

NCTM Wednesday Livening Course; Third Term 1988; Dean: Meatheringham

## STUDY 1

### THE REVELATION WHICH SHATTERS DEMOCRATIC RELATIVISM

#### Introduction To The Series

**What Is Revelation?** By definition it is an unveiling; a making known, or a disclosure of knowledge wherein the living God shows himself to man and makes known his inscrutable will.

Zophar asks Job (Job 11:7) if he can find out the whole sweep of God's nature? The answer is that we cannot know the uttermost limits of God's perfection, or holiness, and what we do know of God must be revealed otherwise it would remain a secret. Revelation does not spring from the reasoning powers of man, nor from his ascending spirituality; but from the God who is outside of ourselves. 'Revelation rather than discovery is the keynote of the Bible' (H. H. Rowley). See for example: Heb. 1:1-2; Matt. 11:25ff.; 16:11; John 14:6-14; 1:18; Gal. 1:11, 16; Rom. 16:25f.; Isa. 40:5; Deut. 29:29.

Revelation and Faith confronts numerous questions such as the relation between faith and revelation, e.g. does faith precede and cause revelation? What part does human reason play in revelation? How does God reveal himself, what media does he use? Is revelation subject to a particular culture? How reliable is the biblical revelation? Can faith have any certainty?

#### Democratic Relativism

All of the 'Ocracies' including democracy come under the judgement of God and his Gospel. As the freedom and rights of the individual are supportive of democratic equality a democracy will accept no authority outside of itself. This puts it in conflict with the revelation of the Gospel where authority and truth are central to it.

Tocqueville's dictum is that in 'democratic societies, each citizen is habitually busy with the contemplation of a very petty object, which is himself'.

**Man becomes the final reference point:** Instead of beginning with God man begins with his own self-understanding. This means that God is reduced with man to the place where there is no one above him upon whom he is dependent (Gen. 2:15ff.; 3:1-7; cf. Jer. 13: 1-11; Judges 21:25; Rom. 3:12).

**Man now uses the inductive to know;** he will now discover by independent inspection what is true and what will take place in history. This will follow his ideology of 'openness', where rights will precede duties and freedom will have definite primacy over community.

As **autonomous, man will now make his own values:** These will be relative.

*‘Value relativism can be taken to be a great release from the perpetual tyranny of good and evil, with their cargo of shame and guilt, and the endless efforts that the pursuit of the one and the avoidance of the other enjoin’ (A. Bloom, p. 142).*

**Man creates his own hierarchy of values** and may put a god at the apex, yet educate his children in ‘values clarification’.

*The rebel will deny that it is impossible to know the Christian God. He has now become his own final reference point, religion is now designed to meet his needs. But his reason is now a sea of lies, he is trapped in the prison of his own self-contradiction, and his search for values comes to nihilism (Rom. 1:18ff.)*

The following points show the revelation of God breaking into this closed system with shattering power and redemptive grace.

### **Revelation Is All God’s Free Action**

*‘The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham’ (Acts 7:2; cf, Gen. 12: 1 ff.; Neh. 9:7).*

As an idolater Abraham was swamped in a bog of lies. Religion always goes up and is utilized by man to meet his needs. Revelation is the grace of God coming down to man (Ps. 115:3; Eccl. 5:2). Therefore it is no good performing rites, or drawing lots, or turning to magic. We cannot buy it or exchange it, we can’t get the hang of it, or decide to fill up with it. The revelation of God is utterly intolerable, for we are at the mercy of God’s decision (Rom. 9:15).

For God to appear to Abraham means that he was seen by him, and encountered by him (Gen. 12:7; 35:7; Num. 23:3f.,16). The purpose was to bind Abraham to God in the fellowship of faith and obedience (Gen. 15:1-6; 18:19).

### **God Speaks A Word Of Revelation Which Is Self-Authenticating**

We have already seen this in regard to Abraham. The medium of God’s revelation is wedded to his word; see Moses (Exod. 3:1-6). The word explains the revelation and is simultaneous. It needs no proofs. It is sudden, unexpected, immediate and personal. God showed himself as the self-existent One (Exod. 3:13f.), the God who would redeem his elect people (Exod. 33:19).

The word of God brings autonomous man back to size, freeing him from his illusion, and reigning him into renewed dependence. Now he has another viewpoint which is not self—derived. It derives from reality.

### **God’s Revelation Is The Last Word**

The ultimate self-revelation of God is given in Jesus Christ. See the word of God coming to the Greeks in Acts 17:16-34.

There is no future word after the final word, but everything that follows has gone before the ultimate. Nothing can be added, not even the disposition of the heart. This is God's redemptive self-disclosure in Christ and can only be defined in its own terms (I Cor. 2: 1 ff.).

'A revelation of redemption is a revelation of something done; and it is only a deed that can reveal a deed.'

'He has given the word of a final revelation-not its idea but its word, not its surmise but its arrival, not its conception but its visitation, not its intuition but its revelation something which is his because of its insight into him rather than his insight into it, something wherein he is known rather than knows, something finally done which is the root of all our best doing' (P. T. Forsyth).

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## **STUDY 2**

### **CREATION: THE INESCAPABLE REVELATION**

#### **God Has Not Left Himself Without Witness**

This is an assurance in the preaching of Paul and Barnabas as they testify to those who worship and serve the creature, rather than the Creator at Lystra (Acts 14:17). There has never been a time when God has left himself without witness,

Paul's message is similar when he met with the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers at Athens (Acts 17:16-34). It would not be sufficient to preach the resurrection of Christ in such a 'monistic', yet 'pluralist' environment for the Gospel must turn people from the worship of the creature to the worship of the living, Creator-God.

Romans 1: 19 says that the knowledge of God is not an obscure or esoteric thing which can only be understood by those who have a secret key of enlightenment. The revelation is transparent for all who will see. It is not that the creation proves the existence of some prime mover whom we call God, for this would be a human philosophical abstraction on a par with the monotheism of the Greeks. The creation ceaselessly testifies of the **nature** of the God who created it, sustains it, and governs it.

The creation was made in accord with the will and purpose of God, and in spite of man's sin the creation has not ceased to be what God made it to essentially be (Gen. 1:31; 8:22; Ps. 19; 29:3-7; 104:14f., 31, 35; 33:5; 8:1ff.; Isa. 6:3).

#### **The Agnostic Dilemma**

The religious city of Athens was wholly idolatrous (Acts 17:16). Secular man is by creation either religious, or superstitious, and come what may he is an incurable worshipper. The intelligentsia of Athens would have had no place in their thinking for a creator God, and they would have been sure that the God preached by Paul did not exist.

They had an altar 'To an unknown God' (Acts 17:23). Like Adam and Eve (Gen. 3: 1 ff.) they sought to do without God, and making themselves the starting point for all knowledge they developed a system and a rationalization to suppress their responsibility as men created in the image of God.

Therefore God is 'unknown'

- (1) because they have repressed the truth and made surrogate gods.
- (2) They have no relational and so true knowledge of God (John 17:3; 3: 1 ff.).
- (3) So they are given over to their futility (Rom. 1:21-23).

(4) But God cannot be gotten rid of, his creation remains and still testifies of him, man cannot unman himself as a creature made in God's image, and at bottom they know God the Creator.

Paul preaches to them on this basis (Acts 17:23-29). The 'unknowable god' is knowable.

### **Ignorance Of God Is Inexcusable**

Agnosticism is a false modesty. It is moral and ethical in nature not a philosophical impasse of the infinite and the finite. It is wrapped up in our wanting to be the creators of values rather than living under the given commands of another. The altar to the unknown god' is trying to make ourselves believe that we have done justice to the demands of God if we tentatively say that there is something higher than ourselves.

Romans 1:18 tells us that in rebellion we take hold of the truth of God which is revealed in the creation, and deliberately hold it down, use it for our own ideological purposes, and live a lie. In this 'openness' we are closed off. This makes for the prostituting of relationships, the despair of any finality, and the addiction of idolatry. Man is accountable to God in this life, and faces condemnation in the final judgement (Rom. 1:23-32; Acts 17:30f.; Rom. 2:12-16).

### **The Saving Revelation**

Into this seemingly closed off situation the Word of the Gospel is spoken; the Word of the crucified and risen Jesus Christ (Acts 17:18, 31).

The preacher no longer serves the creature but has converted to the Creator through the revelation to him of the truth of God in Jesus the Messiah.

The Word spoken is one with the revelation in creation. But man has set himself against the latter; now he must have a redemptive revelation. We need to be saved into knowing God. The saving Word sharpens to the conscience the truth which has been repressed, bringing forgiveness, and reconciliation, and constraining to repentance. The hearers see that their systems are not merely inadequate but wrong because they have left God out.

The resurrection of Jesus presupposes the doctrine of creation, so that there is no essential division between the one and the other.

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## STUDY 3

### THE MEDIA OF REVELATION

#### INTRODUCTION

Hebrews 1: 1-2 say that in the days prior to the coming of the Son of God, God spoke *in many and various ways*. This was some what piecemeal, coming as it did over many years. There was a *progression* in the revelation given. This was not an evolution of people's religious concepts of God. It was not from the less true to the more true, but from the promise to the fulfilment (Heb. 11:40).

In his speaking God used differing media, or means to convey his will. The media used affected the nature of the Word given.

We will emphasize that the experience of revelation did not originate in the life of the medium, nor was the particular experience given for the recipient to interpret by his disposition, or spirituality. The revelation was the fruitage of the recipient's experience, and the accompanying Word from God.

Hebrews 1:1-2 says the *final* Word of revelation has been spoken in the Son (Acts 10:36-38; John 1:1-14).

#### God Reveals Himself By His Acts

As the 'living God' he is the God of pure action (I Thess. 1:9; cf. Josh. 3: 10; Dan. 6:20 etc.).

God acts in history (see for e.g. Exod. 60; 190; 201). Through this act God 'began to show' ('caused to see') Moses his mighty power (Deut. 3:24; 11:2-7).

God's acts were not left hanging, as it were, for man to interpret. Rather the Lord told his servants what the acts meant (Deut. 7:6; 26:18f.; Matt. 11:2-6; Acts 2:22-24).

#### God Spoke By Dreams And Visions

Numbers 12:6 says this is the way the Lord reveals himself and speaks to His prophets. Without dreams and visions there is no word from the Lord (I Sam. 28:6, 15; Micah 3:5-7).

Jacob and Solomon are given dreams, yet they are accompanied by, and interpreted by the Word of God (Gen. 28: 11 ff.; I Kings 3:5ff.).

The same could be said of the visions of Cornelius and Peter in the account of Acts 10 (cf. Amos 1: 1; Micah 1: 1; Isa. 2: 1; Jer. 1: 11, 13; 24: If.; etc.).

The visions and dreams need to have come from the 'council of the Lord' and not the imagination of Man (Deut. 13: 1 ff.; Jer. 32:25-28, 32; Col. 2:18).

In the era of the Spirit all of God's people will see visions and dream dreams; and prophesy (Joel 2:28ff.; Acts 2:17-21).

### **The Angel Of The Lord Brings A Revelation Of The Lord**

As messengers sent from God, angels reveal God's will to Man (Heb. 1:7, 14; Ps. 103:20; Zech. 12 1; 1 Sam. 29:9; Gen. 19: 1 ff.; Luke 2:8-14).

The 'Angel of the Lord' is identified with the Lord himself being a revelation of God, but as it were a shaded revelation of God's glory (Gen. 16:7, 13; 18:16-17; 48:15; 31:11-12; Judg. 6:21; 13:21f.).

Under this heading we can also place the 'theophanies' of the Lord (Exod. 3:6; 16:7; 3 3:22; 24: 10; 1 Kings 8: 1 Of.; Isa. 6: 1 ff.; Ps. 96:6-9; Luke 2:8-14).

### **The Spirit Of God Is The Source Of Prophecy**

Key verses are II Samuel 23:2; 11 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Peter 1:10-12; Acts 2:17ff.; 1 Corinthians 2:7-13; John 16:13-15.

Examples are Numbers 11:17, 25; 24:2ff.; 1 Samuel 10:6, 10; 19:20, 23; Hosea 9:7; Zechariah 7:12.

The Holy spirit of God reveals the mind and will of God. This must not be confused with the development of human spirituality, the upward reach to God. Nor is it the deification of human reason or emotions which far from being prophetic is in fact pantheism. The Spirit is transcendent and he brings the truth of God to us from outside of ourselves, yet so that we know it within ourselves.

*'Experience does not come first, after which interpretation follows, but revelation precedes, and is experienced in faith.'* (H. Bavinck)

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## STUDY 4

### GOD'S SAVING WORD

#### God Speaks

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1; Heb.1:1f).

We have seen that when God revealed himself through dreams and visions these were all speaking appearances. Without the Word the dreams and visions would be incomplete (e.g. Hab. 2:1-3).

The Word of God is synonymous with his will, and his council; and so simultaneous with God himself. To will and to do are identical (Isa. 55: 10-11; 31:2).

It is only by the Word that God speaks. The Word (Hebrew “*dabar*”) means action, but this must not divert us into dismissing the speaking Word that God has given us. E.g. we cannot translate Genesis 1:3 as “God acted: Let there be light”. By his Word God personally gives himself in action, and speaks by his actions (Heb. 4:12).

God personally reveals himself-his being-and his will in his speaking. It testifies of God not being a stranger, he is not afar off, he is not ethereal, he is not abstraction, he is not a series of shifting pictures or images, and his Words are not sounds which fly into the air. By his Word God is personally present with his people (Deut. 30:14; Ps. 119:105; Rom. 10:6-8; Col. 3:16).

#### The Word Comes Into The World Of Silence

The world of silence is not God's world, but the world of man's hostility and contempt for the Word, the world of the lie and the darkness of minds which reason and think from the point of view of their own self-understanding (Rom. 1: 18-32; 1 Cor. 12:2; Eph. 2:1-3; 5:8; Col. 1:21; 2:8ff. e.g. Acts 14:8-18).

Men close their ears (Jer. 6: 10; 4:4; Isa. 6:9f.). This is the judgement of the deafening silence.

“This silence of God means death and judgement for man. Now God's silence is not a meaningless void, but the omnipotence which refuses to speak”. (G. Wingrin).

(Isa. 64:12; Ps. 281; 1431; 83:1.) God withdraws his presence and his people are given over to confusion (Isa. 59:2; 64:7; Jer. 5:13; Micah 3:5ff.).

In the world of images there is a famine of the Word (Amos 8:11-12; cf. 6:4-6; 5:21-24; 4:4ff.).

Into the sounds of silence God speaks a shattering Word (I Sam. 3:1-21). Samuel knew the Lord by the Word which the Lord spoke to him, and by that Word Samuel prophesied to Israel. In the midst of calamity and judgement God sent a saving Word which led to the anointing of David as King.

(to be continued)

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## STUDY 5

### GOD'S SAVING WORD

(CONTINUED)

#### REVIEW

The only possible revelation of God comes through his speaking Word and nothing else.

By rejecting the Word man closes himself off into a world of “deafening silence”, i.e. not a void but the realm of not hearing **the God who** is all **the time** speaking.

This realm is shattered by the Word of judgement and grace which penetrates the sounds of silence.

#### Images Substitute The Visible For What Is Heard

Man knew God's glory, not through an image which could be grasped and controlled, but through the discriminating Word of God (Rom. 1:23) God's glory is changed into an image, but it can never be made into a thing, and God is no longer God when he is represented.

The account of the Fall in Genesis 3 shows sight being considered independently from the Word. ‘The woman *sees*; she no longer listens to the Word to know what is good and bad. Did God **really** say? Am I sure that I heard? The woman sees a possible way to take possession and to dominate. Now evidence is at hand and the Word loses its meaning (I John 2:16).

An image is not a sign, but has an identity with the god so that it participates in that god's existence. It is the means of bringing the god down to our level. See Exodus 32 where the people don't want just a fleeting Word but something they can hold onto and be sure of. God is made visible in the calf, and the calf has now become God himself.

For this reason images are condemned (Exod. 20:4-6; Isa 44:9-20; 40:18-20; 46:5-11; Jer. 10:3-4; Ps. 135; 115; etc.).

The image takes over and controls e.g. symbols, ritual, spiritualism, TV, etc.

### **God Sends The Saving Word**

The recreative Word shines out of the darkness giving us the knowledge of God's glory (II Cor. 4:6; 3:18; Gen. 1:1-3; Ps. 33:1-9).

The incarnate Word, the now glorified Christ, now speaks the Word of revelation (II Cor. 4:6; cf. Rom. 10:14-17; Gal. 3:23-25; Rom. 10:8f.).

The incarnation of the Word (John 1:1-18) tells us that it is impossible to see God apart from the man Jesus (John 6:40; 12:45; 14:1-9). This is the unique moment of history when the Word can be seen. But this was no overpowering image, so that "God" was not apparent except to faith, and faith is born of the Word (John 6:26; Luke 24:13-35, John 4:25f.; II Cor. 5:16; Isa. 53.2).

The Word must re-create our hearing. Left to ourselves we would be unable to grasp the meaning and would only find it a reason for terror and condemnation. 'Our reason is not one of functional ability but a moral and a relational impotency. The Word is the Word of the Cross the full revelation of God's reconciling judgement. It is the Word of grace, the coming of Christ and being apprehended by him for a new life of seeking the will of the Lord (I Cor. 1: 18; 2: 1 ff.; Rom. 5:6ff.; Gal. 3: 1 ff.; Phil. 3:12; Titus 2: 11 ff.; I Pet. 1:23-25; Isa. 55:5-11; 66:2, 5).

Such is the last Word. There is no future Word after this Word and this Word of the self-revelation in Christ is never mistaken for anything else. It is never defined other than in its own terms and defines everything else which comes before it.

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## STUDY 6

### THE BIBLE: THE INSCRIPTURATED WORD

#### Introduction

We have repeatedly stated that God's primary revelation comes to us by his speaking Word. In what way are we to understand the Bible as the Word of God? How should we listen for God speaking to us in the Bible? What authority does the Bible have for us living close to 2,000 years after the last book was written? Then, how should we interpret the variety of writings which make up the Holy Scriptures?

#### Coming To The Bible

John 5:37, 38, 39, 42 shows how we can come to the Bible as a text book of doctrines and laws; and so change the shape and form of the scriptures into an abstraction. This use of the Bible may be a means to prevent us hearing the living voice of God. Jesus is the *subject* of the scriptures and he bears witness to the Father.

In Mark 12:24 Jesus says we go astray because we do not *know* the Bible, implying that it is reliable in what it teaches. Jesus and the Apostles were emphatic in that what they taught was in accordance with the Old Testament scriptures (e.g. John 10:31-39; 1 Cor. 15:1-6). But there is more, for we go astray for not knowing the scriptures or the *power of God*. We cannot know the voice of God in scripture apart from God himself.

Acts 7:38 calls the scriptures 'living oracles'. There is no distinction between the revelation of God as he spoke and its being committed to writing (Exod 34:27f.; Isa. 1: 10; 2:3; 30:8-12; etc.).

The New Testament personifies the scriptures as the Word of God (Matt. 1:22; Acts 4:25; Rom. 9:17; Gal. 3:8, 22; Col. 1:25f.; Heb. 3:7ff.; etc.).

It is by the testimony of the Holy Spirit that we are given the certainty of God's speaking to us in the Bible. This will be God's saving Gospel Word working redemption in our lives and reconciling us to the Father (Rom. 8:15-17; Matt. 16:17; John 15:16; 16:13). Apart from the saving work of God's grace in Christ the Bible remains closed off to us.

#### The God-Breathed Character Of The Bible

'All Scripture *is God-breathed*' (11 Tim. 3:14-17). The writings themselves are breathed out of God's mouth (11 Pet. 1:21). This origin of the scriptures gives them their authority.

As the scriptures come from the Spirit their testimony is to Christ, the full and final revelation of God (Rev. 19:10; 1 John 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:21). The witness to Christ given by

the Spirit makes them the Word of God. The books of the Bible have their authority in their prophetic and apostolic testimony to Christ.

The God-breathed nature of the scriptures does not dissolve the human word into the divine word. The witnesses of scripture bear the character of the authors and the times in which they lived. Believing scripture does not mean beginning with a mysterious and closed book but hearing the witness concerning Christ.

The Bible is not the fourth person of the Trinity, but it is the writing down of the word which God has given his people, it comes in a servant form, but it carries the authority of God as is author.

### **Listening To The Bible**

11 Timothy 3:14-17 gives a sound and helpful principle of hearing. We must sit under it and not over it. 'We have devised ways of reading the word of God from which no word from God ever comes'. 'When you treat the Bible as a fossil, it fossilizes under your hand'. Therefore it is not good enough to concentrate on what God said in olden days. Nor is it correct to come to the scriptures with a subjectivity which says 'This passage means what it means to me' (11 Pet. 1:20). It is important to know the truth of scripture and to hear it as the oracles of God with a will to do what God says (Matt. 11:25).

The Holy Spirit is a unique interpreter of the scriptures (Rom. 15:4; 4:23f.; I Cor. 10: 11.).

The question is, are we in fact listening to the Word of God in scripture, and in listening are we doing what God says?

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## STUDY 7

John Kammermann

### FAITH'S CERTAINTY

#### Introduction

Revelation is for God's purpose 'the unveiling of; a making known, whereby the living God shows Himself to man and makes known His inscrutable will, i.e. unable to be known by investigation.

#### Revelation is for faith

Faith is the expected response to God's promise. 1 Peter 1:21, Rom. 3:21-25, Rom. 4:3. Faith sees the true nature of God: Heb. 11:1, 11:6, Rom.11:33f, Titus 3:5.

#### The Age before the age that is coming

This age of faith is rich in God's provision. Rom.1:16,17, cf. Matt.5:17-20, Jer.9:23, I Cor. 1:18,24, 1 Peter 1:3-9, Heb.11:39f Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7, Eph.1:3-23. What happens along the way is as important as what happens at the end.

#### The age of faith

We live by grace in faith and not by sight. Rom.10:17, 8:24. The works of faith now will be recognised then as the works of God. John 9:3,4, Rev. 14:12,13.

#### Autonomy the 'great pretender'

Faith is such that its end (telos) is only the 'beginning' of the 'end in fullness'. Autonomy for man will mean something else. Luke 16:14-31. The rich man had nothing then that related to his lifestyle and vocation.

Autonomy is the breeding ground for anarchy. Titus 2:12, cf Judges 17:6, 21:25, Prov. 14:12, 21:2, 30:12. The life and works of faith spring from a lively certainty and trust in God, Eph. 2:8-10, Col. 3:1f.

#### Sight sucks certainty from faith

Success, power and ambition are political in nature. "The beginner is soon overcome by what appears to be the slow movement of God in history". Gen.2:17, 3:5,6, cf. 2 Cor.11:1-6. Power and politics can do almost anything. Jer.9:23f, 1 Cor.1:18f, Gal.5:4ff cf. Gal.3:14, Rom.3:21-25, 12:1-7-Nimrod Gen.10:9,10, 11:4—His graceless, faithless autonomy based on the 'sight' of power and politics. Ambition is deadly, Hab.2:2-5, Heb.11:39.

**Faith is lived out in the conflict**

Faith sees grace has done its work and trusts. 1 John 2:18-25(21). Rev. 13: 'The unholy trinity' works deceptively against faith in its graceless detailed 'copy'.

Man's 'baggage' will never open up God's treasures Is.55:6-9, cf. 47:10, Deut.29:29, 1 Cor. 2:9. Man comes to knowledge gracelessly Gen.3:6. God is the only wise God. Wisdom belongs to Him, 1 Tim.1:17, 1Cor.1:24.

His treasures are to us sure from His hand. 1 Cor. 2:7, Ps.78:2f, Is.48:6,7, Matt.11:25, 13:35, Rom.16:25f, Eph.1:4, 3:4-9,

Conclusion: Faith's certainty enables a living, moving trust in God's promises. 1 Cor. 1:20.

## Study 8

John Kammermann

### LIVING IN FAITH

#### Trust the God we have heard.

Luther "Man is only what he heard from God."

God has always spoken. Acts 1:4,2:11, Heb.1:1-4, Jer.31:31-34, Gen.12:1-7, 17:3-8, Gal.3:8,9, Psa.19:1-4, Rom.1:18 etc. (Gen.1 to Rev.22.)

We hear the living word of God at each moment 'appropriately'. Deut.29:29, 2 Peter 1:20,21, Rev.19:10, Jer.23:18. The prophet stood in the counsel of God e.g. Ex.7:1.

#### Faith is fed by hearing.

We hear the Gospel, i.e. the gospel is the Word of God to salvation (safety). Rom.1:16,17.

Yet the call of God to be conformed to the image of His Son is our destiny. It was so from the beginning. Gen.1:26, Eph.1:4,5 To live in faith is to live in 'safety' while we come to our destiny 'consummationally'. Rom.8:1, 5:1, John 15:3, 1 Cor.15:22-28, Acts 3:17-21, Col.1:13,14, cf Rom.8:14-17, 8:28-39 speaks of the assurance of our situation. See also Gal.3:14, 16, 29 and 4:1-7, Rom.4:13.

God has brought us to the obedience of faith. Rom.1:5, Gen.49:10. Quote from Luther on faith.

"Faith is not the human notion and dream which some regard as faith they, fall into the error of saying: 'Faith is not sufficient; we must do works if we want to become godly and be saved.' The reason is because, when hearing the Gospel, they go to work and by their own power frame up a thought in their heart which says 'I believe'. That they regard as genuine faith.

On the contrary, faith is a divine work in us, which transforms us, gives us a new birth out of God, John 1:13, slays the old Adam, makes us' altogether different men in heart affection, mind, and all powers, and brings with it the Holy Spirit. Oh, it is a living, energetic, active, mighty thing, this faith."

So, faith is not a work, its the free gift from God, through His grace. Eph.2:8, Rom.3:24.

#### Work the work that He has said.

Whitefield: "A true faith in Christ Jesus will not suffer us to be idle."

Faith will be 'lively' participation in the action of the living God. Phil.2:1-13. See also 1 Thess.1:9, Heb.9:14, Rev.7:13-17 Rom.12:1ff. Is it service that faith brings us into, or faith that serves as sons of the Father who serves? John 4:34, 5:17, 1 Cor.15:58, 16:10, Eph.2:10, 2 Thess.1:11, 1 Cor.3:13ff.

### **Don't listen to the lie.**

This is a deliberate act of the will. Not convenience. Isa.30:9, Lev.19:4, 1 John 5:21.  
Paul charges Timothy to 'preach the Word' 2 Tim.4:1-5 and warns the Corinthians 2 Cor.11:1-6

Living by faith is to be personally in the Word. God knows about the problems. See Matt.13:24-30, weeds and the wheat. (in 13:29 the Disciples taught to leave God's Kingdom in the action of conflict). The training in obedience to God must be important! Isa;66:2, Titus 2:11,12, Matt.5:3-5, I Peter 1:6,7.

Hearing - Isa.53:1, Matt.13:9,12, Rev.2:7,11,17,29, 3:6,13,22. 2 Cor. 10:5.

The Word of the cross assures us that the lie is dealt with at the appropriate time. John 12:31, Acts 2:36, 10:38, Psa.2:6, Rev. 20:9,10.

### **Live joyfully in faith**

It is good to be living faithfully in Christ. Rom. 15:13, Phil.3:1, 4:4,10. Prov.10:28, Col.1:27.

We are given great freedom. John 8:3-36, Gal.5:1, Col.3:lff, God's promises are to us. Gal.3:14,29, 4:7, Rom.4:13.

2 Thess. 2:13-17. Paul gives this summary.

John Kammermann.