

Erlo Stegen:

Luke 18:8b

"Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

This is a strange question Jesus asked His disciples. As we look around today we see so many people coming to faith in Jesus, and there are so many thousands of congregations and millions of believers all over the world. Why does Jesus ask such a strange question?

Jesus is clearly referring to a very specific faith, a very precious faith.

Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit refers to faith which is more precious than purified gold (1Pet 1:7). Today we have to consider ourselves whether we have this type of faith. Is the quality of my faith worth more than gold purified in the fire?

Let's look at this text in context. Jesus told the story of an unjust judge, who didn't fear God nor regarded any man. A certain woman came to him one day and asked him to grant her justice against someone who wronged her, but he ignored her. However she didn't give up, but persevered. Eventually this judge, who didn't fear God nor cared for people (who would easily condemn someone to death without feeling a thing), got tired of her continual persistence and decided to do justice to her, just so that she will stop being a nuisance to him. Jesus then compared her persistence to the way we must persevere in prayer. For God is just and will speedily grant our request, though it sometimes seems as if He delays to test our faith.

So Jesus speaks of this precious faith, which doesn't come to an end when tested.

The Syro-Phoenician woman who came to Jesus and asked Him to heal her daughter, had this precious faith. Jesus didn't take notice of her, and His disciples wanted Him to send her away. Eventually when Jesus did speak to her, He told her that He wasn't sent for her, but for the children of Israel, and that He could not take the children's bread and give it to the dogs, referring to her. However she wasn't offended but persevered and asked the Lord Jesus to at least give her the crumbs that fall off the table. Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour. (Matthew 15:21-28)

Someone who has this precious faith cannot be stopped or offended, whether it be hardship, persecution or discrimination.

James speaks of another type of faith as well - the faith of the devils. Such people fail when the smallest temptation arises and then they seek for excuses to hide their failure and sin. So-called Christians who cannot get along with their fellow brothers or sisters because they haven't been greeted properly or because they feel they've been treated unjustly have this faith of the devils. Jesus is not looking for this type of worth-for-nothing faith when He returns.

If you do not have this precious faith to which Jesus referred you are doomed and damned to hell. This faith makes the difference. This is also the faith with which we believe on the Lord Jesus and are saved, as we read in John 1:12, Acts 16:30-31 and many other places. It doesn't help to simply know about this faith. You must experience it for yourself, otherwise it is worth nothing.

If you know this faith, you will rather die than part with it. You will rather die than sin.

Each one must answer this question today in honesty before God, does Jesus find this faith in me?