



Empowering People to Change the World

A Kingdom of God Revolutionary Church

Steve Holt

© Steve Holt | TheRoad.org

A Kingdom of God Revolutionary Church

Introduction:

- No other book of the Bible exemplifies to us the sinfulness and depravity of our *human potential* and the greatness and power of *God's potential* as the Epistle of Romans.
- The overarching theme of Romans is the righteousness that comes from God, not from ourselves.
- The Roman church is a healthy church whose faith is spoken of all over the Roman Empire.

Romans 1:8

Also turn to 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3a

- Here in this *city of the Caesars*, was a group of believers whose faith was making such an impact that it was touching the world.
- The New Testament only refers to one other instance of such a church... the church in Thessalonica.
- Today I'm going to synergize two passages to look at what the New Testament refers to as a faithful church.

1) A Kingdom of God Revolutionary Church is a Church of Great Faith.

The Nature of our Faith

- *Faith* is the buzzword in the media today to describe anyone who believes in any kind of religion.
 - Being a person of faith in this context can mean anything from believing in New Age Mysticism to having faith in Mother Earth.
 - This is not the faith of the Bible...this is not the faith being spoken of in our passage.
- There are so many definitions for faith today, but I believe the Bible gives us the clearest definition in Hebrews.
 - **Hebrews 11:1**
"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

- Faith has a substantial hope in something in the future.
- It must be related to *seeing something with substance.*
- Faith is always visual—seeing and believing that God is going to act in the future.
- It is future based...looking to the future for something you are hoping for.

- **Hebrews 11:6**

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. “

- We cannot please God without faith. In other words, God is always pleased when we try to live by our faith and not just our sight.

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6 KJV)

- Faith is believing God, trusting God, standing on God...in contrast to believing and trusting in ourselves.
 - Faith is not only *seeing the future* but it is believing that we will be rewarded for our faith.
 - Donald Grey Barnhouse has said, “Faith is a very simple thing. It is believing God’s word and acting upon it.”
 - This is quite simple but profound.
- There is a kind of popular view that faith has nothing to do with our down-to-earth lives.
 - That is not the faith of the Bible...we are to believe earnestly that God is going to really reward us for our faith!
 - It is believing God’s Word and acting upon it!

Rightly Placed Faith

- All of us have faith in something...everyone has faith.
- Our faith must be rightly placed.

- E.g., If you drive down Academy south, you will encounter a bridge that carries you over the Fountain Creek. You know that bridge is well built and strong, but it was not your faith that carries you over that bridge, it is the bridge that carries you over. If you had the same faith on a stormy night and Fountain Creek is flooding and the foundations of the bridge are crumbling, and you came to the bridge: same bridge, same faith, but as you cross over the bridge collapses...it was not your faith that made the bridge strong or weak.
- You must have your faith in something of substance...something that will not collapse under pressure.
- There are many counterfeits vying for your faith, but will they hold up under life's pressures?
- True faith is a simple thing. Faith is believing God's Word and acting upon it.
- Is your faith in the substance of God's Word, the Bible? Can you trust the God of the Bible? I believe that you can.
- E.g., We act all the time on the word of other people for our faith—we fly on planes because we have faith in a man in a cockpit whom we have never met, never seen...we don't know his character, his score in flying school, nor his ability to stay sober...but we place our faith in him.
- E.g., We ask the woman we love to marry us and she says, "yes," and we run out and make extravagant new plans for our life based on one word, "yes!!!"
 - We go out and buy an expensive ring.
 - Plan parties.
 - Plan a wedding service.
 - Use up all our savings for the ceremony and honeymoon...based on one word, "yes."
 - We change the rest of our future based on one word.
- Faith is very similar: I'm a sinner in need of salvation and God gave you His son, that if you will believe His Word, your entire life can be transformed.
- I am a sinner, hopelessly in debt to God, and He comes and He announces that He has paid the debt on our behalf.

- His life is placed to my account---where I had nothing in my favor. Christ communicated His credit of righteousness to my account. His life is deposited into my account.
- We have life because of Him.
- God says that He is satisfied with the death of His Son instead of my death.

2 Corinthians 1:20

“For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.”

- Trust God’s promises!
- Trust God’s leading in your life.
- Listen to Him and find fulfillment through a life of faith that trusts in God’s promises and power.

1 Thessalonians 1:3-4

2) A Kingdom of God Revolutionary Church is Known for Action.

- This is not a church that sits around, just doing services on Sunday. This is a church of action!
- This is a church with acts of faith, laboring in love, putting their hope in Christ.
- Paul always associated a faithful church as a church of love that was actionable.
- It’s about being in our community, making an impact in our city!

Vs. 5

3) A Kingdom of God Revolutionary Church is Rooted in the Word and Alive in the Spirit.

- Such a church is not just speaking about the power of God, rather the manifest presence and power of God is active.
- This is not just a Word Church, but a *Word accompanied with the Spirit Church!*
- *All Word no Spirit you dry up; All Spirit no Word you blow up; Word and Spirit you grow up.*

- The Holy Spirit is not just a doctrine but is the power of God moving, acting, and changing lives.
- A church of the Word and Spirit is a church that is guided and empowered by God's Word and enflamed by the Spirit.
- Let me illustrate it...
 - There are some churches that are enamored by the Spirit's power like a fireworks show...like a Roman Candle Fireworks show at the Fourth of July.
 - Some churches have built a wonderful fireplace but have never lit the flame.
 - A Kingdom Revolution Church is a church who uses fire to light the fire in a fireplace built on God's Word and it warms the whole house for generations.
- A church of faith is built on and centered in God's Word.
- Faith comes from God's Word and builds from God's Word.
- The Holy Spirit enflames the Word of God and it becomes living and active in the lives of the members.
- One writer explains, "The Lord has never promised to bless oratory, though he sometimes uses it. The Lord has never promised to bless music, though it may gush forth from the pressure of true blessing. But He has promised to bless His word. If we cleave to the word there must be blessing."

Vs. 6-7

4) A Kingdom of God Revolutionary Church has Joy in Adversity.

- The Thessalonican church was persecuted by the authorities from the day it was planted.
- The incident is recorded in Acts 17 in which the whole town came out and attacked Jason and dragged him out of his home.
- The persecution continued for years to come, and the church was stronger because of it.

- Someone has said, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.”
- We see Great Faith Churches in China today, in Burma, in Malaysia, Indonesia, in Iraq and all over the Middle East.
- Wherever the church is under persecution, we find great believers with great faith who form Great Faith Churches!
- Have you ever had your faith under fire? Have you ever been on trial for your faith? Have you ever suffered ridicule for your faith?
- This is really when we find out what our faith is made of...when we are persecuted for our love for Jesus.

Vs. 8-9

5) A Kingdom of God Revolutionary Church is constantly Reaching the Unchurched.

- The church in Thessalonica and Rome were evangelistic churches.
- At the core of the church is Christ...He is the cornerstone; He is the purpose; He is the Anchor; He is the Foundation.
- Jesus is proclaimed as the Way, Truth, and Life in all that He does.
- A church of faith is a church that has faith for sinners to get saved.
- All the programs and ministries are pointing people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- A church of faith is a church of evangelism that hasn't lost focus on the primary purpose of changing lives through Jesus Christ.

Faith and Doubts

- Faith is built upon the written Word of God and centered upon the Living Word and enflamed by the Holy Spirit.
- Faith is simple. It is believing God's Word and then acting upon it with our very lives.

Read...

- Faith looks at Christ and He produces life and righteousness; doubt tries to produce our own righteousness.

- Doubt looks at the obstacles; faith studies God's Word.
- Doubt will call attention to the desert of sin; faith calls attention to the streams of God's love and grace.
- Doubt will focus on past failures; faith hopes in a better future being worked out by a sovereign God.
- Doubt becomes hopeless and full of anxiety; faith believes that if we will persevere in our faith, we will be rewarded by God.
- E.g., Many years ago, there were two men in a boat who found themselves headed down the river toward Niagara Falls. People on the shore saw them and could do little to help. At last, however, a man threw a rope out and one of the men decided to grasp the rope. The other man decided to jump for a log that was floating nearby. It was a fatal mistake. The one was drawn to shore by the rope's connection to the people and the other was swept away in the current of the river and perished in the falls. Faith is the vital connection we can have with Christ; He holds the rope, the rope is His Word, it is as we cling to His Word that we are saved and delivered in this life...