

## Home Group Study Guide

### (#297) **Receiving by Faith**

You find the transcript and video of the message which informs this study @  
<http://www.livinggracetoowoomba.org/2017/sermons17.htm>.

#### **Warm-Up**

1. The Christian teaching is that we are being saved by faith, not works. Why is this good news? Is exercising faith easy to do?
2. Kenneth Hagin learned about faith through Mark 11:22-24. What are your impressions and reactions when you read these verses? Are you inspired, challenged or cynical?

Mark 11:22-24 [NKJV]: So, Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. 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.

#### **Let’s Talk About It**

1. With the Bible, Martin Luther insisted on faith. Do you think that he is too harsh when he writes the following?

Martin Luther: Large Catechism: A person who wants to ask for something has to actually say, present, and spell out what he wants. Otherwise, it can’t be called a prayer. This is why we have been quite right in condemning the prayers of the monks and priests. They wail and mumble frightfully day and night, but not one of them thinks of asking for the smallest thing... Not one of them has ever made up his mind to pray, obeying God’s command and trusting his promise, nor considered his own need. Instead, the best we can say is that they only thought of doing a good deed as payment to God...

Martin Luther: Large Catechism: But it all depends on our learning to say “AMEN” to it, too. This means not to doubt that God hears our prayer, and that we ask for will come about. “Amen” is nothing but an expression of the faith of a person who doesn’t doubt or pray on the off-chance, but knows God doesn’t lie, because he has promised to give. Where this faith is missing, there can be no proper prayer.

So, those people make a big mistake who pray without daring to say a whole-hearted Yes to their prayer, and aren’t sure whether God hears them. They keep on doubting and say: “How could I be so bold and flatter myself that God hears my prayer? After all, I’m just a poor sinner”, and so on. The reason they say this is because they don’t keep their eye on God’s promises, but on what they do and what they think they are entitled to. This means that they look down on God, and make him out to be a liar.

So, they get nothing, as St James says: “Anyone who prays must pray in faith and not doubt. Whoever doubts is like a wave in the sea that is driven and blown around by the wind. A person like this must not think that he will get anything from God” (James 1:6-7).

You see, this is how much it matters to God that we are sure that we aren't asking all for nothing, and in no way look down on our prayer.

As Luther observed, why is it also necessary to be specific in our prayers? See also Hebrews 11:1 and Matthew 18:19.

2. Kenneth Hagin was filled with the Spirit of God for healing ministry but he struggled with his faith. This is what he experienced:

One night while I was ministering to the sick, a man in the healing line told me he had tuberculosis of the spine. He said he had been through three clinics and all the doctors had given him the same diagnosis: He was beyond medical help at that time. The man's spine was as stiff as a board.

In praying for him, I laid one hand on his chest and one hand on his back. When I did, the fire, or anointing, jumped from hand to hand. I knew immediately that his body was oppressed by an evil spirit. I commanded the spirit, saying, "You foul spirit that oppresses this man's body, I command you to come out of his body in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!"

And then I made a terrible mistake: I got into unbelief. It is easy to get into unbelief sometimes, no matter who we are, and not even realize it.

I said to the man, "See if you can stoop over and bend your back. Try to touch your toes." The word "if" is the badge of doubt. When I said, "See if you can," that was doubt. (God will put up with a certain amount of doubt in a young Christian who doesn't know any better, but when one is enlightened in God's Word, the Lord won't let him get by with it.)

The man tried to bend over, but he couldn't. His back was as stiff as ever. I laid my hands upon him again, one hand on his chest and one hand on his back, and I felt the fire jump from hand to hand. Again, I commanded, "You foul spirit that oppresses this man's body, I command you to come out of him in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!"

Again, I said to the man, "See if you can stoop over. Bend your back and touch your toes." His back was as immovable as before, because I was acting in unbelief and didn't realize it.

Then I said, "Well, we will try (which is unbelief, too) the third time." I laid one hand on his chest and the other on his back. Again, I had the manifestation of the anointing in my hands.

For the third time, I said, "You foul spirit that oppresses this man's body, I command you to come out of him in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!" To the man, I said, "Now see if you can stoop over. See if you can bend down." He couldn't, of course.

I gave up and went on to pray for the next person. The man walked back down the aisle. I was standing on the platform about three feet to the right of the pulpit. As the next person stepped up to be prayed for, I looked over to my left for some unknown reason, and I saw Jesus standing there as plainly as any man I had ever seen in my life! I thought everybody saw Him, but I learned later that no one in the congregation saw or heard Him except me. The congregation heard what I said, but they didn't see or hear anyone else.

Jesus was standing beside the pulpit. I could have reached out and touched Him. He pointed His finger at me and said, "I said that in my Name the demon or demons will leave!" "Lord, I know You said that. It has been only a month since You appeared to me in Rockwall, Texas, and told me to command the demon or demons to come out in your Name. I told the demon to come out of that man, but he didn't."

Again, Jesus pointed His finger at me and said, "I said, in my Name call out the demons and they will leave the body!" "I know You said that, Lord, and I commanded the spirit to leave this man's body in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, but he didn't go."

Jesus put His finger in my face and said for the third time, "I said in my Name the demons will go. Call them out in my Name, and they will leave the body in my Name!"

Weakly, I replied again, “Lord, I know You said that. It happened just a month ago, and it is as fresh in my mind as if You said it last night. I know what You told me. And I did tell that demon to leave this man’s body, but he didn’t go. I think I know how Jesus looked when He drove the money-changers out of the Temple, as recorded in the eleventh chapter of Mark’s Gospel. Suddenly it seemed as if His eyes shot fire; I could see flashes of lightning in them.

For the fourth time, He jabbed His finger at me and said emphatically, “Yes, but I said the demons will go.” Then He disappeared.

I realized then that I had acted in unbelief. We sometimes think that if we have a special gift or anointing to minister, it always will work — but that is not the case. No matter how much authority we might have, no matter how many special gifts we might have, or how much power we might possess, it works by faith and faith only.

When I realized that I had exercised doubt instead of faith, I saw my mistake. I called the man to come back to the platform. He was standing at the rear of the auditorium and hadn’t gone back to his seat yet. I pointed to him and said, “Come back up here, brother.” He retraced his steps back up the aisle. I stood on the platform waiting for him to come around to the altar to where I was. The instant he stood before me, I slapped him on the back, and with my other hand on his chest I said, “Satan, I told you to leave this body! Out you go in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!” Then I said to the man, “Now, my brother (I didn’t put an “if” in it this time), stoop over and touch your toes!”

Instantly his back was limber. The tuberculosis of the spine was gone. The spine which had been as stiff as a board was healed. He could stoop over and touch his toes as well as any normal person. He was completely well! Because this man had come to our meeting from Arkansas, we didn’t see him until two weeks later. He came back to be in the last Saturday night service.

I asked him if he was still able to stoop over and touch his toes. “Yes, I am still free,” he said with a big smile lighting his face. He stepped out into the aisle, stooped over, touched the floor, and went through several exercises to prove that he was still limber and free.

This experience demonstrated to me once and for all the importance of following God’s Word explicitly. And I learned that no matter who we are, if we move in unbelief, we will stop the flow of God’s power.” [However, Kenneth Hagin also knows – because Jesus taught him in another vision – that not every demon can be expelled (e.g.: woman and man that wilfully sin) and that sometimes special techniques (e.g.: Jesus taught him that sometimes the demons need to be named and their number specified) need to be employed for successful expulsion.]

Where did Kenneth Hagin go wrong? How many times do we pray with a doubtful “if” in our prayers which contradicts the promises of God?

Jesus had appeared to Kenneth Hagin previously and explicitly commissioned him for the healing ministry. How could he still struggle with doubt despite having a vision of Jesus?

What do you make of Jesus’ conversation with Kenneth? Why was he so passionate?

3. How important is faith for receiving anything from God? See Romans 5:1-2.

4. Here is another testimony of Kenneth Hagin:

I was preaching many years ago in the state of Oklahoma, and in one of my services a woman was brought to the service who hadn’t taken one single step in four years. She was an older woman, in her seventies, and the doctors said that she would never walk another step again. Her knees had just simply worn out and wouldn’t function properly, and they couldn’t carry her weight. Sitting with no exercise, she had grown quite large.

When it came time for the healing line, they brought this woman forward and sat her down on the altar. I came and knelt in front of her and laid my hands on

her knees and prayed. Then I said to her, “Now, Sister, arise and walk in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

That dear woman did her best to get up; but all the time (and I’m not making fun of her) she was crying and praying, “Oh, dear Jesus, please heal me. Lord, I know You promised to heal me. You know what a burden I’ve been to my family, and I can’t do one thing for myself. Dear Lord, please heal my knees; please heal my limbs; please let me walk. Oh, please, please.” I said, “Wait a minute, Sister. Wait a minute,” but instead of listening, she just got louder. I said the second time, “Wait a minute, Sister. I have a word for you. I can help you.” But instead of listening, she just got louder and louder. The third time I said, “Wait a minute, Sister. Wait a minute. I can help you.” But instead of listening, she was becoming almost hysterical.

Then I just took hold of her shoulders and shook her, and said, “I command you to shut up in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.” She stopped and looked up at me, rather startled, and the congregation put the brakes on me. Did you know a congregation can put the brakes on you? I don’t care who you are, when the people put the brakes on, you can’t do anything. For instance, people put the brakes on Jesus in His hometown of Nazareth, and He couldn’t do much there in the way of miracles or healings. The Bible says so. [Mark 6:5: And he [Jesus] could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.]

Notice it didn’t say He wouldn’t do any mighty works, it said He couldn’t do any mighty works. The Greek reads that Jesus laid His hands on a few folks with minor ailments. In other words, the only ones God healed in Nazareth under the ministry of Jesus were a few people who had minor ailments. Why? Mark 6:6 gives us the answer: “And he [Jesus] marvelled because of their unbelief ...”

Well, this congregation put the brakes on me, and before I could do anything, I knew I had to get the brakes off. If I couldn’t get the brakes off, then I wouldn’t be able to do anything. If people could only recognize that, what a difference there would be in our services and in our churches. So, I knew I had to work on the congregation before I could go back to the woman in the wheelchair and help her.

What does Kenneth Hagin mean when says that the congregation “put the brakes” on him? Why was the attitude of the congregation important for his healing ministry? See Mark 6:5 and also Mark 8:50-55 where Jesus removed those that ridiculed him before raising the dead girl. How can we grow congregations that they do not “put the brakes” on what Jesus wants to do in their services?

5. Kenneth Hagin’s testimony continues in this way:

Some folks thought I was being rude to this woman, or getting smart with her, and some of them spoke right out and said so. I said to them, “Now I want to ask you a question. If someone asked you directions to a certain place, but instead of following your directions, you saw that they mistakenly went the wrong way, wouldn’t you try to stop them or flag them down and try to get them straightened out?”

If you knew they didn’t know where they were going, wouldn’t you try to get them going in the right direction?” They all agreed that they would. I said, “All right, this woman was on the wrong road. She wasn’t on the road to healing. She was on the wrong road, and all I did was just flag her down. Now I have her attention.”

When I explained that, most of the people in the congregation took the brakes off, and I felt a release in the spirit so I could go back and minister to the woman. I said, “Now, Sister, did you know you are healed?” She looked up at me, her eyes got big, and she said, “Oh, am I?” “Yes,” I said, “you are healed, and I can prove it to you by the Bible.” So, I got my Bible, opened it to First Peter 2:24, handed it to her, and said, “Would you read this verse aloud please?” She read, “Who his own self bore 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 said, “Read that last clause again.” And she read, “... by whose stripes ye were healed.” I said, “I want to ask you a question. Is ‘were’ past tense, present tense, or future tense?” She said, “It’s past tense.” Then I said, “If you were healed by Jesus’ stripes then you are healed, aren’t you?” “Yes,” she said, “I am.” I said, “Will you do what I tell you to do?”

“Well,” she answered, “I will if it’s easy.” “This is the easiest thing you ever did in your life. Just lift your hands and look right up to heaven, and begin to praise God because you are healed, present tense. Praise Him because you are healed, not going to be healed; you are healed.”

She just looked up, and as a little child, 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 whatever, but she said, “I’m so glad I’m healed. I’m so thankful, dear Lord Jesus. You know how tired I got sitting around all those four years. Thank God, my knees are well and my limbs are healed. I’m so thankful.”

Then I said to the congregation, “Let’s thank God with her because she is healed – not going to be healed – but because she is healed.” You see, faith is present tense, not future tense. You’ve got to get your believing in the present tense for things to work for you. 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 a step yet.” But don’t you remember what our text said, “. . . faith is the ... EVIDENCE of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). If you’re going to wait till you see something before you believe it, then that’s not faith at all. That’s leaning to the evidence of your senses.

After I told the congregation to praise God with this woman, I turned to the woman and said, “Now, Sister, arise and walk in Jesus’ name.” Immediately that woman jumped off that altar like a sixteen-year-old and walked and leaped and ran and praised God!

We had to get that woman’s believing in the right tense. The Word won’t work for you unless you get it in the right tense. As long as you’re struggling to receive healing, for example, and you believe you’re going to get it sometime in the future, you are not in faith. If it’s future tense, that’s hope. Faith says, “It’s mine. I have it now.”

What does it mean to get our faith into the “present tense”? The woman was willing to do something for her healing if it was easy. What did Kenneth Hagin have her do and do you think that this was easy? Can you do the same?

The healing of the woman was successful but what about the times when we exercise faith, praise God for the healing and give it a go, but the healing is delayed or not happening? Have you ever felt like giving up?

In Kenneth Hagin’s ministry not everyone was being healed either but many were. Maybe we do not always have to understand everything and give up our “right” of demanding that God explain everything to us. Our call is to exercise faith, leave the results and timing to him, and otherwise trust him. He is always good no matter the current circumstances. See also 2 Corinthians 4:7-18.

6. Sometimes we need to change our hope into faith. What does this mean? Kenneth Hagin writes:

I was holding a meeting in Pomona, California, in 1950, and there was an eighty-three-year-old man who came forward to receive the Holy Spirit. I learned that he had been seeking the Holy Ghost for fifty years. In fact, he said to me, “Brother Hagin, my wife received the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the revival fifty years ago here in Los Angeles at the old Azusa Street mission.” He went on to say, “Some people have said that everyone who went there got the Holy Ghost, but I went through that whole meeting for three years, three services a day. I was in every one of those services. I sought the Holy Ghost every time, and I didn’t receive.”

I knew the second time I laid my hands on him, in my spirit by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, just exactly what his trouble was. He was hoping to receive the Holy Spirit. He wasn’t in faith. But I also saw that I wouldn’t be able to get him to accept that. He wouldn’t have believed that. Sometimes you can tell what’s wrong with folks, but just because you know what is hindering them, that doesn’t

always mean they are ready to receive it. They've got to understand and know it also for themselves.

I'd had a revelation about this man's situation, but I knew I wouldn't be able to get him to see it until he saw the truth of it for himself in God's Word. But he came day and night, and I began to teach the Word. I taught on the difference between hope and faith.

Finally, the truth dawned on him. (It's a strange thing to me that he heard me teach for about a week and didn't get it. He had to hear it over and over again. That's the reason I keep teaching certain truths over and over again. Folks don't get it just because you say it once.)

After about ten days, this eighty-three-year-old man came to me at the close of one of the morning meetings (I'd already taught on faith the first week, but I was going over the same teaching again the second week). He said, "Brother Hagin, you know, I just caught it this morning. I see now why I haven't received. I have never believed. I've just been hoping for fifty years that I'd get the Holy Ghost." I said, "I knew that, Brother. I knew it the second time I laid hands on you and prayed. The Holy Spirit revealed that to me, but I also knew I wouldn't be able to get you to see that. I also knew if you'd keep coming to the services, you'd eventually see it for yourself.

"Now," he said, "you're going to have to give me a little more time." "That's all right," I said, "take all the time you need." He said, "You know I've been on this road for fifty years, and it's going to take me a little while to get stopped, turned around, and headed back in the right direction." I said, "That's all right, Brother, just take all the time you need, but keep on coming to the services." "Oh," he said, "we'll be here every service, day and night."

I said, "All right, keep coming and when you get that hope changed into faith, I'll know it, and you'll know it. Then you will receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit." About three days later on a Friday night after we had dismissed, this man came up to the pastor and me, and said, "Brother Hagin, I wonder if I could get you brethren to lay hands on me. I've changed my hope into faith. I'm ready now to receive the baptism in the Holy Ghost. I'm ready!" I said, "Are you expecting to receive?" "Yes," he said, "just put your hands on me and I'll receive right away."

That pastor and I just laid our hands on him, and almost immediately his hands were in the air and he was talking in tongues! This man had been hoping for fifty years that he'd get the Holy Ghost"

Why had the eighty-three-year-old man sought the Holy Spirit for fifty years but did not receive despite first attending three services a day for three years at Azusa St and many other Spirit-filled services in the meantime? Why is hoping not the same as exercising faith? How are you going with exercising faith? How did the old man move from hope to faith?

Have you received the infilling with the Holy Spirit? What does Jesus promise you? See Acts 2:38-39; Luke 11:9-13 and Acts 8:14-17.

7. What can you do when you struggle with faith? What are some strategies that can strengthen our faith? What is Jesus' attitude towards desperate but doubtful people? See Mark 9:20-27.

### **What Now?**

1. How would you feel about praying for one another now? Does anyone need healing or a fresh infilling with the Holy Spirit?
2. Can you risk faith and change your hope into faith? What precisely do you want to pray for?