

“Make It Plain” Newsletter



"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

~Hebrews 11:1

Welcome!

Welcome to our Living Word Church Newsletter entitled "Make It Plain". The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge and insight for God's people. It also promotes spiritual growth by addressing a wide variety of Christian topics. We hope and pray that this newsletter will bless you spiritually.

Faith...An Act of Obedience

What is faith?

Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The Webster dictionary defines faith as "a firm belief in something for which there is no proof; complete trust." Faith came about because God knew that alone we could not fulfill the laws that He set, therefore we are to have faith that Jesus' sacrifice is enough to give us the fellowship with God and have faith in God that He still loves us.

How does faith grow?

Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." When we hear the word of God, we receive instruction. We then place God's standard as the guiding principle of our lives. Once we have God's standard as our guiding principle, trials come to test the strength of your faith. Faith is a spiritual muscle; in the natural, your muscles grow with exercise. When we workout our mortal bodies, we strengthen our muscles by first eliminating our weak muscles, once the weakened muscles are strengthened, then we strengthen the stronger muscles. Similarly, in the spiritual, your faith grows when it is exercised; God exercises our faith through trials, tests and tribulations. Similar to our bodies, our faith cannot grow unless it is exercised.

How is faith an act of obedience?

Because we have faith that God is who He is, we must obey the laws and guidelines that He has placed before us. When tests and trials come, God's desire is for us to continually obey His standards and depend on Him to see us through situations. Essentially, obedience produces faith. That is why it is paramount that we have a loyal faith, which is to follow what God has said and is saying no matter the situation or consequence. A true Christian believes in God beyond all their fears and above everything else. Romans 3:4 says, "...let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." Our faith is tested to prove its strength. 1 Corinthians 15:58 says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." True obedience is evident when we trust God during our trials because we love Him.

We have to be sensitive to God's word and voice. Once we hear from God, we must do what He said. Delaying slightly in doing what God orders shows disobedience, a lack of faith, a lack of trust and disloyalty. Notice that the word obedience is present tense not past, nor future, meaning that we must do it now. If we believe in the Lord for eternal life, we must be quick to do the Lord's bidding.



Upcoming special events for Living Word

- Oct 30th – Women in Red Sunday Service where Elect Lady Louise Swinson will deliver the message
- Nov. 20th – Youth Day Service
- Dec 17th – LW 2nd Annual Spiritual Tea—Please see Elect Lady Swinson for more information
- Dec 25th – Christmas Sunday Morning Service: Come celebrate the birth of Jesus in the household of faith

Scripture References: Hebrews 11:1, Romans 10:17, Romans 3:4, 1 Corinthians 15:58

The Danger of Compromise

"When God gives us instructions, He desires that we FOLLOW THEM COMPLETELY WITHOUT DEVIATION."



"We must remember that we cannot afford to compromise God's standard because COMPROMISE LEADS TO SIN and 'the wages of sin is death...'"

As a Christian in today's society, there is a grave danger in compromising our standards. If we really examine the times that we fall short of God's standard, there was a compromise somewhere in the process. We can even see compromise leading to sin in many of the events in the Bible. For example, the biblical account of King Saul's failure to obey God. In I Samuel 15, Samuel anointed Saul King over Israel. One of King Saul's first assignments was to destroy the City of Amalek and all of its inhabitants. King Saul compromised God's plan due to the pressure of the people, in doing so, he violated the instructions from God and he made the Lord regret naming him king.

As we see in the story, Saul lost control of the kingdom of Israel because he compromised with his people instead of following God's instructions. Are there areas in your life where you compromise your Godly standards in efforts to appease people? Do we always do exactly what God told us to do? Saul listened to his people and allowed King Agag and some of the best of the sheep, oxen and fattening to live instead of following God's instructions and killing every of the Amalekites. When God gives us instructions, He desires that we FOLLOW THEM COMPLETELY WITHOUT DEVIATION.

The Bible gives us a standard for all areas of our lives. We as believers must learn to read the word of God with the intent to obey instead of trying to bend God's word to fit our agendas or desires. We CANNOT compromise God's standards for

ourselves or for others because it destroys our witness. For example, the Bible clearly states that pre-marital sex is a sin. Therefore, as Christians, we should not consent to or condone pre-marital sex. Accordingly, we cannot approve worldly standards by providing counter-pregnancy options to the people, we must uphold God's standard and give them the truth, which is God's word. If we did contrary, we would be consenting to pre-marital sex and ultimately destroying our witness.

Our society also gives many examples of how a little compromise has led to the extreme becoming the norm. In society, homosexuality is now normal or accepted. At one point, homosexuality was frowned upon, even considered a mental disorder. However, society compromised its standards, and allowed homosexuals to have the same rights and privileges as heterosexual couples. Compromise for the homosexual community has even crept into the church. We now have homosexual members, pastors and even entire churches. Please understand that I am not bashing a group of people, because the Bible commands us to love our brothers and sisters as we love ourselves. But, we are told that homosexuality is an abomination in the sight of God (Lev. 18:22). God does not hate homosexual people, but He hates the act of homosexuality. We must remember that we cannot afford to compromise God's standard because COMPROMISE LEADS TO SIN and "the wages of sin is death..."

Scripture references: Leviticus 18:22, I Samuel 15, Romans 6:23



**Living Word Church of Open Heart's
Foundational Scripture:**

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

~ James 1:22

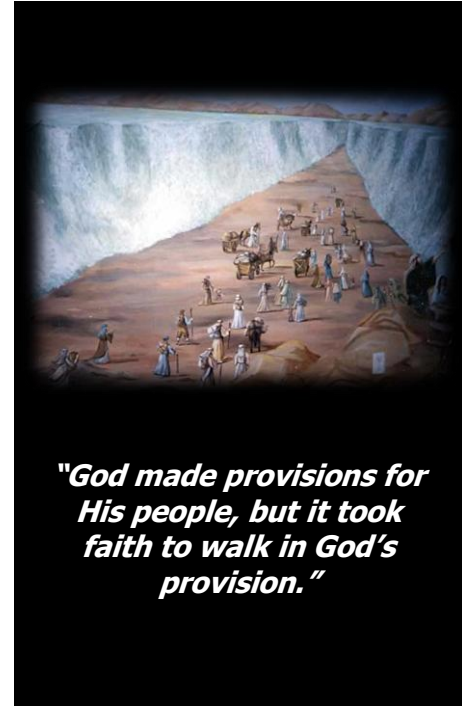


Faith to Walk in God's Provisions

When we look throughout the Bible, we see the men and women of God that were faced with great challenges, but overcame with God's help. These biblical events help us understand that God truly provides for His people. Those events also let us know that the people of God in the biblical times had faith to walk in God's provisions.

When we speak of God's provisions, we are talking about the act or process of God providing or preparing for His people. As previously stated, the Bible tells us of many events when God made provisions for His people. One event in the Bible that comes to mind is the parting of the Red Sea by Moses, which is located in Exodus 14:1-31.

The Children of Israel had just fled from Pharaoh's captivity and were faced with trials and challenges on every side. They were chased by Pharaoh's army, mountains on both sides of them and before them was the Red Sea. These trials showed us something that still holds true, even today. Many times we face situations in our lives in which the only way out is for God to supernaturally intervene. God supernaturally intervened in this situation by telling Moses to stretch forth his rod and the Red Sea parted. God made provisions for His people, but it took faith to walk in God's provision. Imagine seeing a man stretch forth a rod and then watching a sea part? Imagine seeing the land under a sea be as dry as the pavement that you walk on daily? Imagine how high the waves were on both sides? All of these things probably ran through their minds as they began walking through the Red Sea. The Children of Israel showed tremendous faith in God's provisions. God provided them a way to escape captivity and a safe crossing through a treacherous situation.



Another biblical event where God's people showed faith in His provisions was David slaying Goliath, which is located in I Samuel 17:1-58. David, God's anointed one, was faced against a member of the Philistine Army. Goliath was described as a giant in I Samuel 17:4-7, *"And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him."*

This biblical account was very descriptive of Goliath, in our measurement, six cubits is the equivalent of 10 foot 6 inches. Goliath frightened the Israelites, challenging them in combat. All of the Israelites were afraid except David. Once David decided to take on Goliath, King Saul wanted David to use a specially made armor and sword, but David did not use those weapons. David only equipped himself with a sling-shot and 5 smooth stones. David eventually slewed Goliath and became king.

David, God's anointed one, was faced with a great challenge. Although many people thought he was outmatched, God gave David exactly what he needed to defeat Goliath. It took faith for David to trust that he was adequately prepared to face a giant. God provided David with the ability to swing the sling shot with such precision. David had to trust in God's provisions.

Although God does not part the Red Sea or help us defeat physical giants now, God is yet providing and preparing. The problem is that we don't trust God as much as we need to. God's provisions come in many forms; the money we get from our secular jobs, help from others, wise counsel, God teaching us how to be wise stewards over our resources, etc... are all ways in which God provides for His people. Nevertheless, because we desire to live in the overflow, we tend to show distrust to God and hoard what doesn't belong to us. Psalm 24:1 says, *"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."* Because the earth and everything in the earth belongs to God, we should act accordingly and trust that God will provide what we need. God made us a promise in Philippians 4:19, *"But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*

Scripture References: Exodus 14:1-3; I Samuel 17:1-58; Psalms 24:1; Philippians 4:19



***"The earth is the LORD'S,
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~ Psalms 24:1

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**"We Do What Is
Right Because It Is
Right."**



Make It Plain Practical Tips: How to stay on Budget?

The holidays are quickly approaching and this is the season that we are bombarded with advertisements that cause us to want to spend, spend, spend. However, we have to be wise stewards over our finances and the resources that God has given to us. To be a wise financial steward, we have to be able to manage our money according to how God wants us to manage our money. We don't want to miss an opportunity for God to meet our needs through the resources that He gives because we have used them to satisfy our wants. Therefore, below are a few practical tips that can help us stay on budget during the holiday seasons so that we can remain wise stewards over our finances.

1. Renew your mind
 - ❖ We do not have to have the newest gadget or the latest purse. Use what you have and make it last.
2. Avoid impulse spending
 - ❖ Don't allow your mind to convince you that you need something that you really do not need.
3. Plan your errands
 - ❖ Try to run errands that are near each other on the same day to help save transportation costs.
4. Take a list and stick to the list
 - ❖ It is best to take a list when going shopping for groceries or clothes. This will help to eliminate impulse spending if we buy only what is on the list.
5. Give up something
 - ❖ There is always something (*at least one thing*), that we spend money on, that we can go without. Give it up and see how much can be saved.
6. Track ALL of your expenses
 - ❖ Writing down how much money is spent daily will help us to see where our money is going and how we can use our finances more efficiently.
7. Don't be wasteful
 - ❖ We have to realize that ALL of our natural resources are dedicated to the Lord for His use, for His direction and for His glory.
 - ❖ Luke 16:11 says, "*If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon [money], who will commit to your trust the true riches?*"
 - ❖ If we manage God's resources according to His direction, He will continue to entrust us with even more.



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