

Mother of God Community  
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting  
March 22, 2009  
**Advancements in Faith**  
Mark G

What a wonderful God we have that God loves us and gives faith.

Welcome to you all tonight. God is here to bless you with new seeds of faith...and empower you with His Creator Spirit during this talk. May you grow in understanding and wisdom of what this Charismatic Faith and lift you to a new level of faith. Mother of God Community is all about Faith...the Life in the Spirit experience of Faith.

Let me clarify something, I'm not up here saying I'm any better than any of you or that any of you lack faith. My purpose is to tell you God wants to give you more faith.

When Damian Stayne was here he would constantly ask us – are you increasing in faith? When I spoke to him last he asked is there increase in faith at MOG. Please examine your life:

1. What is happening with your faith at MOG? Does MOG want to go to the next level?
2. Is our faith growing as a community or are we in a rut? Every year examine - Are you in relationships that are increasing your faith or decreasing your faith?
3. Do we regularly repent before God for our lack of faith? Damian does daily....
4. Is your faith a vague notion, something that remains vague in our lives or is it getting crystal clear by prayer and the Word of God?
5. Do I have Faith that moves mountain or move anything?

Damian Stayne provided helpful framework and training in how to increase faith in our modern world. He mentioned four areas and I reorganized them into levels of Faith. Level one is the most basic and is the facts, level 5 is actual actions of faith you take.

First, what does Scripture say: In Heb 12: 2 "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and the perfecter of our faith...who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. John 5:19

1. Hebrews Identifies Jesus as the author of all our faith. Jesus writes upon your heart all Faith and will help you on the way to completion. Jesus is the author. In the Gospels we witness that it is this faith that pleases Jesus and faith looks for in our hearts. The blind man, the paralyzed man – Jesus wants us to perfect our faith so we are seeing the hand of God working in everyday just as he was living to watch God the Father as we heard in John 5:19

We are going to begin where Damian left off in Aug. I'm *going* to briefly review a model for our discussion on Faith. This is just a model to help us understand better the dynamic faith of Damian Stayne Aug 2008. I called Damian recently and discussed again:

1. Faith of Creed
2. Faith of Salvation
3. Faith of Providence/faithfulness
4. Faith of our Position in Christ - Eph 2:10 Claim your seat
5. Faith of gift of Faith - faith for a specific task, event, other  
It is gift from God given to you for others to demonstrate God's glory, power, presence, knowledge, or attributes  
God gives you faith to perform a specific task – for his glory and for others...  
Sister Elena Guerra, Topeka, KS, Azusa Street,

**Level 1 Faith = Creed** - Creed from the church Fathers...proven by faith in miracles ... this is foundation of our faith...we must pray through.

Hebrews 11:1&3 "Now faith is being sure of what we hoped for and certain of what we do not see – v 3  
*By faith we understand that the universe was formed by God's command so that what is seen was not made out of what is visible. ....*

Sr. Mary Paula taught me this faith...Most of us have heard this by 4<sup>th</sup> grade Catholic Education classes

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The Creed and Church instruct believers to be full of faith and asks that we believe in Miracles. Damian Stayne asked us to read *Saints who raised the Dead* a written report on 400 people who were raised from the dead.

Saints believed the creed and daily brought it to their lives. Saints had such faith in the power of God that as they prayed God answered their prayer and literally raised people from the dead. That's belief – Do we need to believe this? You bet we do!

Vatican 1 – (1870) in Chapter 3 on Faith says...

“Nevertheless, in order that the obedience of the faith might be in harmony with divine reason, God willed that the interior help of the Holy Spirit there should be joined exterior proofs of his revelations, to wit, divine facts and especially miracles and prophecies, which, as they manifestly display the omnipotence and infinite knowledge of God, are most certain proofs of His Divine revelation adapted to the intelligence of men” Chapter 3 on Faith

III “If anyone shall say that miracles are impossible, and therefore that all the accounts regarding them, even those contained in Holy Scripture, are to be dismissed as fabulous or mythical, or that miracles can never be known with certainty, and that the divine origin of Christianity is not rightly proved by them, let them be anathema”

**Level 2 Faith = Salvation** : Jesus is the author of our faith...We have been saved by our faith in Jesus Christ and baptized into his church and we believe God will save us and our household and many others. This is a faith in the salvation for ourselves and others also.

**Example:** During my early years in community, I witnessed to all my friends of mine. One would scoff at me and make jokes God and my Catholic faith and say all sorts of spiteful comments. How can God care about me?

One day we had a long conversation, he asked me if I believed people go to hell? I said I do believe, if they didn't believe in the salvation in Jesus Christ. Do you think God died on a cross for the fun of it? He said “okay I get it”, but I want to have fun in life and not to worry about life.” I said – maybe someday you will remember and turn to God. I would share Gospel and he would drink and run off living the party life. We went our ways in life - I never thought that what I said made any difference, but I prayed for his salvation.

I got a call from my mother, she said, “Mark I ran into your friend's mother at the Safeway Grocery and she told me Donnie had died of a brain tumor but that “he wanted you to know something.” He had moved to AZ and gotten very ill and was diagnosed with a brain tumor and had a year to live. He had told his mother that if she ever ran into me to please tell Mark that before he died “he wanted to have the same faith of Mark Gargulinski”. When he found out he had a year to live, before he died he entered RCIA and had entered into the Catholic Church in good standing. She said he wanted to thank me. He believed in God and heaven.

Jesus had authored something that day – he wrote something upon his heart, not me!! I didn't have any idea it would result in what it did...this is salvation faith for others

All of the people here are meeting people, we need to pray that Jesus use us to serve His church in Gaithersburg, MD

**Level 3 Faith = Providence** = divine guidance or care – God conceived as the power sustaining and guiding your life

Romans 14: - anything done without faith is sin. Faith - Romans 14. Do we allow our faith to remain a vague notion or are we getting clearer that all we do is guided by God?.

If you could see your innermost person as God does, our hearts have a basic insecurity that God doesn't look after us. Man wants to connect with God. This connection is faith. We underestimate the reality of Gen. 2 - of how we were before the fall. We underestimate how far we fell from this divine state of walking

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with God and how much we need God. We underestimate the effect of sin. We think it's not that bad. It's no big deal! As we turn in Faith to God we learn he is faithful and gets us through all the difficulties we face

**Example:** In 1995 I was asked to leave my company. I was on the board of directors but disagreed with the direction the company was going. I felt I was going off a cliff! I was asked to leave so I did. I prayed to the Lord to provide for me. He told me to make a novena to St Joseph so I did.

On March 19 – Feast of St Joseph - I was offered a management position at Digital Equipment Corp.

Faith is not about these extravagances we see on TV, out of control experiences or overly emotional experiences like the media portrayal. Let me ask you should American media and Hollywood define what our faith is and isn't? People simply allow TV and the media to form our faith beliefs / opinion and we follow blindly.....

**Level 4 Faith:** This is vital. Eph 2:10-14 defines a faith position based on Eph 2:10 that you are seated in the heavenlies. Did you know that? This can only come from the Holy Spirit - baptism in the Holy Spirit is a faith experience in prayer before the throne of God – the right hand

Our challenge is - do we believe Jesus our Lord is there before the Father now? Do I believe I have access to the very throne of God now? When there – get a quickening sense in the Holy Spirit. My challenge as a business man is to stay there during my business day.

The fact is God has so much more for us - we can stay in a pose of faith vs self life of anxiety, manipulation of others, sin and worldiness.

As faith increases the cares of the world decrease their hold. To the degree you are out of sorts is the degree you are out of your faith position.

God's love is meant to be the foundation of our faith, every day. As we come to *experience* his love and build our lives on it, other things are less and less of a big deal a faith for others should begin to grow within us...– they no longer affect us in the depth of our being. We will know that God's love for us is infinitely greater, and is unchanging. God wants to give us a confidence and joy that nothing can take away.

**Level 5 Faith = Charismatic Faith** = a gift from Holy Spirit to do a specific task. Its aim is for others – others to grow in love relationship with God and others. And this is why we have Sunday night prayer meeting!

Heb. 11:1 – Now faith is being certain of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see...

Damian said, "In our experience this may or may not be accompanied by feelings of faith. If I waited for a feeling of faith I would have only prayed over 10 people in the last twenty years. I would never have prayed over anyone."

**Faith = RISK** – How are you doing? Risk at Sunday night prayer meeting with us – Risk at prophesy and healing – Risk at word of knowledge...Every SNPM we should leave here with the gift of Faith.

Jn 14:12 – He who believes in me, the works that I do also, and greater works than these he will do, because I go to my Father. Do you believe this?

What we know of faith remains at beginner levels we stay at the theory – creed level. Many in the church are still at the theory-only level and try to disprove the miracles of God's power and authority. They know the theory but not the reality or the substance of their lives...1 Peter 1:7 says Faith is of greatest worth in your life, it is of greater worth than anything else in our lives even gold...

**So what hinders this faith?**

1. Unbelief vs faith
2. Critical vs faith
3. Self-righteousness vs faith

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4. Spiritual envy vs faith (we put blessed people down to build self)
5. Unrepentant vs Faith
6. Obstinate vs Faith

**Examples** of Charismatic Faith:

1. Prayed over a woman going through one of the community classes, she told us she had cancer. We prayed in faith for a healing – she was healed of cancer...
2. My Mother called me this week – her favorite cousin Pat Hall has brain cancer. Doctors say there is no hope...Pat is healed?
3. A friend acted in Faith when he went downstairs in Hotel in NYC at the Lord's prompting and saw his father whom he had not had any contact with for many years. They talked and became reconciled.

Kathy Stayne and I spoke recently about moving to the next level of Charismatic faith. Kathy told me that her thoughts are quite simple

1. Ask God: Go ask God for more faith to do something. This faith is for others, not you.
2. Start realistically: what are a few things that are on your heart?
3. What are some things that you could have faith for? Don't start with asking difficult things like raising the dead, performing miracles, but with something you believe God can do.

Kathy started with asking God for faith for her son's ability to do math – to have decent friends. She prayed and God made something very clear to her. She started off and bought a text and went to work she prayed everyday that she was faithful...

1. Intercession – keep praying for others until things change
2. Keep a list: this means we are good at forgetting. We ask God to do something and if we forget we asked and fail to recognize it anyway.
3. Leave results with God. I prayed for my friend's salvation

**Let's pray:**

Heavenly Father, I praise you for the wonderful fullness of faith you have called us to. I praise you for sending our Lord Jesus who went before us and is perfecting our faith tonight. We humbly ask you to increase our faith relationship with you. Infuse more faith in each of us that we might believe in those things that do not appear and they appear as fruit of our faith.

Whatever level you relate to really doesn't matter – Let us ask God to give you the grace to use the faith you have.

**Questions from Sunday night: The objective of tonight's talk is to encourage you, to advance in your faith walk...**

1. Level 3 faith believes in God's providence. When have you seen God work matters out in your life that you felt were impossible? Do you now believe that in his providence he will in fact work through impossible areas in your life? Can you dare to believe?
2. Level 4 faith is a faith attitude or a spiritual position God has given to you by the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. As you pray [Eph 2:10-14](#) have you experienced this deepening in the Spirit?
3. Level 5 faith is when God gives you faith for a task. What is an example of this in your life?