

WORK AT WORK

Dear Friends:

When the issue of the current condition of the Church arises, one can hardly avoid the word Jesus gave to the Laodicean's in Revelation 3:17 and 18,

““Because you say, “I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing” – and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked – I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed, and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.””

What is astounding about this passage is the utter contrast in diametrically opposite perceptions. The Laodicean believers were convinced God had blessed them financially. God viewed it in totally different terms. The question is, “Why couldn't they see what God saw?”

The Laodicean church was apparently quite proud of all the local and regional accomplishments attained in the natural. They were the leading ophthalmic research center in the empire, producing a salve whose reputation exceeded the boundaries of Roman rule.

They were comfortable in their spirituality until Jesus blew the “doors off with this assessment.” Things are often far from what they appear! What will it take for us to see as Jesus sees? Are we willing to ask for a depth of visitation which would scrutinize our successes?

If God were to visit us granting whatever we asked, would we ask to see as He does? Perhaps this “eye salve” is the greatest gift ever to be attained in any generation because it guarantees accurate assessments enabling clear choices. Are we asking for the right things?

Yours in Him,

Al Houghton.

WORD AT WORK

VOLUME XXIV NUMBER VI
Using Faith On Your Flesh To Obey God V

TUESDAY, June 1

Scripture: Revelation 3:18

Revelation 3:18 says, “I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.” If the Lord were to release that eye salve suddenly and we could see things exactly the way He does, what would change? Would our decision-making process change? Would we live by a different standard? Would we live by a different yardstick? If we could see the way God sees, what activities would rate our time and what is now important would suddenly diminish? What, if anything, that has little meaning would suddenly rise to govern our choices? What would it be like to be able to see exactly the way God does and what would be the fruit? Is God going to come to the Church and cause us to see the way He sees? If He imparts that anointing and it suddenly falls, what changes would it make politically, governmentally, educationally, legally or financially? We have much to look forward to if God performs Revelation 3:18.

WEDNESDAY, June 2

Scripture: Mark 4:9-12

Mark 4:9-12 says, “And He said to them, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’ But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. And He said to them, ‘To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that “Seeing they may see and not perceive, And hearing they may hear and not understand; Lest they should turn, And their sins be forgiven them.”’” Mark’s account of what it would be like to see the way God sees emphasizes that seeing would release the full measure of receiving and hearing and at every juncture where there was a conflict, we would turn toward God’s will. Sin would slide into the background, as obedience produced its great fruit. That sounds like a glorious Church without spot, wrinkle or blemish full of faith and power. Can we expect such a Church in the end-times? It would seem, from the prophets that we certainly should, and perhaps the pathway to that place in the realm of the Spirit includes just such a visitation and just such an ability in the realm of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit was sent to be our aid and our comforter so the path for the end-time Church is certainly in following the Holy Spirit. We trust we will all get there together.

THURSDAY, June 3

Scripture: Matthew 13:10-15

In Matthew’s account of this passage, we are told it was given to the disciples to know the mystery of the Kingdom, and whoever has, or understands this mystery, more will be given until they have abundance; whereas whoever does not understand this principle, everything he has will be taken away. He goes on to quote Isaiah 6:9-10, which says, “‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the heart of this people has grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they

should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their heart and turn, So that I should heal them.”” What Jesus prophesied, or spoke as a judgment, certainly came to pass on the Jewish nation to which He ministered. However, in the season in which we live something else comes into view. Paul’s prophecy in Romans promised that toward the end of the age the Gentiles would reach fullness, releasing fullness to the Jews as they would come into the Kingdom. It seems that the Church will have the final great honor of ministering God’s word to the Jews and it will be heard. It is interesting to consider the controversy stirred by the movie “The Passion” and the fruit of its aftermath. Suddenly, a hearing ear is developing in Hollywood, concerning why this movie has done so well. God has a way of speaking in a language that can be understood, even when that language is mammon! One thing is for certain, the Church is going to have an opportunity for a tremendous harvest in the days ahead and it is going to come in realms and dimensions that will probably be surprising. Perhaps never in history have we needed a hearing ear and a seeing eye as much as we do for the days ahead. God told us how to buy it. He said it was available and it is time we pursued with all our heart.

FRIDAY, June 4

Scripture: Isaiah 55:1-2

Isaiah prophesied a key, concerning the issue of buying from God. In Isaiah 55:1-2 he says, “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.” Isaiah said there was a commodity that we all had and could spend in the realm of the spirit. That commodity was our time. We can buy from God the things that really satisfy as we yield our time to Him, because it spends in the spirit like money in the natural. This now becomes the major point of challenge for every individual believer and possibly the chief area where we choose to use our faith on our flesh and obey God. Perhaps there is no point of testing in using our faith on our flesh that quite rivals the area of our time. If we say our time is our own, then we’ve already given the enemy space to rule. ***God says our time is not our own.*** We are bought with a price and our time belongs to Him. Will we use our faith on our flesh to spend our time the way God ordains. If we so choose, then we can be assured that we will find the full measure of God’s gifting and calling.

SATURDAY, June 5

Scripture: Hebrews 5:7-9

It is interesting to look at Jesus, the Pattern Son. In Hebrews 5:7-9 we are told, “...who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,....” How did Jesus accomplish His assignment? The path to fulfillment on an individual basis is the same for us as it was for Jesus. Jesus, according to this passage, had to use His faith on His flesh to obey. In the process, He became the Pattern Son. Does God expect any less of us in following Him to fulfillment in our gifting and calling than He did the Pattern Son? Jesus made it clear that what the Master experienced would also be required of the disciples. If it is not, the disciples become greater than the Master. This is how we prove we are His disciples. Can we run from the very foundational principle upon which the Kingdom is based? If we are going to disciple the next generation, we not only have to embrace and live the essence of what brought Jesus into fulfillment, but we have to preach it by example to our children. This next move of the Spirit may well be ushered in on the heels of walking this principle as a demonstration to the succeeding generation. Are we willing? Are we embracing? Are we living like “pattern sons”?

SUNDAY, June 6

Scripture: First Peter 4:12-13

First Peter 4:12 and 13 tells us, “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened in you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.” This looks like the very same process of being a “pattern son”. What do we have to do when “fiery trials” emerge? It seems there is only one way to continue to walk through it. We must embrace the essence of how Jesus walked. He used His faith on His flesh to obey all the way to the end. To what degree are we willing to walk this out? To what extent are we partaking of Christ’s sufferings? There are those who tell us because Jesus paid the price, we by faith can be delivered. The impression is given that Jesus paid it for us, therefore we have no part in it. If that is true, and they are right, why does Peter say, “...to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings,...”? What do we know about this? What is the issue here? If Peter said, “...rejoice to the extent that...” it is obvious he expected us to taste a measure of what Christ suffered. He even said not to think it strange; translation – it’s common. Are we willing to use our faith on our flesh to walk through, even participating with the suffering of Christ in order to see the way He sees and respond accordingly. The path is not always easy, but it always brings us into the full measure of the purpose of God.

MONDAY, June 7

Scripture: Luke 12:47-49

Verses 47-49 say, “And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, But he who did not know, yet committed things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more. I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” Jesus made it clear that there was a cost of all discipleship and the cost was experiencing fire. The cost was adversity. A baptism of fire has a very specific purpose. When fire comes, it burns away the chaff – all selfishness. Any manifestation of the five giants is usually treated by fire. The fire falls on selfish ambition, self-effort, self-protection, self-righteousness and self-preservation. Jesus walked a path and He said the fire was kindled that would help us find that very same path. Using our faith on our flesh is what keeps us on the pathway. Nothing else qualifies. How will we walk?

TUESDAY, June 8

Scripture: Luke 12:41-44

Verses 41-44 say, “Then Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?’ And the Lord said, ‘Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.’” Will we see the full measure of anointing that goes with our gifting and calling? The preparational issue is, are we choosing to use our faith on our flesh? Are we being faithful to the best of our ability in the midst of the fire? Apparently the degree of fire parallels the magnitude of the gifting and calling. The issue remains, are we willing to commit our souls to the faithful Creator, trusting the fire has an end and when it does, whether on earth or as we pass to eternity we will be better off because we were willing to use our faith on our flesh and follow Jesus - the Pattern Son!

WEDNESDAY, June 9

Scripture: James 1:22-26

Verses 22-26 say, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and

continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless." Are we willing to use our faith on our flesh to bridle our tongue? Proverbs 18:21 tells us "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." Are we willing to use our faith on our flesh? What constitutes using our faith on our flesh to tame our tongue? Is it, as some have taught, never to make a negative confession? If that were the case, we could certainly not embrace, "to the extent of sharing in Christ's sufferings" and ever say anything about it. What constitutes using our faith on our flesh and bridling our tongue? That is the issue of faithfulness in keeping ourselves unspotted from the world and continuing to walk out our gifting and calling when it would be much easier to find something else to do. Jesus faithfully endured betrayal and finished His race. How are we at faithfully walking out our purpose?

THURSDAY, June 10

Scripture: James 1:27

Verse 27 says, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." It seems that we have two categories in which we are to use our faith on our flesh. Category one is offer relationship to those who have lost their family. God asks us to be a family to those who have lost their family. How are we doing? It seems to be much more comfortable for the Church to fellowship with people we know, people of like cultural status, education and income. It is much more difficult to fellowship with those who have no family. The second area, where we are to use our faith on our flesh, is to walk in purity, to possess our own vessel in honor, which means disavowing the morality of Hollywood. If we are using our faith on our flesh, according to James, it has two manifestations. The first is we seek out people who don't have a family and second we use our faith on our flesh not to act like the world. Surely we can judge how well we are doing in both of these categories.

FRIDAY, June 11

Scripture: James 2:1-4

Verses 1-4 state, "My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, 'You sit here in a good place,' and say to the poor man, 'You stand there,' or, 'Sit here at my footstool,' have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?" James, by the Holy Spirit, is outlining here areas where we have to use our faith on our flesh. Another area is partiality. God demands we use our faith on our flesh to not cater to wealth and not cater to those with much influence. He expects us to treat everybody equally – the poor – the middle class – and the wealthy. Are we doing that? Have we embraced impartiality? Why do we go to church where we go to church? Do we have partiality in our church ethnically? Do we have partiality in our church financially? Do we have partiality in our church socially? Do we have partiality in our church educationally? How much partiality do we have in our church? Are we comfortable with it or are we doing something about changing it? God calls us to be an agent of change. How well are we doing? Are we using our faith on our flesh or are we going with the flow without challenging the status quo? Where are we in disavowing partiality?

SATURDAY, June 12

Scripture: James 2:14-22

In James 2:14-22 we are told if we say we have faith it has to be demonstrated by appropriate corresponding action. To be a believer means that if we see somebody who doesn't have the necessities of life then we act. Our response should not be, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,..." Using our faith on our flesh can diminish our bank account. In James' definition of what it means to walk with God, we're expected to use our faith on our flesh and help people. We're suppose to be showing that we are believers by using our faith to help

those who don't have enough to survive. We're even given Abraham and Isaac as an example. We are told in verses 21 and 22, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?" So our faith, as a believer, has to be demonstrated by corresponding action in two dimensions. One, is sharing what we have with others who are having trouble surviving because they don't have the necessities and Two, sacrificially obeying God when we don't want to, when it is not in, what is often considered, "our best interest". Abraham I'm sure was convinced that putting a knife in Isaac was not in his best interest, but he raised his hand to do it anyway. Using our faith on our flesh has two forms of sacrifice. One – the sharing of material goods and Two – the walking away or separating or just plain doing what God demands. How difficult would it be to separate yourself from one of your children by laying down the law or cutting them off? How many Isaac's get sacrificed every year out of obedience when, like Abraham, its only tears, grief and agony beyond description? God was faithful to Abraham and we have to trust He will be faithful to us.

SUNDAY, June 13

Scripture: James 2:23-26

Verses 23-26 say, "And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.' And he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." If we are using our faith on our flesh, then we are producing corresponding action that brings a testimony in eternity to what we believe. Abraham's action brought an eternal testimony, because of what he believed. God honored what he believed. The covenant was completed and man has been blessed as a result. Many manifestations of using our faith on our flesh must come in every generation as a witness and a testimony to those who do not believe. When such manifestations are wrought in front of people, from that point on they become utterly without excuse concerning the ways of God. God has revealed Himself in front of them and they are forever accountable. An end-time church must walk in this place, using its faith on its flesh to obey God at every turn.

MONDAY, June 14

HAPPY FLAG DAY

Scripture: James 3:1-2

Verses 1 and 2 say, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." It is obvious that God has set out a standard for us that was lived in the Lord Jesus Christ. Using our faith on our flesh starts with the tongue and the words we speak; especially about other people. The promise for using our faith on our flesh in this dimension develops maturity, a perfect man is a complete man, but able also to bridle the whole body. Success in using our faith on our flesh means we are able to bridle our body for God's purposes changing direction whenever and wherever He leads. Directional sensitivity is rare. We can have success. The word tells us it is possible. All we have to do is choose to begin to use our faith on our flesh and obey Him.

TUESDAY, June 15

Scripture: James 3:3-12

James makes it clear that the chief war we fight will be with our tongue. How long does it take to use our faith on our flesh and reign in the tongue. The examples are very clear. Ships, regardless of how large, are driven by fierce winds. Of course, this was written in the days when they only had sails, but the one thing that hasn't changed is they are all still guided by rudders. Rudders control ships. He likens our tongue to a ship's rudder. Verses 8-12 state, "But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same

mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring can yield both salt water and fresh.” Are we using our faith on our flesh to turn the salt water to fresh? Are we willing to allow the Spirit of God to be our own desalination plant so we can turn the salty words of judgment and criticism into the fresh water of vision, hope and blessing? Jesus is the Pattern Son. We have no choice but to follow His footsteps in this issue.

WEDNESDAY, June 16

Scripture: Psalm 32:8-9

Psalm 32:8-9 says, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.” The Amplified says, “...they will not come **with you**.” Is it possible that in the church today, especially in the American church, we are raising a generation which are so focused on their own self-interest that only a bit and a bridle will cause them to abandon the path of self-fulfillment and lay down their life for God’s purpose? Are we raising a generation which only a bit and bridle will turn? Or have we become a generation which only a bit and bridle will turn? We have come to a season where embracing God’s purposes is necessary and the only path to get there is using our faith on our flesh to obey Him - almost always going through the fire!

THURSDAY, June 17

Scripture: James 3:13-18

We are told in James 3:13-18, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exists, confusion and every evil thing will be there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” Using our faith on our flesh has a decided and specifically pointed fruit. The fruit is making peace, not showing partiality. The fruit is producing righteousness, walking upright and circumspect. Is it possible to produce the fruit of the Spirit without using our faith on our flesh? The answer is “no”. The only pathway to the fruit of the Spirit means using our faith on our flesh to obey Him. The question is, how far are we willing to go in that pursuit?

FRIDAY, June 18

Scripture: James 4:1-7

In James 4:1-7 he continues to deal with the fruit of *not* using our faith on our flesh to obey Him. And he says the fruit is very clear. It manifest in wars and fights among us or a runaway desire for pleasure that wars in our members. He even says, “You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” Perhaps there is not a clearer declaration of the fruit of *not* using our faith on our flesh than we read right here. By not embracing God’s path, we end up in spiritual adultery claiming or laying hold of and using our faith for all the things we want rather than using it for what God wants. Verse 7 says, “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” It is in the context of using our faith on our flesh we are encouraged to resist the temptation of acting like the world. Are we using our faith on our flesh to bring it under, or are we using our faith to pacify it? Are we walking in spiritual purity, or are we walking in spiritual adultery? Are we teaching people to walk in spiritual purity, or are we teaching people to walk in spiritual fornication? The answer lies in whether or

not we are teaching them to use their faith on their flesh to obey God! Anything else leads directly to the warning that James gives us. What kind of faith are we passing on to the next generation?

SATURDAY, June 19

Scripture: Hebrews 11:32-34

In Hebrews 11:32-34 we're told, "And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, because valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." The immediate question from this passage is, what were the prerequisite sin training these individuals for the great victories they won in the realm of the spirit? Did God require them to use their faith on their flesh and obey Him, or did He allow them to do whatever as long as they finished their assignments? Are they a pattern for us in the end-times? Do we have kingdoms we have to conquer for the Lord?

SUNDAY, June 20

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

Scripture: Revelation 11:15

Revelation 11:15 says, "Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'" How does that happen? Is that something God does, or is that something we have to aid or be a part of? It is interesting that is spoken *after* the ministry of the two witnesses. It is obvious that somebody has to use their faith on their flesh and obey God in the process to come to that point. Perhaps the examples of Hebrews 11 have more to speak to us at this juncture in Church history than one might have thought.

MONDAY, June 21

Scripture: Judges 6:13-21

Gideon is given to us as an example of one who conquered kingdoms. Notice his condition in Judges chapter 6 verses 15-17. The passage says, "So he said to Him, 'O my LORD, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the LORD said to him, 'Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.' Then he said to Him, 'If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me.'" Gideon did not see himself in any way, shape or form as one who could bring deliverance anywhere, anyplace, anytime! So it is obvious in the beginning, Gideon had a very difficult time accepting the fact that God would use him to bring any kind of deliverance to Israel. Gideon was much more in God's view than he was in his own. Did Gideon have to use his faith on his flesh? The first application was in believing what God said about him. Perhaps that is the first application for many of us. We have to choose to believe what God has said we can do. We have to believe we are who God says we are, even when there is nothing of answered prayer to prove it. Gideon demanded God's hand move to prove he could bring deliverance. Perhaps we find ourselves in a season where, like Gideon, we need to see God's hand to believe we can really do what He has prophetically said. The good news is that God showed up for Gideon. He did what Gideon asked. He increased his confidence, so he could fulfill his ministry. Perhaps that should be the next round of expectation for us who have long-standing prayer requests unfulfilled. God can easily show He will actually do what He has called us to do. He did it for Gideon and if He is no respecter of persons – He should do it for us.

TUESDAY, June 22

Scripture: Judges 6:37-40

Gideon put a fleece out before God and God answered it; not once but twice. He wanted the fleece wet the first time and the second time he wanted it dry. God met him both times. Is God ready to meet us? Does He

desire to meet us? Would He like to meet us over long-standing issues? Well we can certainly give Him the opportunity by asking Him, which is precisely what Gideon did. James says, "...we have not because we ask not, because we ask amiss" But if we ask, as Gideon did, to see God's hand knowing that He is in fact with us and will do what He has said, then it would appear we are following a pattern that is given to us in Hebrews. God showed up for Gideon and he fulfilled his ministry and brought deliverance to the nation. Perhaps it is time to ask God to show up and perform what He has promised. And like Gideon, we can rise to fulfill our calling.

WEDNESDAY, June 23

Scripture: Judges 4:8-9

Barak is cited as another example. We are told in Judges 4:8-9, "And Barak said to her, 'If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go.' So she said, 'I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.' Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh." Barak was successful but Sisera was delivered into a woman's hand. Barak is an example of partially using our faith on our flesh, but demanding help that God didn't intend. Barak fulfilled his mission, but he didn't get the glory for the victory of catching Sisera. God gave that to a woman. Isn't it interesting that apparently God has a specific criteria for using our faith on our flesh. Barak used it partially but didn't use it fully, so he gained the victory without the reputation that should have gone with it. Is it possible to partially fulfill what God calls us to do? It apparently is. The question for us at this juncture is, what kind of generation are we going to raise? Are we going to raise one that partially fulfills God's call, or fully gives themselves over? Since we can't take anybody beyond where we have gone, the first challenge is going there ourselves.

THURSDAY, June 24

Scripture: Judges 13 and 14

In Judges chapters 13 and 14 we are introduced to the miraculous birth of Samson whose stunted growth and development produces a spectacular failure to use his faith on his flesh and possess his vessel in honor. Samson lost it with the ladies, but through repentance in the end used his faith and God gave him the opportunity for redemption. He was victorious and killed more in his death than he had done in his life. Is Samson held as an example of someone who uses his faith on his flesh? Yes. And the sad fact is, it came to him very late in life. Will we be able to pass on this principle to our children so they don't have to wait till their 50's to use their faith on their flesh? Samson could have had a lot more victories had he learned God's ways early. Lets embrace and teach the next generation God's ways *now*, so they are prepared when the move of the Spirit comes.

FRIDAY, June 25

Scripture: Judges 11:1-4 and 30-31

We are told in Hebrews 11 that Jephthah is a good example. In Judges 11:1-3 we are told, "Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, but he was the son of a harlot; and Gilead begot Jephthah. Gilead's wife bore sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out, and said to him, 'You shall have no inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman.' Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob; and worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out raiding with him." Now God calls Jephthah, in verses 29, 30, and 31. The story of Jephthah is, in many ways, one of the saddest stories of all because he grows up with all the shame of being the son of harlotry. He was rejected and removed from his family, but God shows him mercy and grace. Is it possible by using our faith on our flesh to overcome all the disadvantages of heritage? In Jephthah's case the answer is – absolutely! The dumbest thing possibly in Scripture, is Jephthah's vow to the Lord where he says in verses 30-31, "'If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands, then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD'S and I will offer it up as a burnt offering.'" Of course, his daughter comes out to meet him and then she is offered up. Jephthah used his faith on his flesh to overcome the

shame of his heritage and become a mighty deliverer. Past failures do not disqualify with God. Using faith on our flesh can certainly overcome any heritage deficit qualifying for God's best.

SATURDAY, June 26

Scripture: First Samuel 17:38-39

First Samuel 17 brings us to a very familiar character named David. In verses 38 and 39 Saul clothed David with his armor and put a giant helmet on his head with a extra large heavy coat of armor. It didn't fit David's petite teenage frame. David's chief complaint was "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off." David had tremendous wisdom for his age. As a man of wisdom, he knew that by using his faith on his flesh he could face a giant, but he couldn't go out in another's armor. Neither can we fight with another person's revelation. We have to go with what God has woven into our life. David had to go with where he was confident. David was victorious, not just because he was willing to use his faith on his flesh, but because he was savvy enough to only use what had worked for him before when he faced the lion and the bear. God is faithful to give us the lion and bear experiences so we know what works when it comes time to use our faith on our flesh and face the biggest giant of all.

SUNDAY, June 27

Scripture: First Samuel 17:28-30

The process of using our faith on our flesh in serving God has many manifestations. One of those that David had to overcome was in verses 28-32 where we are told, "Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, 'Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart for you have come down to see the battle.' And David said, 'What have I done now? Is there not a cause?' Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones did." David had to overcome the accusation and jealousy within his siblings and choose not to retaliate. So David used his faith on his flesh as a two-edged sword, number one, to overcome the jealousy and accusation of a brother, and, number two, not to retaliate in the process. Using our faith on our flesh will get us where God wants us to go, because God is no respecter of persons!

MONDAY, June 28

Scripture: First Samuel 18:11-12 and 19:1-2

In chapter 18:11-12 we find, "And Saul cast the spear, for he said, 'I will pin David to the wall with it.' But David escaped his presence twice. Now Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul." Not only did David use his faith on his flesh to obey God and find victory, but in chapter 19:1-2 we're told, "Now Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David; but Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David. So Jonathan told David, saying, 'My father Saul seeks to kill you. Therefore please be on your guard until morning, and stay in a secret place and hide.'" David now has to use his faith on his flesh to dodge the very king he is serving. How often do we have to use our faith and overcome what our brothers and sisters in the church throw at us in judgment, in spears, in humiliation, in accusation that would kill us if it were not for God's redemptive purposes. David had to use his faith on his flesh to survive his employer. Is it any different today? Are we teaching that to our children? God ordained the Church. We have no option but to be a part of it and we better learn to use our faith on our flesh or we won't survive. God loves the Church and we have to love Church. David had to choose to serve Saul because he was the Lord's anointed. Those principles still stand today.

TUESDAY, June 29

Scripture: First Samuel 24:4-5 and 26:8-9

In First Samuel 24:4-5 we are told, “Then the men of David said to him, ‘This is the day of which the LORD said to you, “Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.”’ And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul’s robe. Now it happened afterward that David’s heart troubled him because he had cut Saul’s robe.” David was encouraged to take Saul’s life, but he used his faith on his flesh and resisted. Even in the cutting off of Saul’s robe to show him that he had the opportunity to kill him, God’s conviction came upon him. David had to learn serving and using his faith on his flesh in a very difficult situation. He made the right choice and he became the greatest king in Israel’s history. Are we willing to follow David’s pattern and use our faith on our flesh?

WEDNESDAY, June 30

Scripture: First Samuel 26:8-9

In First Samuel 26:8-9 we are told, “Then Abishai said to David, ‘God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear, right to the earth; and I will not have to strike him a second time!’ And David said to Abishai, ‘Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the LORD’S anointed, and be guiltless?’” David understood spiritual authority especially when those called were not doing what they were suppose to do. Even when others were not using their faith on their flesh with devastating impact, he was still responsible for using his faith on his flesh in honoring them. For David, it meant dodging spears. David used his faith on his flesh in the right way and God made sure that he dodged every single attack. What can we say about God’s grace and God’s blessing except it is awesome when we are willing to use our faith on our flesh. David is a perfect example and God honored him at every juncture. God is once again looking for leaders to honor! Will we qualify?

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ITINERARY

Al Houghton

The travel itinerary for June July and August is blank
because this time has been set aside for publishing “Sure Mercies”.

Please pray for a productive season of creating, editing and arranging material for the manuscript.

**Reaching deep... and deeper still
I find the One my heart to fill
Instructing me He helps me grow
His ways more perfectly to know**

**And though I’m broken and I’m crushed
His inner workings can’t be rushed
The subtle fruit behind the scene
He meant it all along to glean
I’m being stretched for days ahead
To run when others walk in dread**

So thus there’s purpose in this path

**And in the devil's face I'll laugh
The Lord's in charge and this I know
It's my desire to stretch and grow**

Jayne Houghton