

WORD AT WORK

Dear Friends:

In Matthew 24:45-47, Jesus made one of the greatest promises recorded in the entire New Testament, “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.” Can we qualify?

Perhaps we should ask ourselves, “What would it be like to have Christ’s anointing for healing without restriction?” “Ruler over all his goods” has endless possibilities. In Revelation 3, speaking to the Laodicean church, Jesus said in verse 18, “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.” How do we buy from God?

Three things have to be purchased with faithfulness to qualify for limitless anointing. Gold refined in the fire is a product of “using our faith on our flesh” to continue when all the circumstances indicate it is time to quit. Overcoming adversity through faithfulness has a great reward.

The second thing we are to buy is white garments covering our nakedness. Revelation makes one fact clear: the righteous deeds we do become our clothing in eternity. Like a military dress parade, we will visibly identify how believers used their faith. Did we spend it on ourselves or use it for others?

The final purchase is eye salve so that we can see as the Lord does. The spiritual currency for all three purchases is the same – “using our faith on our flesh to obey”. Jesus lived the principle that became foundational for all Kingdom transactions. Without faith (applied to our flesh) we can’t please Him. I pray this “Word at Work” will contribute to greater spiritual acuity and much increased purchasing power.

Yours in Him,

Al Houghton

WORD AT WORK

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

SATURDAY, May 1

Scripture: Revelation 3:16-18

Revelation 3:16-18 says, “ ‘So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. 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.’ ” “Buying gold refined in the fire” essentially guarantees us four things. #1 *True* riches which last for eternity become ours. #2 The “white garments” specifically speak to walking in God’s righteousness being holy and without blame. That has tremendous reward in every season, especially in periods of intense judgment. #3 That we would be spiritually clothed and the “shame of our nakedness would not be revealed.” We would be clothed with Jesus. We would be clothed with the good deeds that we have done, the righteous acts which become our medals of honor in eternity. Nobody wants to spend eternity naked because they never completed anything God called them to do. #4 When we “see” as God sees, our value system changes dramatically. “Seeing” changes behavior to conform to Jesus. Do we see the way God sees?

SUNDAY, May 2

Scripture: Isaiah 55:1-2

Isaiah 55 gives us insight into the issue of “buying gold refined in the fire.” Isaiah 55:1-2 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.” There is only one thing which God gives every single one of us the exact same amount. If we’re going to come to God and buy from Him, without using money, then we have to understand the only commodity He has given, because He is no respecter of persons, is - **time**. How we spend our **time** in the spirit is the equivalent of spending money in the Supermarket. “Buying from God” is a product of faithfully using our faith on our flesh to spend our **time** on what pleases Him, and not continually on what pleases us. Are we buying from God? Are we using the spiritual exchange rate that God has given everyone of us, or are we walking in a more worldly realm?

MONDAY, May 3

Scripture: Matthew 24:45-47

Matthew 24:45-47 says, “‘Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.’ ” If we’re faithful in spending our **time** on God’s purpose, if we are willing to use our faith and overrule our flesh *then* we have a promise. The

promise is that the Lord will make us “...*ruler over all*...” His goods. “Ruler” means from that point on there is no hindrance with our gifting and calling to accomplish everything that God has appointed. He withholds nothing necessary to accomplish our purpose and plan in the earth. Only faithfully spending our **time** on what pleases God can buy that in the realm of the spirit. Using our faith on our flesh to govern our **time** has great reward, as we can purchase in the realm of the spirit everything necessary to fulfill our gifting and calling. Using our faith on our flesh creates faithfulness!

TUESDAY, May 4

Scripture: Matthew 22:3-8

In the parable of the Marriage Feast, the Lord called many. In verse 3, “...he sent out his servants to call those who were invited...” The problem was, they were not willing to come. Then in verse 4, “...he sent out other servants saying, “Tell those who are invited, ‘See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.’”” They made fun of it. When the king heard about it, it was judgment time. He sent his army and destruction came. It is obvious in this passage that every call has a preparational price and those who are worthy simply use their faith on their flesh to obey. Obeying God at inconvenient times proves character and commitment. We are forced to be flexible. They understood the issue of **time** and they understood the necessity of using their faith on their flesh to spend that **time** toward the purpose of accomplishing their gifting and calling. If we could catch that mindset, we could accomplish a lot in the kingdom.

WEDNESDAY, May 5

Scripture: Second Timothy 1:8-9

Verses 8-9 say, “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,....” Verses 8 and 9 show us that every call demands power, or an anointing, to perform. Gaining the power, or anointing, has a preparational price tag. That preparational price demands walking through a realm of adversity in order to acquire the full measure God has for us. He starts out by saying, “...share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus....” The grace to walk out the purpose, attain the empowering to bring the purpose to pass, demands faithfulness in adversity, which is “...sharing in suffering for the gospel....” The process cannot be diminished. It has to be understood. If we can see the preparational price as a part of developing the character of Christ, then we can understand why we face the measure of adversity we do. God has given grace for the process and He wants us to be encouraged knowing that His purpose will be fulfilled in our lives. We have to choose to pay the price understanding it is not a strange thing. This adversity comes to crucify flesh, not because of some hidden sin. It is a process that many generations have walked through prior to us and we have to choose to follow in their steps.

THURSDAY, May 6

Scripture: Luke 12:49

Jesus attempted to prepare us for this process, as He taught the twelve, when He said in Luke 12:49, “I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” Jesus was sent to baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. The question is “What is the fire?” Every call has a fire so that even James says, “Think it not strange when we fall into fiery trials.” We are pursuing God’s anointing to wind up the age, which is encased in a double measure of adversity. There is no way to run away from the process. We have to face the issues and walk the path. There is a prize to be attained. Jesus pioneered the path and our choice is how far will we follow.

FRIDAY, MAY 7

Scripture: Luke 12:41-48

In Luke 12:41-48 Jesus had just taught the parable of the expectant steward when He sets forth the parable of the faithful steward. In verses 42-44, Jesus 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.*” It is very obvious in this passage that the issue of “...*ruler over all that he has...*” promises the full measure of anointing which parallels various levels of power are the call necessary to bring each call and purpose to pass. “...*ruler over all...*” is when God says to us, “I withhold nothing of the anointing to bring to pass your gifting and calling. The pathway to “...*ruler over all...*” is a pathway of faithfulness. The core to that faithfulness is being willing to use our faith on our flesh to obey God. Verse 47 makes it really clear what will happen to those who were not willing to use their faith on their flesh. Verse 47 says, “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.” We have a choice and the choice we make as we walk out our call depends on where we end up and what happens when we face the Lord. The time to make that choice is at hand. We usually face those choices on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

SATURDAY, May 8

Scripture: Matthew 4:18-20

In Matthew 4:18-20 we’re told, “Now Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ Then they immediately left their nets and followed Him.” The very first test presented in the calling of the twelve is what do we do with our business? Jesus put a demand on people to honor their divine purpose by using their faith on their flesh and walking into a realm with which they were not familiar. They “...left their nets...” They left what was familiar. They left what they knew, using their faith on their flesh to walk with Jesus. Is it any different today? Has the pattern changed? I can’t find in Scripture where it has. **The bedrock core of walking with God is being willing on a monthly and weekly basis to use our faith on our flesh and obey Him. It is the essence of true discipleship.** We find it at the beginning of their call, and history records it at the end of their life. Jesus had to walk it and we’re no different. Nothing less is expected of the disciples than of the Teacher. The Teacher sets the pattern for the disciples.

SUNDAY, May 9

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY

Scripture: Matthew 14:28

In Matthew 14 we find the disciples in the middle of a storm on the lake, when Jesus appeared. They even cried out and the cry was a **krad-zo** cry. It was the cry of drowning men. This cry had the urgency of those about to die! “And they cried out for fear.” Peter said to Jesus, “Command me to come to You on the water.” **Kel-yoo-o** is an aorist active imperative, meaning a “command”. What does that say concerning Peter? It says he knew that if the Lord commanded him, he could do it. All he needed was a command and then he could walk on water. If he got the command, he knew the power was there to bring it to pass. He learned a little bit about Jesus in the years they spent together. Peter had faith in Jesus’ commands. That is a process of growth that all of us have to come into. But how do we get there? We start by using our faith on our flesh, and if we’re never willing to *start* we can never *grow* to that place. Peter got there. He had to – to fulfill his call.

MONDAY, May 10

Scripture: Matthew 16:21-24

In verses 21-24 Jesus begins to tell the twelve that He has to go to the cross. The problem with this revelation was it totally contradicted what the twelve believed about the end-times. They knew all the Kingdom promises for the victorious Messiah conquering and banishing their oppressors. They were going to rule and reign with Him as He

put the Romans down and raised Israel to victory. That was their eschatology. That is what they believed about the end-times. That is what they had been taught and understood about their Messiah. When Jesus taught this, it challenged everything they ever learned about end-time eschatology. This message demanded they use their faith on their flesh to receive, because of all the repercussions affecting them. Jesus rebuked Peter for expressing what the group believed. Jesus called him "...an offense, not minding the things of God, but the things of men." He continued saying, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." The translation was: "If you're going to walk with Me, you are going to have to use your faith on your flesh to obey God." Would we stay after such a rebuke? Anybody who got a rebuke like that in today's church would be out the door within thirty seconds never to be seen or heard from again. But Peter didn't quit. He used his faith on his flesh to **STAY**. Can we develop that? Are we willing to use our faith on our flesh and **STAY** where God assigns us until we achieve the same measure. The pattern has been set but the choice is ours.

TUESDAY, May 11

Scripture: John 6:60-67

In John 6:60-67 Jesus taught and declared something that is very hard to hear, being extremely offensive. He had just said they had to eat His flesh and drink His blood or they would have no part of Him in the kingdom. Then He asked, "Does this offend you?" Verses 64-66 say, "But there are some of you who do not believe' For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, 'Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.' From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more." Jesus knew who would betray him and who it was who would fall away. The issue ultimately was who would use their faith on their flesh to overcome the offense and keep walking? Many of them did not. A divine principle was established. If God leads His very first disciples through this kind of trial, what is the essence of what He is looking for from us? The answer to that question is obvious. We have to embrace the primary principle of discipleship, which is using our faith on our flesh to obey God. Those who didn't, could no longer walk with Jesus. **THEY WERE SEPARATED BY THE OFFENSE.** The others reached a point where they understood what He was talking about after the resurrection when He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures. The period in between the crucifixion and resurrection demanded they use their faith on their flesh to **STAY** where God assigned them. It is no different with us. We will face the same seasons. The question is, will we understand the principles and will we respond appropriately? For surely that time is upon us. Preparation time is here.

WEDNESDAY, May 12

Scripture: John 6:68-71

Verses 68-71 say, "Then Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered them, 'Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?' He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve." The disciples found themselves in an unbelievable place. Peter responded to the dilemma, "We know who You are and because of *WHO* You are, we choose to stay even when we don't understand what You say or what You do, even when it conflicts with everything we've known. Because we **KNOW WHO YOU ARE** we choose to use our faith on our flesh and stay in this place until we get understanding." Peter basically said, "We know God sent You and we're staying. We refuse to leave." The twelve are learning the foundation principle and they are using their faith on their flesh to overcome offenses and **STAY** where God assigns them so they can possess the anointing to fulfill their gifting and calling. Is it any wonder that Elijah put three hurdles in front of Elisha, telling him to "...stay while I move on." Qualifying for Elijah's anointing had a price. Each time Elisha had to use his faith on his flesh and overcome. Is it any different for us? It certainly appears not!

THURSDAY, May 13

Scripture: John 21:3

In John 21:1-3 we find Peter in a very very discouraging place. Peter says, “I’m going fishing.’ They said to him, ‘We are going with you.’ They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.” Peter and the others came to a place of such utter discouragement they were willing to completely and totally throw in the towel, because they just couldn’t take it any more. Their attitude was, “We’re out of here. We tried. We did everything we know to do and it hasn’t worked, so we are returning to something productive. We are resuming our previous occupation. We know we can earn a living that way.” What does God do with us when we reach a pinnacle of discouragement and decide to go regress? The good news is He doesn’t leave us. He understands. He knows the pressure and He has already paid the price for it. The man who was greatly used in the early book of Acts threw in the towel! We need to realize that. Peter quit after denying Jesus three times. God did not reject him because of failure or tremendous discouragement. That is the God we serve. He is faithful even when we are not. That is the God of the Bible. He is bigger than our mistakes. Think it not a strange thing to fall into such a place. The greater God’s purpose in using us, the greater the warfare and discouragement we face. It was true with Peter. It certainly seems to be true with many of us today.

FRIDAY, May 14

Scripture: John 21:4-7

What can we expect God to do for us when we reach a pinnacle point of discouragement? The disciples decided to go back to something they knew – fishing. But God was there to meet them and they caught nothing. When He faced them in the morning and said “Do you have any food?” They answered, “No.” “Have you caught anything?” “No.” Jesus said, in verse 6, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” They did and brought up a multitude of fish. Jesus met them in their discouragement to show them the direction they needed to go. That is what we need to understand about the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God! At the point in our preparation when we have gone as far as we can go and are ready to throw in the towel, God meets us there, shows us the futility of such a decision, and gently pulls us toward Him into the full measure of what He has. That is the FAITHFULNESS of the KING of kings and LORD of lords. He pulled Peter through. He will pull us through.

SATURDAY, May 15

Scripture: John 21:14-19

In verses 14 through 19 Jesus now goes to the heart of the spiritual pride that Peter demonstrated just prior to Gethsemane and the resultant denials. Jesus began to use His faith on Peter’s flesh and pointed out the full measure of deliverance needed. Peter got mad. He was embarrassed, he was frustrated and upset, and yet the Lord pulled Him through by saying, “Follow Me.” So once again, Peter had to use his faith on his flesh to **stay**. Why is Peter singled out for greater adversity and deeper dealing? Only one answer makes sense. Because Peter is going to be used dramatically in the early chapters of Acts, it takes a deeper preparational price. Or perhaps he just had more flesh to deal with. His dysfunction did not disqualify! At any rate, the preparation equaled the challenge and depth of the call. Jesus was faithful to each of the twelve. That is the chief thing we have to learn about this process. Regardless of how difficult it is, God is FAITHFUL. We should ask ourselves, what can we expect if we use our faith on our flesh to obey Him?

SUNDAY, May 16

Scripture: Acts 3:6

Did Jesus mean what He promised when He said if we were faithful He would make us “...*ruler over all*...” His goods? Acts 3:6 says, “Then Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.’” Did God make Peter ruler over all His anointing? Did He give him the full measure of anointing necessary to build a church in a hostile environment? Did God give Peter an anointing which could not be resisted? If we identify the pattern and understand it, it helps us pay the price and walk it through.

MONDAY, May 17

Scripture: Acts 5:14-16

In Acts 5:14-16 we are told, “And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.” Did God give Peter an anointing? Did He make him “...~~ruler over all~~...” His goods in the healing arena? If just the shadow of Peter passing by would heal some, we would have to say that is pretty close to being ruler over all His goods. So what is the fruit of using our faith on our flesh to obey God, enduring reproof, failure, rebuke, correction, and humiliation? Peter helped build an awesome church. Did it pay off? It certainly did and, I believe, since God is no respecter of persons, it must pay off for us!

TUESDAY, May 18

Scripture: Acts 7:57-60

Stephen obeyed the Holy Spirit and spoke all he heard, to his own hurt. He fulfilled the promise Jesus made to the twelve in Matthew 10:18-20, ““And you will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.”” Stephen is a perfect example. Did he have to use his faith on his flesh to obey God, knowing that an enraged mob would probably stone him? In one final act of using his faith on his flesh, after being pummeled with stones, he cries out, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” When we talk about using our faith on our flesh to obey God, we have examples at every end of the spectrum. It all depends on the magnitude to which we are called. Is it possible to please God without using our faith on our flesh to obey Him? I don’t think so. Isn’t it time we embrace the very foundation of Christianity? If we “say” we belong to Jesus, then there is one way we demonstrate it. We use our faith on our flesh to obey Him – even when it is *not* convenient and sometimes when it is going to cost us our life.

WEDNESDAY, May 19

Scripture: Acts 8:1-3

In Acts 8-3, we find a man using his faith to advance his stature at other’s expense. Not only did he consent to the death of Stephen, but he orchestrated a great persecution against the church. Verse 3 says, “As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.” Saul was using his faith to destroy the church in every way that he could. I wonder if Stephen was an unusual and unforgettable testimony before his eyes? People have a choice. Paul demonstrated that choice. We can use our faith to “flesh out” or we can use it to “overcome” and obey God. The choice is ours.

THURSDAY, May 20

Scripture: Galatians 1:13-14

In Galatians 1 we get a glimpse of one of the things that had to be the most lamentable in the life of Paul. He said it this way, in verses 13 and 14, “For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.” It is obvious what Paul used his faith for. He used his faith to advance in Judaism by torturing, imprisoning and brutalizing innocent people. What can we say about Paul in this condition? It is obvious that he is using his faith to advance beyond his contemporaries by persecuting the church. Now that deserves a unique judgment. God customized his judgment – he became a leader of those he persecuted. Paul discovered the hard way, the reality of “using your faith on your flesh to obey God”. The path was hard, but the fruit eternal!

FRIDAY, May 21

Scripture: Galatians 1:15-17

Verses 15-17 declare, “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.” Isn’t it interesting that immediately upon Paul’s being separated from his former life, courtesy of a divine intervention and knocking him off of his donkey, he begins to use his faith on his flesh. He did “...not immediately confer with flesh and blood,...” He used his faith on his flesh not to go up to Jerusalem. He used his faith on his flesh to go to Arabia and he was there an extended season, and then uses his faith on his flesh to return again to Damascus. Only after returning with a number of years in between, does Paul go up to Jerusalem. Paul’s introduction to Kingdom life reflects a message that he will take to the entire church. This word shines through all of his Epistles. Faith in God was given as a gift and must be demonstrated by how we use it. What we accrue in eternity is determined by the measure of faith we apply to our flesh - obeying God. Stephen’s reward was great. He used his faith, to the ultimate, on his flesh to obey God. To what degree are we using our faith on our flesh? Can we use it to turn off the TV set and spend **time** with the Lord? Can we use it to speak up when the Lord’s name is being blasphemed? Are we using our faith on our flesh in any significant way? Can we ask, “Father, what should we do?”

SATURDAY, May 22

Scripture: Acts 9:3-6

In Acts 9:3-6 we are given Paul’s encounter with the Lord that changes his life. As he journeys to Damascus, suddenly a light shines around him from heaven. He falls to the ground and hears a voice, “‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’” He enquires, “‘Who’s speaking?’” Again the voice comes, “‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’” One more time he says, “‘What should I do?’” The answer comes, “‘Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’” How would we feel in this situation? And what would we do? Almost all of our choices have been taken away. We’ve been blinded. We can’t see. We might not even be able to find the donkey. Fortunately he had people with him and they were able to help. Suddenly his physical condition matches his spiritual condition. Do we ever have times when our physical condition matches our spiritual condition? Paul did and perhaps that was the beginning of learning the most important lesson he would convey to the church. His life message concerning following Jesus was bound in the price we have to be willing to endure to walk out our calling. Paul was learning his life’s message.

SUNDAY, May 23

Scripture: Acts 9:10-16

Verses 10-16 records God dealing with Ananias to go pray for Paul so he can regain his vision. But Ananias is reluctant. He has heard about Paul’s reputation and he is afraid to go. The Lord says to him in verses 15 and 16, “‘Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.’” As soon as Ananias discovered that Paul was going to preach the gospel at a very high cost, he was willing to use *his* faith on his flesh and obey God. He didn’t want to. There were many reasons why Ananias objects to his assignment by telling God all the harm Paul has done to the saints in Jerusalem. Ananias continues with, “‘...he has authority from the chief priests to bind everybody who calls on Your name’” – and that includes “me.” God said, “No, go anyway.” Isn’t it interesting how God sends us to do things for which we strenuously object. Ananias had good reasons not to go. God said, “Go anyway.” The God we serve is willing to spend our life for His cause. He proved it in Acts 7 with Stephen. He proves it throughout scripture. Jesus lived it in front of us. Are we going to embrace the primary essence of being a believer? It is not complex. It is not difficult. It doesn’t take a Dr of Divinity Degree to figure it out. It doesn’t even take a Masters of Theology. No college is required. You don’t even have to have a High School Diploma. The simplest of God’s creation can understand it. **We demonstrate we love God when we use our faith on our flesh to obey Him. No more. No less.** It

was required of Ananias, Stephen, Paul, Moses Isaiah, Jeremiah, David, Samuel and all the prophets. It is required. It is the way of the cross. How are we doing? Do we avoid the cross or do we embrace it. Do we avoid using our faith on our flesh or do we embrace it? Are we serving God or are we serving ourselves? Who occupies the throne of our life? If God does, we know where to apply our faith!

MONDAY, May 24

Scripture: Acts 9:17-23

Paul does such a good job, after receiving the Holy Spirit and choosing to use his faith on his flesh, that he becomes fairly well known, earning a godly reputation. His reputation of being a powerful proponent of Jesus also earns him death threats. Paul is doing so well using his faith on his flesh that now he has people plotting to kill him. How far do we have to go with this “using our faith on our flesh” thing? Do we have to go as far as Stephen or Paul? Do we have to go as far as Jesus? Its interesting to note one of the things Jesus told the twelve, when He first sent them out. He said, in verses 24 and 25 of Matthew 10, ““A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!”” How far do we have to go using our faith on our flesh? There is only one yardstick – His name is JESUS. Within our gifting and calling, God has set the boundaries of our contribution to the Kingdom. The magnitude of the call determines the magnitude of the crucifixion .

TUESDAY, May 25

Scripture: Acts 9:24-26

We’re told in verses 24-26 that, “...their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket. And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple.” Perhaps we expect when we use our faith on our flesh to be rejected by the world, but what hurts the most is not the persecution of the world, but the rejection of the church. When the church doesn’t like the message they discredit the messenger, to placate their conscience for rejecting the message. One thing for sure, they have very strong opinions and they are usually unwilling to let God alter them. So when we talk about using our faith on our flesh to obey God, one of the biggest hurdles comes from our Christian brothers and sisters with their attitudes about and judgments against. Are we willing to use our faith on our flesh to stand up to the onslaught that comes from believers? Are we prepared for that crucifixion? If we’re not – we better be, because **IT COMES!**

WEDNESDAY, May 26

Scripture: Acts 14:19-20

In Acts 14:19-20 we are told, “Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.” What would be your response if you had been stoned to death in a city, raised up through prayer, and God says “Go right back into the city where you were stoned!”? Would you do it? How much faith would you have to use on your flesh to obey? Would the memory of being stoned be a bit hard to overcome? When Paul preached using your faith on your flesh, he had lived it. He lived it like Stephen, and like Jesus. Should we be preparing a generation to use their faith on their flesh and live it like the Early Church? Should we be doing that? If we don’t prepare a generation to use their faith on their flesh to the ultimate, will our reward in eternity be diminished because we did not fulfill our call? How can we impart a heart to use our faith on our flesh to obey God even unto death – if we haven’t made some of those decisions ourselves? Can I lead somebody into a place I have never been? Today’s generation would answer, of course, all things are possible with Map Quest. Does Map Quest have a spiritual counterpart?

THURSDAY, May 27

Scripture: Acts 21:10-14

In Acts 21:10-14 we see Paul in Tyre on his way to Jerusalem. Suddenly a prophet named Agabus comes down from Judea, takes Paul's belt binds his hands and his feet and says, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" Paul faces a life-changing decision. "Am I going to use my faith on my flesh and go to Jerusalem where I know I am headed for prison? What am I going to do?" What do we do when life presents us with hard choices? How much of the cross are we willing to embrace? Is he willing to face death to finish his race? The answer, of course, is in verse 13 where he says, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." What are we willing to use our faith on our flesh to die for? Perhaps, in this season, that is a question every believe *must* answer.

FRIDAY, May 28

Scripture: Acts 27:19-25

In Acts 27:19-25 Paul finds himself in the middle of a very large perfect storm. They do everything. They throw out the cargo. They get rid of the sails. Suddenly, in verse 20, "...all hope that they would be saved was finally given up." Paul stands up in the middle of them and says, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss. And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God of whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'" Paul uses his faith on his flesh to stand up and **decree** exactly what the angel said, and exactly what the angel said came to pass! Did Paul get to be "*...ruler over all...*" God's anointing for his gifting and calling. I think we would have to say "yes" he did. The question is, how did he get there? The answer has to be, the same way Peter got there, the same way Stephen got there, and the same way Ananias, who prayed for Paul, got there. He used his faith on his flesh and God made him ruler over all His goods. Will God give us that level of anointing if we are consistently unwilling to use our faith on our flesh just to obey Him? I don't think so. We know, from what we're given in the Word, how these men walked and we know what God did for them as a result. The question now is, how are we going to walk? The choice is ours.

SATURDAY, May 29

Scripture: Philippians 1:21-26

In Philippians 1:21-26, Paul finds himself in a Phillipian jail, headed for judgment and he is having this inner struggle as to whether or not he should live or submit to the potential judgment he is about to face. In verse 22 he says, "But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell." Looking in the natural we would say, "Wait a minute. This is not *your* choice at all. You are the prisoner. You're in jail. The Roman Emperor has your fate in his hand. All he has to do is speak a word and you're headless. You're toast." But that is not the way Paul saw it. Why did Paul see it differently. I submit there is only one reason Paul saw it differently. Jesus made him "*...ruler over all...*" His goods. This is the attitude, the words and the actions of a man who has used his faith on his flesh and obtained the prize, the full measure of God's anointing to fulfill his gifting and calling. That is why we find in verses 23-25 this reasoning, "For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith..." Paul said, "The decision on whether I live or die does not belong to the Roman Emperor. It belongs to God. And because He has made me ruler over all His goods, I get to choose. And I'm going to choose what God wants. And it looks like He wants me to stick around with you for awhile. I'd really rather go. It is the better deal." Will Jesus make us ruler over all His goods? If we use our faith on our flesh, He will. The only boundaries are predetermined by our gifting and calling. Paul arrived. The pathway became obvious. If we use our faith on our flesh, we will arrive also.

SUNDAY, May 30

Scripture: Second Corinthians 10:10-11

Second Corinthians 10:10 and 11 says, “‘For his letters,’ they say, ‘are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible. Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such we will also be in deed when we are present.’” What does that sound like? Does that sound like a man who has been made ruler over all God’s goods? Does that sound like a man who can decree blindness and it falls on a person? It is the very man! Why did God make him ruler over all His goods, within the boundaries of his gifting and calling? Because it was necessary to bring to pass the purpose for his life. We have been promised a former and a latter rain, a double anointing to wind up the age. Should we not expect that when God makes us ruler over all His goods, what we do to harvest nations will eclipse what we read in the book of Acts? If that promise of the double anointing is true, we should definitely eclipse what is recorded in Acts! The question is, are we willing to pay the price to qualify? Paul did. And so did many others in the New Testament. The question is - will we?

MONDAY, May 31

HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY

Scripture: Acts 13:9-11

Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, finds himself nose-to-nose with somebody full of another spirit. Now this is a picture of what we will encounter in the last days. People are more and more going to be full of the God they have chosen to worship. Will we be ready when the confrontation comes? It is inevitable, you know. It is coming! Increasingly it is coming! Verses 9 and 10 say, “Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, ‘O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?’” Verse 11 tells, “‘And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time.’” And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand.” Paul was made “...*ruler over all*...” His goods. We have to raise up a generation who will be ruler over all His goods, because they are promised a double anointing, the former and the latter rain in the same season! We know the path. It is very clear and simple. We have to teach a generation to use their faith on their flesh to obey God – even if that means unto death. Can we teach that? Are we willing to go there? How can we teach it if we are not willing to go ourselves? God has an awesome and a mighty work to wind up the age. He is recruiting. The price is being paid every single day with the choices we make.

USE YOUR FAITH ON YOUR FLESH AND REJOICE IN ETERNITY.

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ITINERARY

Al Houghton

May 2	Seattle Revival Center 12636 SE 89 th Place, New Castle, WA	Phone: (425)228-0810 Services: 10AM & 6PM
May 14-16	New Wine Christian Center 689 Bee Street, Placerville, CA	Phone: (530)622-8054 Services: 14 th 7PM 15 th 10AM 16 th 9:30AM & 6PM
May 23-24	City Of Refuge Seminole Hwy, Andrews, TX	Phone: (915)523-7773 Services: 23 rd 10:30AM & 6PM 24 th 7PM
May 25	Trinity Fellowship Church 1200 S Sumnar Street, Amarillo, TX	Phone: (806)375-2339 Service: 7PM