

Templates of Truth with Rick Smith
Audio Script – March 12, 2009

A popular saying declares, “God helps those who help themselves.” While there may be a degree of truth to that adage, applying that strategy to every situation in life may in fact be a violation of our faith. In today’s Templates of Truth, we’ll see that God wants us to leave some things to Him.

According to Isaiah 7, the Arameans were positioned to wage war against Jerusalem. When King Ahaz and the people heard the report, the Scripture says they *shook as the trees of the forest shake with the wind* (7:2). God told Isaiah to take this message to Ahaz: *be calm, have no fear and do not be fainthearted* (7:4). Even though a grave threat was looming, God promised, *it shall not...come to pass* (7:7). God had declared the outcome, and all it required of Ahaz and the people was simple faith: *if you will not believe, you surely shall not last* (7:9). God never calls on us to live life by fear. He always demands that we live by faith and trust in Him.

What is faith? The writer of Hebrews answer that question with a classic definition – *faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen* (Hebrews 11:1). Immediately we can see that faith demands that we believe in that which has not yet come to pass, but is promised by God. This is the way we as believers must live, for *without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and the He is a rewarder of those who seek Him* (Hebrews 11:6). It’s not just difficult, it is *impossible* to please God if you are living according to anything other than faith. It is by faith that we *gain approval* with God (Hebrews 11:2). In fact, Paul simply declares – *whatever is not from faith is sin* (Romans 14:23).

Like Ahaz, we often look at the challenging circumstances in our life and allow them to paralyze us in fear and doubt, gloom and doom, despondency and despair. We feel overwhelmed and helpless to do anything to change our situation, and concede defeat before we ever consider even the possibility of victory. God reminds us: *Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?* (Jeremiah 32:27). Jesus affirmed the obvious answer – *with God all things are possible* (Matthew 19:26). Not just that, *but nothing will be impossible for God* (Luke 1:37). Faith and belief are the keys through prayer that unlock this supernatural power of God in our lives. Jesus said, *all things are possible to him who believes* (Mark 9:23). He also taught, *all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive* (Matthew 21:22). The things we ask for must obviously coincide with His will for our life and meet the standard and promises of His Word.

Where do we get faith? The Bible teaches that we gain our faith from two sources. First of all, the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit equips us with faith, for it is one of the *fruits of the Spirit* that Paul identifies in Galatians 5:22. So, we obtain the ability to have faith when we are saved and the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us. But our faith is strengthened into a more powerful resource in our life in yet another way – *faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God* (Romans 10:17). If you are living your life without a daily time of study and meditation in God’s Word, you cannot be living by faith. You are most likely living by fear and doubt, completely tossed and driven by every insecurity and threat. Stress, dissatisfaction,

bitterness and resentment characterize your life more than joy, peace and contentment. Faith is the divine quality that makes the difference. Without it, your life cannot be and is not pleasing to God. Without it, you are living in sin. Why? Because fear says, “God, you are not big enough or powerful enough to handle things in my life.” Faith says, “God, your grace is sufficient, and no matter what, I will be OK, because You promised to always take care of me.” How are you living today? By faith, or by fear?

That’s today’s Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in Christ Jesus.

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