

## **HAVE FAITH IN GOD**

**Pastor Moses Yoon, UBF General Director**

**"Have faith in God," Jesus answered (Mk 11:22)**

For the past 7 years, through Skype, I have been studying the Bible with our UK UBF leaders - Ian from Oxford, and Paul from London. The three of us study via Skype every Thursday morning London time. Some time ago, we were studying Judges, the famous chapter 6, and I received much grace from the word of God. Judges 6:12 says, "When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, 'The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.'" Gideon was an ordinary young man. Out of fear of the Midianites, he was threshing wheat in a wine press to keep it from them. Normally people threshed wheat in an open yard so that the wind might blow the chaff away. But he was afraid of the Midianites and was threshing wheat in a wine press. He had no other choice in order to get food and survive.

He was not a warrior at all. Yet the LORD said to him, "Mighty warrior!" Not just a soldier. Not just a warrior. But mighty warrior! The Lord did not say that he would become a mighty warrior. He was already a mighty warrior. How could this be? It was because the LORD was with him. A mighty warrior is not someone who is particularly able or courageous. A mighty warrior is someone whom God is with. The power, the strength, the courage, and the wisdom of a warrior all come from the LORD. When the LORD was with Gideon, even with just three hundred men, he defeated 135,000 Midianites.

When I assumed the new duties as general director of our ministry I was trembling in fear like Gideon who was hiding himself in a wine press. I am not of a strong character, and I was full of worries. How could I carry out all the responsibilities? Yet through the study of Judges, I realized that actually it is the LORD who is the mighty warrior. If God, the mighty warrior, is with me, I can also be a mighty warrior. So, I began to pray that God may be with me. Of course, it is up to God's sovereignty with whom he will decide to be with. Yet there is one thing we need to do on our part. It is to pray and have faith in God. When we have faith in God, he is with us. His mighty power can be demonstrated in our lives and ministries. This is why right after verse 22, "Have faith in God," Jesus said, "if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.'"

In fact, the disciples were surprised at Jesus' power and authority. At a single word of Jesus, the fig tree dried up from its roots! The disciples were envious of Jesus' power. They thought that Jesus could do it because he was the Son of God.

They thought that they were just ordinary people and would be fundamentally limited in ever doing such great work. Because of this they were helpless and fatalistic. But Jesus said to them, "Have faith in God!"

What did Jesus' words mean? It meant that they should not trust in their human condition, money, knowledge or even other people, but trust in God almighty alone. Jesus did not tell them that in order to be a great servant of God they needed excellent qualifications. He did not tell them they needed an outstanding knowledge. Jesus said "Have faith in God!" Jesus believed that even though Peter had many weaknesses and shortcomings, if he had faith in God he would become a powerful and able servant of God. God is the source of all power, wisdom, ability, authority and grace. No matter how able or humanly outstanding we may be, if we do not have faith in God we are nothing. It is because of our self-reliance that we cannot be used by God. God uses those who humbly and absolutely trust in God almighty. What then does it mean practically to have faith in God? It is to firstly, believe his word of promise; and secondly, to pray.

As we know, the late Dr. Samuel Lee was a man of faith. He absolutely believed in God's word. By faith in God's word he had great visions. By faith in the living God, he planted God's vision in the hearts of many young people and sent them out as missionaries all over the world. In planning or doing things he always had one clear belief, which was, "God will surely help me." By faith, he helped many who followed him to have faith in God.

In 1993, I went to England as a layman missionary. Soon after I arrived in London, Dr Samuel Lee sent me a letter. He said in the letter, "Study the word of God with all your heart and teach diligently. Then you will become prosperous and happy, and all those who follow you will be happy. However, if you neglect studying and teaching the word of God with all your heart, you and all those who follow you will be miserable and many problems will arise in the ministry." He really emphasized the importance of the word of God. Dr. Lee returned to the Lord 16 years ago, yet whenever I think of him, his love for the word and his faith in God challenges me. In particular, his faith in God is still living in my life. My prayer is that I may always remember Jesus' saying: "Have faith in God," and by obeying his word I may continue to grow in my personal faith. Through today's service may we learn again what it means to have faith in God. May his grace be with us.

*October 5, 2018*  
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