

# WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT

*For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, **eternal in the heavens**. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with **our habitation which is from heaven**, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has **prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee**. So we are **always confident**, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we **walk by faith, not by sight**. (2Corinthians 5:1-7)*

## Introduction

This so-called “**real**” world has almost everyone, even Christians, **walking in fear** – fear of **failure**, fear of **embarrassment**, fear of **pain**, fear of **death** – so many fears, that the list goes on and on and on.

It is this **fear** that prevents Christians from *walking by faith!!*

- But **Christians** have **no need to fear anything** – except the LORD
  - In Matthew 10:28, **Jesus** tells us: “**Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**”
- The **LORD** speaks **innumerable times** throughout Scripture that we should “**fear not**” because fear of anything in this world comes not from God but **from Satan**
  - 2 Tim 1:7 “**God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**”
- The **opposite of love** is not hate, as we all suppose, **but fear** – **God is love, Satan is fear**
  - According to 1 John 4:18, “**perfect love casts out fear**”
- So, if we put our **complete trust in God**, we have **nothing to fear**. Romans 8:38-39 tells us that:
  - “**Neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”

The key phrase from 2Corinthians that we are going to explore now in greater depth is that, “**we walk by faith, not by sight.**”

- When we do so, we are living a life of **love** and **power** and **fulfillment**

When we **fulfill God’s Will**, we also achieve the elusive **self-fulfillment** that people in this world **strive so hard to find** and **never do** – unless they **turn to God!**

- When we do **not walk in faith**, we wander off into the **darkness** where we’ll **stumble** around in **fear** and are certain to eventually **fall and fail**
  - Which is what happens when *we walk by sight*

## Walking by Sight

So, what does it mean to “**walk by sight?**”

- This actually refers to **all** our physical senses – **sight, smell, touch, hear, taste**
- And, while these senses are indeed **miraculous**, we only perceive a **small fraction** of the physical universe - and absolutely **nothing** of the spiritual realm
  - 1 Cor 2:14 *But the **natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.***

But let's step back and **explore** the **natural world** of **physical sight** from the “**macro**” (i.e. large) to the “**micro**” (i.e. tiny)

- While our **vision** enables us to **function** in this **three-dimensional world** of ours, we see but a **fraction** of what there **is to see** – and **what we see** is actually **not even there!!**
  1. **Macro** – stars, light takes **millions of years** (i.e. light years) to **reach earth** and our eyes
    - Therefore, they are **not even where they seem to be** – but **where they were** millions of years ago
    - They might have exploded and **not even exist** anymore – we **won't know** for another millions years!
  2. **Micro** – i.e. microbes – **can't see them**, too small
    - But **millions** of them exist on our **face** alone!
    - And **billions** of flesh eating microbes live **in your bed**, munching on the **small flakes of flesh** that your body is continually **discarding and replacing**
  3. **Atomic Particles** – the “**old**” model of the physical universe
    - This theory has shown beyond a doubt that **what you see is not what you get!**
    - Because, an **atom** is **99% empty space**, with the **electrons** orbiting around the **proton**
    - So, when we look at something, **what we're seeing is not what's actually there**, but rather the a **small segment of the electromagnetic radiation** (what we call light) that is **reflected off the object**
  4. **Sub-Atomic** – i.e. particles smaller than electrons – **much smaller!**
    - Recent scientific findings, called **string theory**, hypothesize that these fundamental building blocks of all **physical** things in this world are **not actually particles**, but rather **strings of vibrating energy**
    - In fact, experiments have shown that **light** is also comprised of **strings of vibrating energy** and that there is **no difference between energy and matter!**

So, **what does all this mean to us?** It means that “**what you see is what you get**”

- While our **physical senses** allow us to **function well in this world**, they do **not actually allow us to see things as they really are**
  - We only have a **perception** of what's real, **not of what is truly real**
- So, not only does **walking in faith** entail **ignoring our senses**, but in fact our **senses themselves** are **not trustworthy** and also requires a **walk of faith**
  - We are **not giving up as much** as we think **to walk by faith** instead of **by sight!**

We're afraid to **let go of our senses** and march off **blindly** according to **faith** in something we **can't see**

- Because... “*faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*” Heb 11:1)

We must learn how to **take our eyes off** the things of this world and look unto

- “*Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith*” (Heb. 12:2)

And **not look** at:

- *the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* (2Cor 4:18)

## Walking by Faith

So, now let's explore what it means to **walk by faith**

- When we walk by faith we essentially **close off our mind and our senses** to the stimuli and feedback from **this world** and instead **hear only God**
  - *“So then **faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**”* (Romans 10:17)
- There are three **key Scriptures** that apply to us when we **walk by sight**, not by faith
  - *“There is a **way that seems right** to a man, but its **end is the way of death.**”* (Prov. 14:12)
    - That's how **Satan** and this **world deceives** us, because there are **many times** that the **way of the Lord** does not seem **logical** or **right** to our **skeptical minds**
  - *“**Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.**”* (Prov. 3:5)
    - **Trust** comes **through faith** and it comes **out of our hearts not out of our minds**
  - *“**But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**”* (Hebrews 11:6)
    - Not **hard** or **difficult** – **impossible!!!** – to please Him **without faith**
    - But He is a **rewarder** of those who **seek Him**, who seek **His Presence**, and who **desire to do His will, not our own**

God does not leave us **hanging out to dry** when we **seek Him** and **seek to follow Him**

- Instead, He **teaches us** through the **indwelling of the Holy Spirit**
  - *“**But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things.**”* (John 14:26)

**What** does He **teach**?

1. First, He teaches us how to **distinguish His Voice** from that of the **world**, our own **mind**, and from our **Adversary**
  - *“**the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.**”* (John 10:4)
2. He teaches us how to determine **His Will** – a **13-week course** that we'll do again in 2004
  - *“**And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**”* (Romans 12:2)
    - God does **not** generally reveal His **entire plan** for you – instead, He provides **one step at a time** or a **vision** of what the **end** looks like, but not the path
      - e.g. God commanded **Abraham** to go *“**to a land that I will show you**”* (Genesis 12:1)
        - all he got was the first step – and each **subsequent step** until he was told to **stop**
      - e.g. **Moses** at the **burning bush** where God said *“**Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.**”* (Exodus 3:10)
        - **Moses** got the **end result first** about which he **objected and argued** five times that he **was not qualified** – which is why God generally **does not tell us the whole plan**
        - But still, **Moses** had to **walk out** God's plan **one step at a time** because he did not and could **not know how to do it on his own**

### 3. **Thirdly**, He teaches us what **step of faith** He wants us to take **next**

- Many times, those who say that they **pray and pray** and **don't hear** what God's Will is for them, **don't hear** because they **haven't done** the one **next thing** that God has **already asked** them to do!
  - This is often because of the **fear** we spoke of earlier – “surely **God wouldn't ask me to do that!!**”
    - It doesn't make any **sense**; it will **hurt**; I will suffer **financial loss**; all kinds of **excuses**
    - **Moses himself** made all kinds of **excuses** to try and get out of his **difficult assignment**, but through the process he **learned** how to take it **one step at a time** and was able to finally become the **great leader and prophet** that we now **revere** so greatly
      - But he was just an **ordinary man** like us – and it **wasn't him** who did it, **it was God!!**
  - The same is true of the great **prophet Elijah**
    - “***Elijah** was a man with a **nature** like ours, and he **prayed earnestly** that it would **not rain**; and it **did not rain** on the land for three years and six months. <sup>18</sup>And he **prayed again**, and the **heaven gave rain**, and the earth produced its fruit.” (James 5:17)*
    - Did it rain **because Elijah decided to pray**? **No!** Elijah **prayed** because **God told him** to in order to **fulfill God's plan** that he **works out through us**
  - One of the **big excuses** is, “I'm **not capable** or **gifted** to do this or that”
    - But we have to **remember** – we are just the **vessel** not the **substance**
    - If God chooses to **use us** He will **give us the gifting and anointing** that we need – all to **His glory, not ours**
- **God's overall Will** for us remains a **mystery** because we can't see the **big picture** whereas **He can** because **He knows the beginning and the end**
  - “*For **My thoughts** are not **your thoughts**, Nor are **your ways My ways**,” says the **LORD**. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are **My ways** higher than **your ways**, And **My thoughts** than **your thoughts**. (Isaiah 55:8-9)*
- So, don't seek to learn God's whole plan for you life, **just ask Him what He wants you to do next** – and **then do it!**

### **Conclusion**

But it takes **practice**; it is a **process**

- First you have to take little **baby steps** to get used to it, little **steps of faith**
  - Much like the **Israelites** when they were told to **cross the Jordan River**
    - They had to actually **walk out a little bit into the water** before **God rewarded their faith** and **stopped up the water** so that they could **walk across on dry land** (Joshua 3)
- And the **rewards are unbelievable** – unbelievable **fruits** of the spirit – **peace, joy love and all the rest** right here on **earth**
  - “***I have come** that they may **have life**, and that they may have it **more abundantly**.” (John 10:10)*
- And we build up our **treasure in heaven** -- “***Rejoice and be exceedingly glad**, for **great is your reward in heaven**.” (Matthew 5:12)*