

When An Unwavering Faith Wavers (Part 2—Elijah)

Last week, we considered doubt as an obstacle to the unwavering faith of Abraham. Even for this great man of faith, the questions and fears that doubt produced caused him to waver in His trust in the promises of God. In much the same way, doubt in God's care, His help, or His promises can chip away at our faith and cause it to waver. But doubt is not the only danger that threatens to cause an unwavering faith to waver.

Just as doubt was the shortcoming of Abraham, Elijah's faith was surely a victim of **discouragement**. In 1 Kings chapter 18, we find a defiant Elijah on Mount Carmel fearlessly facing 450 prophets of Baal. With an unwavering faith in the power and sovereignty of Jehovah, Elijah stood courageously against this army of false prophets and, with a mighty display of God's power from on high, defeated them and then executed them. The faith and courage displayed by Elijah in this event is remarkable, but in the very next chapter we see this great man of faith running for his life from the evil queen, Jezebel. Eventually, Elijah is found in a cave hiding from his enemies and lamenting his circumstances. Despite his victory on Mount Carmel and all that God has done for and through him, Elijah finds himself terribly discouraged because of his enemies. He has seemingly thrown in the towel and quit working for God. Discouragement has caused his faith to fail.

Like Elijah, we can occasionally find ourselves discouraged and wanting to give up. Discouragement can deliver a devastating blow to even the strongest faith. If you find yourself struggling with your faith because of discouragement, it might be helpful to pay attention to what God tells Elijah to do. First, you have to get out of the cave. Isolating yourself and hiding from your responsibilities is not doing you or anyone else any good. Next, God reminded Elijah that he was not alone. There were many others who could stand beside him to encourage him. Finally, he told Elijah to get busy. Nothing is as effective in overcoming discouragement as busying yourself with tasks that are encouraging, fulfilling, and purposeful. Yes, discouragement can cause even the most unwavering of faiths to waver, but with God's help, we can overcome discouragement and be strengthened in our faith once again.

Rusty

To Our Guests

We are so pleased and honored that you have chosen to visit with us today! Chase Park is a wonderful Christian family, devoted to serving God through our lives and work. We are excited to share our love for Christ with others and we are thankful to have the opportunity to meet you and to have you join us for worship.

As we worship together today, our desire is to worship God according to the New Testament pattern and in a way that is pleasing and acceptable to Him. It is also our prayer that our time together is uplifting to those who are here including you, our guest. If you have any questions about anything that you see or hear today, please ask us. We would love to speak with you about those things and help you in any way that we can.



Chase Park Church of Christ

Ministers

Rusty Hills Pulpit

Andrew Lamica..... Youth Minister

Elders

John Denney

Curtis Hill

Sam Kachelman

Dennis Lawson

Greg Parker

Barry Todd

Missionaries

Jaime Mendoza Chalco, Mexico

Liborio Encarnacion. Ecatepec, Mexico

Slava Savkovsky Ukraine

Barton Kizer..... Peru

Dewayne Tapscott..... Southwest

Lamications—*Andrew Lamica*

This past Tuesday, we celebrated Independence Day. I hope you had a wonderful 4th and were able to spend time with those you love. Americans celebrate July 4th because on that date in 1776 the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress and America was born.

July 4th is often marked by family cookouts, vacations, or spending time with friends. Americans use the day to reflect back on the sacrifices that have been made up to this point in order to maintain the precious freedoms that we enjoy. These freedoms have not come without a great cost. Many men and women have given their lives for the cause of liberty, and I am extremely grateful for their service. Our military men and women do a great service for those

unable to do it themselves.

As great as our freedoms as American citizens are, there is an even greater freedom to be found. Jesus Christ, because of His willingness to be the sacrificial Lamb of God bought our freedom from sin and death. Paul reminds us of such freedoms in Galatians 5:1, *"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."* Though we have freedom from sin and death, we have to make a choice. As Paul warned the church in Galatia, Christ bought our freedom, we ought to be careful to not be fooled into accepting the yoke of slavery to sin once again.

It is easy to be fooled as to what true freedom is. Satan is very skilled at tricking people into believing that the bondage he offers is true

freedom, but it is not. While it might seem like choosing the way of the world is the path to true freedom, the end of such decision is becoming ensnared into sin.

True freedom, by willingly taking on the yoke of Christ, will lead to eternal life. *"But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit that you get leads to sanctification, and its end, eternal life."*

Christians, may we never mistake Satan's illusions of "freedom" for the true freedom which is found in Jesus Christ. Jesus wants you to do nothing more than live for Him so that when our life on this earth is over we can live with Him in eternity. That is true freedom. Do you desire to live free today?

Increasing Opportunities To Share The Gospel

As we continue our series from Mark Copeland, the importance of sharing the gospel of Christ with those who are lost cannot be over-emphasized. Jesus wants everyone to hear the good news of salvation (Mk. 16:15-16), and has provided the gospel as God's power to save all who believe it (Rom. 1:16-17).

But what is the most effective way to reach people today? The Institute For American Church Growth asked over 10,000 people this question: **"What was responsible for your coming to Christ and this church?"** Their replies were:

I had a special need - 3%

I just walked in - 3%

I liked the minister - 6%

I visited there - 1%

I liked the Bible classes - 5%

I attended a gospel meeting - 0.5%

I liked the programs - 3%

A friend or relative invited me - 79%

It seems to justify churches' concern to pick their preachers and youth ministers carefully and to give special regard to the quality of their Bible classes. The obvious point of the survey is this: **IF CHURCHES ARE TO GROW, IT WILL BE THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS!** The other congregational efforts are worthwhile, however, those individual members can reach people with whom we might otherwise never come in contact. But the fact remains: **THE GREATEST POTENTIAL LIES WITH THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE SOME CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL CONGREGATION.**

Each of us have daily contact with tons of people who need the gospel of Christ. In addition to reaching people "en masse" (via television, radio, mail), we need to utilize the contacts made through members. Unfortunately, when a special effort is being made to reach out to the masses, the tendency in most congregations is to neglect the opportunities to follow up contacts made through the members.

Two fundamental things are needed to utilize the contacts made through individual members of the congregation: First, **CONCERN** for the lost (Matt. 9:36-38; Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1); second, **KNOWLEDGE OF HOW** we can increase our opportunities to share the gospel with those with whom we frequently come into contact.

Assuming that the concern is there, we will share suggestions with accompanying "action steps" in next week's article on **HOW** anyone who is a Christian can increase opportunities for the gospel to be shared with their relatives, friends, neighbors, and others. These suggestions will be based upon observations of what has consistently proven fruitful in other places and are confirmed by the results of the afore mentioned survey.

Your Elders

News Of Interest

Sick

Crestwood Hospital

Tom Pond. Pneumonia. He will go home soon.

HealthSouth Rehab

Steve Bradford (Mary Bradford's son)

Home: **Robyn Brumlow**

Sympathy

We express sympathy to **Pat** and **Alicia Steele** in the death of Dwight on Thursday night.

Directory Information

Please remove **Laura, Jessica, and Sarah Breeden.** They are attending Mayfair to be with family. We wish them well!

Bridal Shower

Ladies are invited to a come-and-go bridal shower honoring **Haileigh Stiegler**, and **Grant Purvis**, Sunday, July 23, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., dining room. Registered at Bed Bath & Beyond, Target, and Amazon.

5th Sunday Special Contribution

July 30 (5th Sunday) is our second planned Special Contribution for 2018. It will be for our Mortgage Reduction Plan. Our Goal is \$25,000. There will be two collections that Sunday, one for our regular weekly contribution, and a separate one for the Mortgage Reduction. For those who use the envelope system, please use your envelopes for both contributions.

Fall 2017 Financial Peace Class

Tentatively scheduled for Tuesday nights starting September 12, 6:00 – 7:15 p.m. Class will be limited to the first 20 families that register and pay \$95.00. For more information, please see **Ken McGee**.

Pantry Item

Spaghetti Sauce

Today and Upcoming at Chase Park

Family Care Program

Teams **E** and **G** will meet today for potluck lunch. Team **E** Leaders: **Eric Corder, Barry Maples, Jon Rosenblum, Bob Williams.** Team **G** Leaders: **Bill Zlatovich, Mike Emerson, Robb Walker.**

Regency Retirement Service

Today: 1:30 p.m.

Speaker: **Michael Sims**

Song Leader: **Joel Hedy**

Hospital Visitation

Team **#2 (Emerson)**, please pick up your assignments following evening worship.

Balance Class

Tues., Jul. 11; Thurs., Jul 13; 1:30 p.m.

Super Seniors

Wednesday, July 12. Cooks will prepare lunch.

Friend's Day Information

Friend's Day scheduled for August 20 has been rescheduled for August 27.

Thank You

"Dear Family at Chase Park

I want to thank all of you for the prayers, visits, cards and phone calls during my recent stay in the hospital and rehab. Your care and concern was encouraging during my recuperation. I also want to thank all of you for the wonderful memories I have of the spiritual fellowship we've enjoyed since 1963. Those were good times. I hope to visit from time to time. Now I will worship at Caverns Rd. in Marianna, Florida, or at Ashville Road in Leeds, Alabama. In Christian Love,"

Sarah Irwin

Sarah Irwin's mailing addresses/information

4895 Dogwood Drive.

Marianna, FL 32446

Camilla's phone 1-205-613-5279

At Camilla's address from now until September

2719 Altadena Lake Drive

Birmingham, AL 35243

Susan's phone 1-205-960-5450

At Susan's address beginning middle of September

Questions from the Master Teacher

2017 Midweek Summer Series

July 12

“Do you want to go away as well?”

John 6:67

A question about our faithfulness to Christ

Guest Speaker:

Kerry Richardson



Northport Church of Christ
Northport, Alabama

The question under consideration in this lesson is one that is posed by Jesus to His closest and most faithful followers in response to many who had become disillusioned by Jesus' teachings and had forsaken Him. What would His apostles do? Had following Jesus become a burden for them? Would they walk away as well? In a similar way, so many in our world have turned away from Jesus. They have decided that the life He called them to is just too hard, that His teachings are out of touch with the modern world, or that a life of faithfulness is simply no longer appealing. Amid this climate of rejection and denial, Jesus' question echoes through the ages and finds its way into the hearts of His most faithful followers: "Do you want to go away as well?" In an age when it no longer seems popular to be a believer, will we choose to follow after the world or hold faithfully to Jesus? It is truly a question that confronts every Christian in today's world. I hope that you will be here this Wednesday as Kerry Richardson leads us in a study of this question and topic.

Statistics

Sunday, July 2, 2017

AM Worship	346
Month Average	346
Bible Class	306
PM Worship	235
Wed., July 5 Bible Classes	265
Regency Ret. Worship	40
Offering	\$20,142.16
Budget	\$18,000
Average '17	\$17,882
Under Budget for year	-\$3,187
Building Fund	\$115.00

Services

Sunday

Worship	9:00 a.m.
Bible Class	10:15 a.m.
Worship	5:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Super Seniors	10:00 a.m.
Bible Class	6:30 p.m.

Web Site Home Bible Studies

<https://www.epcofc.org/home-bible-studies>

(Lesson 1 Link)

The Bible—God's Holy Word

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