 “Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me.”

- Presumption is called sin in the Bible!

Ignorance says: I don’t know what God promised.

Unbelief says: I know what God promised but I refuse to believe it.

Presumption says: I don't care what God promised, I'm going to do what I want to do. and call it faith."

Matt 4:5-7 Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written- 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and 'In *their* hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. ⁷ Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'"

- The devil quoted scripture to Jesus, but Jesus repeated it again to enforce it because the enemy tried to get Jesus to Presume on God's Word.
- Jump off the building and the angels will catch You.
- That's not faith, that's presumption.

Faith acts on what God says, Presumption acts on what the devil suggests!

Faith is not breaking natural law; faith is acting on spiritual law!

Faith acts on God's Word - Presumption acts on feeling

Its presumption to say you don't need to study the Bible or meditate on the Word; I'll just believe anyhow – God knows my heart. That's presumption.

God has bound Himself to His Word and if you don't have His Word, you don't have a foundation for faith.

Find scriptures that promise the thing you're praying for – if you don't, you're not going anywhere.

Many pray vague prayers and lose victory and hope because they are not standing on the Word.

You can't claim things God never promised and expect to receive them.

People expect results without **OBEDIENCE**! Then when nothing happens, they cover themselves by saying: "Well, maybe it wasn't God's will."

The problem is not God's will; the problem is presumption instead of faith in God's Word.

Faith says: God promised it, I believe it, I receive it.

Presumption says: "I hope it's so, I think it's so, maybe it'll be so."

Once we understand that:

- **Ignorance** of the Word keeps people in the dark.
- **Unbelief** shuts the door to the promise.

- **Presumption** makes people act on foolishness.

We are now ready to understand one of the greatest hindrances of all:

Jesus singled this hindrance as a roadblock to answered prayer.

4. **Unforgiveness** if you don't get this one right, your prayers will not work, your faith will not work, your confession will not work.

Mark 11:23-25 "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

²⁵ "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses."

Unforgiveness is the number one hindrance to unanswered prayer!

Your faith will not work if you do not forgive!

- Unforgiveness, resentment, bitterness is sin that will choke your faith.
- You can choose not to hold ill will in your heart against anybody – it's your choice.
- Jesus said: "When you stand praying, forgive."

**Thoughts will come to your head, but forgiveness is not in the head,
it's in the heart.**

- You can choose with your spirit to release it and the person and FREEING your faith to work.

Ignorance of the Word keeps people in the dark.

Unbelief shuts the door to the promise.

Presumption makes people act on foolishness.

Unforgiveness stops faith dead.

5. **Sin & Wrong Motives** –

1John 1:5-7 "This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

If we walk in the light, we stay in fellowship with Him, the blood of Jesus keeps cleansing us from sin; but if we step out of the light and walk in darkness, our faith will not work.

Walking in the light keeps us strong, keeps us clean, keeps my faith alive!

Faith is of the heart, and if your heart condemns you, your faith will not work.

1John 3:21 “Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have **confidence** toward God.”

- Confidence is faith in action.
- But if your heart condemns you because you’re practicing sin, you have no confidence to stand before God – without confidence faith collapses.

Ignorance of the Word keeps people in the dark.

Unbelief shuts the door to the promise.

Presumption makes people act on foolishness.

Unforgiveness stops faith dead.

Sin & Wrong Motives poison faith

6. Failing to Judge Yourself Before God –

1Cor 11:31 “For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.”

- If you judge yourself, God won’t have to.
- Deal with your heart when you’ve sinned and missed His mark.
- If you stay right before the Lord, your faith will stay alive and strong.
- If you cover it up and pretend and excuse it, judgement will come, and your faith will not work.

**Judging yourself is not condemnation; condemnation comes from the devil,
judgment of yourself comes from the Spirit of God**

- **Condemnation** says: “You are no good, you can never make it.”
Judgment of yourself says: “I missed it there, Lord I admit it, confess and ask for forgiveness.”
Don’t allow the enemy to condemn you of the past sins and mistakes, when God forgives, **He FORGETS**.
- The moment you miss it – **judge yourself**, don’t wait till another service time or some other convenient time – put it under the Blood - NOW.
- This keeps your heart clear, your conscience clean, your faith strong.

Ignorance blinds

Unbelief shuts the door to the promises.

Presumption makes people act foolishly.

Unforgiveness stops faith dead.

Sin & Wrong Motives poisons faith

Failing to Judge Yourself Before God condemns

7. **Failure To Stand Your Ground –**

Eph 6:13 “Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy / STAND in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.”

- We are called to STAND, not bow, retreat, or concede.
- Many pray, but when the answer doesn’t come in a day, week, or a month, they give up.
- They cover their lack of faith with: “I guess it wasn’t God’s will.”
- If it’s in the Word, it’s His will.
- Daniel 10 – he prayed for understanding, and the Bible said the answer was sent the very first day he prayed.
- Michael, the Archangel told him, “the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days,” but the answer was on the way from the first day but was hindered in the spirit realm.
- If Daniel had quit, he would have missed it; but he stood and kept praying.
- He kept praying, he held fast, and the answer came through.

Same for you, your prayers were heard, the enemy is attempting to block it; but if you stand your ground, you will also see the manifestation

You need to declare: I know the Lord heard me the first day and time I prayed, the answer is on the way, I refuse to quit, I stand my ground.

To stand your ground means: You don’t quit, you don’t cave in, you don’t change your confession, you keep saying “It is written,” you keep believing, you keep rejoicing, you stand until the mountain moves and the promises manifests.

Heb 10:23 “Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep His promise.”

We can hold fast, because God is faithful, the Word is true, the answer is sure.

When you recognize these strategies of the enemy to stop your faith, you can expose them and deal with them, then your faith will work, your prayers will be answered, and your victory will come.