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Good morning. My title for today's sermon is: Even the demons believe.

And my text to draw that from is The new living Translation James chapter 2:19-20. You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror. How foolish! Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless?

Do you believe the whole Bible? Just parts of it? Is it a buffet, you just pick and choose what you like? What do you believe and why do you believe it? The Bible starts in Genesis, but belief and faith start with the Gospel.

There are many fantastic stories littered throughout the scriptures that will stretch anyone's belief.

From the beginning of Genesis and the miracle of creation, to the book of Revelation and the fact that God himself will destroy the earth with fire...

There's also a fantastically large flood that covered the whole world in liquid judgment.

Then there are giants, and I mean giants, that Joshua and the isrealites had to destroy once they entered the promised land. These giants made the isrealites look the size of grasshoppers.

And there were the 3 young men who defied the king of Babylon and walking in a fire turned up 7 times hotter than normal without so much as a minor

sunburn; because there was a fourth who entered with them and their faith was secure in that fourth.

The Bible tells us that Elisha's bones brought a man back to life in 2 Kings 21:13...

In Joshua chapter 10, Joshua in his great need commanded the sun and moon to stand still to because he needed more daylight to gain victory over the enemy and God honored his command... the sun stood still for about a day. There is also an instance in 2 Kings chapter 20 where King Hezekiah asks God for a confirmation, or a sign, that the prophet is telling the truth and asks God to turn the sun dial backwards, and God grants his request.

Don Stewart, a Bible scholar and prophecy expert, says in an article in the blue letter Bible : Attempts to explain this scientifically or to relate it to some calendrical adjustment - perhaps in conjunction with Joshua's long day (Josh. 10) - have not been fully believed by students of science or chronology. It is best to admit that we do not know the explanation but to accept the testimony of the word of God to the fact a miracle took place (Geoffrey W. Grogan, Isaiah, The Expositors Bible Commentary, Vol. 6, Frank E. Gabelein, General editor, Grand Rapids Mi: Zondervan, 1986, p. 236).

The Bible asks of us to believe angels are always in attendance, demons still roam the earth and an angel that once was a jewel of heaven is now a sick, sadistic being with no remorse or care of any creature anywhere but himself.

Then of course there is Jesus himself, the selfless Son of God who emptied himself of his kingly place in heaven, then emptied himself of any status on earth, then finally emptied his body of blood on a Roman cross to save us from our sins, only to be raised to life again three days later to secure our future with Him.

So what kind of faith do we have?

In my studies I have found 6 aspects to faith.

first is saving faith vs intellectual faith. To illustrate -if we are sinking in a boat, do we just look and admire the the life jacket or do we trust the life jacket to save us, and then actually put it on. Roman's 10:9 says confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead and you will be saved. This is true. James 2:14-26 just expands on that statement. Saving faith will have works following closely behind. Because if you don't actually put on the life jacket, you will drown.

next is a personal faith; Our faith is in a personal God. Rev 21:3 says we will be his people and He will be our God. John 14:23 says for those that keep his word the Father and Son will come to them and make their home with them. Our God has always, since the beginning with Adam, wanted a personal relationship with his kids. He would walk with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day- Genesis 3:8. Think about how much a good good father would look forward to that walk each day. He is a personal God. And we can pray to Him saying Abba father.

Third is a powerful faith. a faith that destroys walls, giants, strongholds, and worldly philosophies. This faith is not just miraculous signs and wonders, as powerful as those are, but also the transformation of a human heart made of stone to a heart of flesh along with the forgiveness of sins. Matthew 9:5-6 Jesus forgives and heals the paralytic. Not only is the healing powerful, but so is the forgiveness. Because it is only God who can forgive our sins. Now Mark 10:25-26 says its easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle... with man this is impossible, but with God ALL THINGS are possible. That's true power and authority.

fourth is practical faith. You need this faith in the day in and day out routines and through the ups and downs of life. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 - For

we remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. This faith will help you raise your children, deal with a difficult boss, and get through rush hour traffic without swearing or road rage. You can use this faith all the time, every day, and in all circumstances.

Number five is a faith that accepts. accepts Jesus for the God he is and accepts the way He runs his ship. Matthew chapter 11 shows that while John the Baptist was in prison he was doubting that Jesus was the One. Even after baptizing Jesus himself, seeing the dove, and hearing the audible voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," still had doubts because of the way Jesus was running his ministry. He was confused because he wasn't a more political or military style messiah. He asked if He was the One or should we be looking for another. Jesus replied, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

Don't worry if you have doubts. Everyone has doubts from time to time. After Jesus responded to John's disciples he responded to his audience by saying of all born of a woman there is none greater than John. And after Thomas doubted, Jesus did not rebuke him but he said blessed are those who have not seen yet believe. It's OK to work through doubts, and it's OK to ask questions like John did. A strong faith and some good prayers will see you through the doubts.

Those 5 aspects of faith all lead to the sixth; a faith that perseveres. Matthew 24:13 says but the one who endures to the end will be saved. Also James 1:12 says blessed is the one who perseveres to the end under trial. Without a faith that's powerful, practical, and personal you won't get through the toughest times of life. When your kids take a wayward path, when your spouse fights cancer, when you lose your job from downsizing, or you lose a child from sickness. Having your faith rooted in a

good God will see you to the end. When you finally close your eyes to this world and open them to glory.

And finally ladies and gentlemen, remember the words of the Holy Spirit through Paul in Phillipians 1:6. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray. Father, I thank you for your words. Words of affirmation and encouragement. I pray that your words don't fall to the ground but are heard and taken to heart, and that it changes lives. I pray that faith is strengthened, and doubts are resolved, and we know what we believe and why we believe it. In Jesus name we pray these things. And everyone said, Amen.

Thanks for coming everyone. Please be an encouragement to others this week, God bless.

