



Women Building Godly Lives

*The wisest of women builds her own house,
but folly with her own hands tears it down. Prov. 14:1*

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Faith and Hope

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Faith, Hope...and Love

by Elizabeth Turner Beall

“So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (I Corinthians 1:13). Love is the foundation upon which our lives are built. The relationships with God, spouse, children, family, and friends are based on love. Careers are often chosen because we love doing certain things, and make it our financial resource of livelihood, or at best a time-consuming hobby. Being a homemaker is without doubt a great career reflecting love for and service to our families. Love is also the reason we care, serve, and encourage those in our spiritual family. Love is the first and second greatest commandments given (Mark 12:30-31)—to love God with all our being and our neighbors as ourselves. “God is love” (I John 4:8) and because of His love for us, we love Him.

But where do faith and hope fit into the picture? “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for; the conviction of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Hope is a strong desire and expectation of something. Though we have never seen God face-to-face, we know He created the world and us (mankind) for the purpose of serving Him (I Corinthians 8:6). We know God is because 1) the Bible—His inspired word (2 Timothy 3:16-17) tells us who He is, what He has done for us, and what He expects from us; 2) because of His great providential care and blessings in watching over us (Psalm 91); 3) because of the countless prayers He has answered in our lives; 4) because of His precious and very great

promises to enable us to become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:3); and 5) because of all the above, in our love and obedience to Him, we know we can have eternal life with Him in Heaven (Matthew 24:46). Our faith in God’s love for us is why we love Him, and why we encourage, care for, and serve others. It is because of that faith we have hope, hope in an eternal Home in Heaven forever.

Our faith in that hope is what keeps us going, with our eyes firmly fixed on God in Heaven. Nothing in this earthly life will matter once we get to Heaven (Romans 8:18-23). We struggle in this earthly body, and sometimes those trials feel like more than we can handle. But that hope—and our faith in that hope (with God’s help) brings us through. “For in this hope we were saved” (Romans 8:24a). Paul says that “hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?” (Romans 8:24b). In verse 25 he goes on to say that we wait for that hope with patience. So, we have love around us from God and family—earthly and spiritual. We have love in us in return. We believe (have faith) that God will someday bring to reality our hope of eternal life with Him in Heaven.

In conclusion consider this thought: When we get to Heaven, there will be **no** more need for faith **or** hope. Those two things will then be realized. And what is left? Love is left; “and the greatest of these is love.” Why will it be left? Could it be because it is the only emotion we will need in Heaven as we live in never-ending time with God who loves us so much and so perfectly?

“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (I Corinthians 15:57). “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18).

Think about it. Let your mind dwell on it. Make it your focus of meditation. The need for faith and hope will pass. What an exciting thought! But until then, let us help each other grow our faith and keep hope alive.

Faith

Faith of Meat or Milk?

by Alice Simmons

From the beginning of creation, God has given man the instinct to survive. Nourishment is the primary means of survival. Shortly after birth, a newborn baby desires to be fed.

Milk supplies the necessary nutrients needed to maintain normal growth. Eventually, as the child matures, his body gradually requires nutrients not found in milk, and his ability to digest solid foods has developed. He no longer can sustain good health, strength, and growth if he continues to drink only milk, and as a result may become ill or even die.

Christians, also as 'newborn babes' in Christ, may not be able to 'digest' the mature spiritual food found in God's Word. Although, after hearing the Gospel, believing, confessing, repenting of sins, and being baptized, no spiritual growth is taking place. They do not desire nor see the need to read or study God's Word. They remain as 'babes,' still barely surviving on the 'milk' of the Word. They have not attempted to 'digest' the 'meat' of the Word because they have not desired to 'taste' it. Sometimes the lack of growth reflects the failure to understand that baptism is just the beginning of our Christian life. From the moment our new life begins in Christ, we cannot stand still, not become stagnant, but instead, we must press on to a deeper faith, hope, and love.

The Hebrews' writer reminds the Christians in Hebrews 5:12-14 of their lack of spiritual growth when he refers to them as 'children living on milk' and not on solid food which is for the mature. Here the writer is getting on to the Christians because they have been Christians long enough to have grown in

their knowledge and faith. They should be past the basic principles of the Gospel, able to discern truth from error, and good from evil. If an adult wants to maintain good health, especially spiritual health, then he must feed on the meat of the Word. Without spiritual 'meat' he will never grow and will eventually die spiritually.

God, through Scripture, has revealed to us how to grow in the grace and knowledge of Him and how to remain faithful. As we walk the Christian path, the roadblocks, and setbacks are sure to come, but in His Word we find comfort knowing He is on our side, ready to hear our prayers, and that He will always be with us. Studying the Word of God is essential to our spiritual growth and our desire to mature in Him (2 Timothy 2:15). Everything in God's Word is beneficial to becoming more like Christ (2 Timothy 3:16).

The lack of Biblical knowledge is detrimental to the child of God. Not only is it needed to maintain our own faith, but also to teach others. We are to be ready to give biblical answers when asked (1 Peter 3:15). When we feel weak in our faith, the spiritual food is there for us to partake.

Some use time as an excuse to not feed on God's Word, yet it isn't an issue when television, movies, novels, etc., seem to find a place in the day. Making Bible study a top priority is a must if we choose to learn more of God's Word. Paul, in his instructions to parents, says to bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). How is that possible to teach what parents do not know or understand themselves?

In order to continue to mature as a child of God, ready to serve, ready to be an example to our family, children, and friends, and to teach others, we must continue to grow to full maturity in Christ. The words of Moses in Deuteronomy 32:47 says "For it is no empty word for you, but your very life..."

We have the opportunity before us to be better, more knowledgeable Christians today than we were yesterday. Let us all set that goal each day!



OR



Is Your Soul Hungry?

By Wilburta Arrowood

I have diabetes and I have learned I function much better when I eat on a fairly set schedule. Breakfast is around 7:30 or 8, lunch between 12 noon and 1 pm, dinner between 5 and 6 pm, and a non-carbohydrate snack around 8 pm. If I vary from that very much, I begin to get weak and have serious tremors. Consequently, I try really hard to conform.

Unfortunately, my spiritual body does not react so quickly to my neglect. Don't get me wrong. There are consequences. They just don't show up quite so quickly or emphatically.

Bible study and worship attendance are a given, but three times a week does not feed my physical body sufficiently. Neither does it meet my spiritual needs. A snack now and then will not keep my body healthy, so why would I think a spiritual "snack" now then would feed my soul.

"But, I read my bible," you say. Good for you! How often and for how long do you read? Do you do any in-depth study of particular words or phrases? Do you research the political and social history of the bible times to better understand what is being said? Do you know the difference in a Gentile and a Jew? Do you know why Herod had all the children two years and younger killed when Jesus was born? Why two-year-olds if Jesus was a newborn? Who were Saul and Saul of Tarsus? Were they the same person? Why is there an Old Testament and a New Testament, and which is most

important?

Why does all this matter? Many things in the bible are there to give us a sense of time and place. Others give us insight into the nature of man, and that of God. When we delve into the depths of a scripture we get a better understanding of what God expects of us, and what his intent is for those who follow his instruction.

There are many books available to help us. Bible concordances, commentaries, and atlases can be of great help. Some of the free online resources include the E-sword software that is free and contains a basic King James version of the bible with Strong's notes, but it also offers several other versions to be downloaded into the program. Most are free, with only a few with a charge due to copyrights. All are searchable. Choose a word and it will list every instance of that word in whichever version you choose. There are also maps and commentaries available for free.

Online the Biblegateway.com site offers many bible versions including numerous foreign language versions. It also offers an audio bible.

Google can help you find other audio bibles. Some people learn better by listening. If that is you, utilize this valuable tool.

There are several television programs offered by the church. I will list some below. Check them out for some great lessons.

Churches across the nation are beginning to stream their services live and then archiving them on YouTube. Christian colleges often stream their lectureship classes. Those are from speakers who are the "cream of the crop." Feed your soul via the internet if you cannot physically attend.

You may not have a set schedule for in-depth study, but do not let your soul begin to fall apart due to lack of nourishment.

Feed your soul.

Online television sources:

[Focus on Truth](#)

[Gospel Broadcasting Network](#)

[Herald of Truth](#)

[In Search of the Lord's Way](#)

[International Gospel Hour](#)

[Totally Acappella](#) Online Radio station featuring only acappella music

[KNLS Radio](#)-Alaska

[WSOJ.Net Radio](#) Searchable list. Listen to sermons on demand.



Questions for Discussion:

1. Define what denotes 'milk' and 'meat' in God's Word.
2. Can one who remains on the 'milk' be pleasing to God? What are some reasons why one might choose to remain on the 'milk'?
3. How can the maturity level of a Christian be measured? What causes immaturity?
4. Which scriptures are beneficial to growth?
5. How can 'digging deeper' into scripture help us grow?
6. Explain your concept of faith, hope, and love. Consider how they tie in with each other and how that is important.
7. Explain why love will last for eternity but faith and hope will not.

Ideas to apply this topic:

- Consider the good and bad foods you put into your physical body.
- Compare that with the spiritual “food” you take in (books, television, movies, music, etc).
- Now consider which of the good “foods” in both the physical and spiritual areas you should have more than you do.
- Are there any bad “foods” in both areas you should not have any more? Make a goal to add one more good “food” (or eat/take in more of something you already get that’s good) this week, and take away one bad “food” this week—physically and spiritually.
- Continue this process as you work on each item. This process may take a few weeks on each item, especially in the spiritual area.
- It might be good to have a plan and write down what you add/take away—physically and spiritually.
- Consider working with a “buddy” on this and encourage one another.

Prayer suggestions:

1. Ask God to help you be objective and determined to help your body take in what it needs.
2. Ask God for a deeper faith and stronger hope.
3. Ask God for a greater love for Him, for those in your church family, for the lost in the world, and for yourself.
4. Consider how you have been blessed and thank God for those blessings, even the ones you do not realize yet.



Word Search:

Find the words from the list in the puzzle, then fill in the blanks in the scriptures given. Use ESV.

ABOUNDING
COMPARING
FAITH
GLORY
GROW
HOPE
IMMOVABLE
LABOR
LOVE
MILK
NEWBORN
REVEALED
SPIRITUAL
STEADFAST
SUFFERINGS
VAIN

Y I E S E F R L I L P L L K T
P M O G T V A A T G N A L L O
A M Y N F W O I R D U B J I C
D O Y I O P S L T T K O Y M M
G V S R E P O H I H U R R R Z
N A G E O B V R V A I N V N C
I B I F G N I D N U O B A E V
R L B F Y P S T E A D F A S T
A E Z U S N W J V E D Y G M C
P M U S Y C R Z L H K L Y U M
M J S X B Y G A O I O V Y W P
O N K V U Y E L I R D Y Q J E
C J T W D V H A Y J G K Q B T
Q Y D N E W B O R N R J I N I
K R L R P K D U Y W U D E S A

“For I consider that the _____ of this present time are not worth
_____ with the _____ that is to be _____ to us.”

Romans 8:18

“So now _____, _____, and _____ abide, these three; but the greatest
of these is love.” 1 Corinthians 13:13

“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be _____, _____, always
_____ in the _____ of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your

_____ is not in _____.”
I Corinthians 15:58

“Like _____ infants, long for the pure _____, that
by it you may _____ up into salvation...” I Peter 2:2



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