



The Conifer church of Christ is currently meeting at the Mountain Resource Center in Conifer.

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MOUNTAIN RAMBLIN'

Provided by the Conifer church of Christ

Number 8

Where Is Your Faith? by Neal Pollard.

How many household conversations begin, "Where is my?" Women leave purses in restaurants, men leave their wallets in the other pants pocket, and kids are apt to leave just about anything anywhere. How many vacations begin with the family wondering where some vital item is, fearing that it is sitting at home and not packed in the suitcases?



The disciples had just heard Jesus deliver some powerful lessons (Luke 8:10-21) and now they were heading across the lake from Galilee to the country of the Gerasenes. En route, while Jesus slept, a fierce windstorm descends and rocks their little boat. In a panic, they awaken Jesus, pleading, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" (Luke 8:24). Jesus calms the storm and

subsequently their fears, but He admonishes them, "Where is your faith?" (Luke 8:26).

That is a fair question. They had just heard the Master teacher doing His usual, masterful job (Luke 7:22-28, 31-36; etc.) and seen Him do some incredible miracles (Luke 7:1-10; 11-15; etc.). Between disembarking and the present distress, where did their faith go?

The question Jesus asked His disciples is a fair question for each of us today. "Where is your faith?"

IS IT LOST (Luke 18:1ff)? Jesus positively teaches a parable about this in His story about the widow and the unjust judge. The woman was persistent and the judge, who feared neither God nor man, granted her petition due to her tenacious pursuit. Jesus makes application by asking, "When the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). It is possible for any one of us to lose our faith. The parable of the sower and the soils shows that people can lose their faith as a consequence of both good times and bad times (cf. Luke 8:11ff). It is equally tragic to see people lose their faith just a few steps into their spiritual journey, several miles down the road, or especially near the end of the road! - *Continued on pg. 2*

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IS IT HIDDEN (Luke 8:16)? Jesus demonstrates how ludicrous a view hidden faith is from heaven's vantage point by illustrating it this way: "No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed" (Luke 8:16a). His point is that light is not doing its job when it is covered, and our faith is not doing its job when it is covered. There will be many settings throughout life when being a Christian and standing up for the Lord will not be popular, admired, or congratulated. What will we do with our faith in such circumstances? **IS IT MISPLACED** (Luke 18:9ff)? Everybody puts their trust in someone or some thing. The Bible says that people trust in their own power and might (Psalm 44:6), their wealth and riches (Psalm 49:6), their national leaders (Psalm 146:3), their own hearts (Proverbs 28:26), their idols (Isaiah 42:17), mankind (Jeremiah 17:5), their own achievements (Jeremiah 48:7), or their physical beauty (Ezekiel 16:15). Many of these attributes can serve us in properly placing our faith in God, but far too many are resting all they are or hope to be on those rather than God. In Luke 18:9, Jesus speaks a parable in warning against those who "trust in themselves." Despite a culture that preaches the preeminent idea of "believing in yourself," God makes that subservient to trusting in Him.

IS IT VISIBLE (Luke 7:9)? A centurion whose servant was dying was humble, devoted and perceptive in his approach to Jesus, pleading with Him to heal that dear one for him. Jesus marveled aloud, "I have not found such great faith, even in Israel!" The Centurion did not have to wear a badge or button that said, "I believe in the Lord." People are watching us every day, our speech, decisions, attitudes, actions, and reactions. While it is nice when someone asks, "Are you a Christian?," how much better for them not to have to ask?

So, "Where is your faith?"

Come, Let Us Reason Together by Wayne Burger

Seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, the Lord said to Israel, "come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18). God has always wanted men and women to have a relationship with Him based on reason. Yes, He also expects us to be filled with love toward Him and our fellow man (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37-39). But, He wants that emotion based on knowledge, not just feelings that are subject to change at any moment because of subjective events that occur around us. One's relationship with God should be based on knowledge and from that knowledge the proper emotion.

For that reason numerous passages urge us to teach and learn (John 6:45; Matthew 28:18-20). While studying the "church fathers" (Christian writers who lived in the second century) I found a statement by Tertullian which summarized this thought well. He said, "Truth persuades by teaching but does not teach by persuading" (Church History Early and Medieval by Everett Ferguson, p. 30). Think about that a moment. Most persuasion is through emotional arguments, thus it is not based on teaching. But truth persuades people by teaching them. Thus, when one responds to God because of truth, he intellectually makes that decision. This gives one confidence and the proper emotions.

