

Join us for meetings with

Larry Hansen
July 17 @7pm

and

Valerie Hansen
July 18th @
5pm

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FORTRESS OF
JOY CHURCH

Faith

If you asked a dozen people to define faith, you may get a dozen different definitions. One day I was golfing with a couple of heathen dudes and they asked what kind of church I was a member of. I told them I belonged to a Christian church, they promptly responded and said that anyone who believes in God is a Christian. I quoted them a verse from the Bible.

James 2:19 You believe there is one God; you do well: the devils also believe and tremble.

So, according to my heathen friends, the devil is also a Christian, they didn't know what to say. All kinds of people like these two are going about defining what they "think" the Bible says. I promise you none of them ever read the Bible and they wouldn't understand it anyway because they are spiritually dead. The Bible says in several different places that the **just shall live by faith**. Well, if we are the **just-ified** then we had better find out what faith is.

FAITH is believing God, it is believing in things there is no natural evidence of in reality.

I have never seen God, I have never heard His voice with my natural ear nor have I ever touched Him. De-

spite having no tangible evidence I totally believe in Him and who He says He is. If you say you believe, you do well, but that is not enough. Can you order your life to what you cannot see? Faith must go beyond an admission, it must become a lifestyle. Our natural flesh struggles with our heart because our spirit man wants to believe in the Lord and His Word.

John 20:29 Jesus said to Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe.

God will bless, that is He will empower all those who believe in Him to prosper. Spiritual and natural prosperity is determined by what you can believe. God gives us His Word, that is truth and we choose how much of it we will accept. Not every Christian believes everything God has recorded in His book. Some

folks can only go so far with God and then He becomes too much to believe. Partially because they try to believe God through their five senses. Jesus was of the flesh but He was recalled to heaven and now we have the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

God's Word was never given to us to make sense, it was given to us to make **FAITH**. The Lord wants us to believe whether we understand or not, He wants us to trust Him. If you can believe Him based solely on His Word, you have faith. So, faith is not a complicated subject, it is a decision that will transform your life. If God's ways sound foolish to you, you are a natural man, a man that is led by the feelings of his flesh.



Faith, A Way of Life

God has reserved a place for all of His people who commit to living by faith, it is called His REST.

We now know that the justified must live by faith, this is the only way to please our Lord. We know that a life of faith is not a complicated issue, it is a choice every man must make. Some may ask this question: *What's in it for me?* I am not put off by this question, it is a fair and honest question that warrants an answer.

Hebrews 11:6 Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

If we don't believe God there is no way to please Him. If we believe God is who He says He is then believing Him should be easy. But let's take this a

He is the healer, He can heal your body. He rewards those who believe and diligently seek Him by confirming the Word you believe.

God promised Israel He would deliver them from bondage and lead them to their own land flowing with milk and honey. But Israel could not believe God and so all but two of them died in the wilderness, they never received the promise.

Hebrews 4:11 Let us labor therefore to enter into His rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

God has reserved a place for all of His people who commit to living by faith, it is called His REST. A place of rest is where you no longer labor in the flesh to meet spiritual needs, but

delivered Israel from the Egyptians, he drowned the Egyptians soldiers in the sea, He brought water out of a rock and provided manna every morning, but they could not believe that He could deliver them from all the "ites" that inhabited their land. So, we must labor to avoid the same example of unbelief and miss out on all the great promises.

How do we overcome an evil heart of unbelief?

First of all we commit to hearing His Word and then we commit to believing it. *Anyone* who is of a willing heart can do this, God is not a respecter of persons, He is a respecter of faith. It will require a little work but the pay off will be well worth every second. It's like walking a mile in the morning, the first few steps are the hardest but it gets easier as you go. If feels "right" in your spirit when faith comes in, your hope and confidence begins to swell.

Mathew 7:24 Whosoever hears these sayings of mine and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house on a rock.

The Word of God is referred to as a rock, when we build our lives on His Word we anchor our lives to Him. The devil can come and huff and puff but he can't blow our house down. Can you now understand why the devil comes immediately to steal the Word out of our hearts?



little farther, you must also believe He will reward you on account of the faith you have in Him. If you believe

you use your faith. Israel did not believe God despite all the demonstrations of His supernatural power. He

Enduring Faith

In three different books of the Bible we are told that the just shall live by faith. Well, how long do you plan to live? No matter how long you live you will need faith every day.

1 Peter 1:25 But the Word of the Lord endureth forever.



If God's Word is forever then we will continue to live by it in heaven. So, if we don't learn it here we will have to learn it there. How can we rule and reign with Jesus if we don't know His will? When we speak the Word of faith we are speaking God's will and He performs it. If we must engage the devil in spiritual warfare, we can wear him out because the weapons of our warfare endureth forever. The devil can't endure for long because he has other appointments he must attend to. When he failed to tempt Jesus he left Him for a season.

Luke 18:1 Then Jesus spoke to the people to this end, that men

ought always to pray, and not to faint.

The word **faint** means to turn coward or give up. So, Jesus is warning us that we will face opposition when we set our hearts to pray. We can surely outlast the devil because we have faith and he doesn't. The

devil is banking on us to quit when he opposes us and a lot of Christians do! The biggest mistake Christians make is failing to identify who the enemy is. If you can't identify the enemy you will end up wrestling with flesh and blood. Wrestling with people is a fight you cannot win, because they are not the problem. Our warfare is spiritual but people have a will we have no authority over.

2 Timothy 3:11 Persecutions and afflictions came unto me at Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, these persecutions I endured: but out of all of them the Lord delivered me.

Paul would never give

up, he would not altar his confession of the Word. He knew who the opposition was, it was a messenger of satan sent to buffet him. Paul said that when he was weak he would become strong because his flesh was in the promises of God. He became so convinced of God's Word that he began to take pleasure in all the persecutions.

He absolutely knew what God would do on his behalf. He went out of his way to do things that would attract the devil to his life. If we will take Paul as our example we will have the same boldness.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we will reap, if we faint not.

We just need to believe one thing, due season is coming because the

Lord says so. No matter what the devil pitches at us we are assured of the victory. If we will hold fast our faith and not turn coward and give up we will reap the victory. Faith which is the Word of God endures forever but the devil will be arrested and dropped in a pit that is hot as hell. We are scheduled to win, he is on course to lose. Jesus is the surety of our success and He is the guarantee of the devil's demise. How long can we endure? God knows we are weak so He gives us His grace to empower us to believe and endure. We can endure as long as we need to and a little more.

How can we rule and reign with Jesus if we don't know His will?

When we speak the Word of faith we are speaking God's will and He performs it.

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**Restoring the
supernatural power
of God back
to the local church**

Got Faith?

One day Jesus gave His disciples a parable to this end, men ought always to pray and not to faint. As we continue reading the parable we come to understand that praying is exercising of our faith.

Luke 18:8 When the Son of Man returns shall He find faith on the earth.

If people have faith they will pray, if they have no faith or neglect their faith they will not pray. What Jesus wants to know is this, will men protect the faith God gave them when they heard His Word?

1 Timothy 4:1 The Holy Spirit clearly warns that in the last days many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.



Now we can begin to understand why Jesus said what He said! When I return how many

held on to their faith and how many opted for another Gospel?

1 Peter 1:7 The trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold, might be found unto praise, honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus.

Do not regard your faith as something that is common to man. God is not a respecter of persons but He is a respecter of faith. There is two things that impress the Word, two things we can offer Him as gifts. Obedience and faith and the two are divinely connected. **Got faith?**

