

Faith Series: The Threefold Cord of Faith

Where do you live and minister? Is it a place full of broken promises... broken dreams... broken people? Or, is it a city bursting with fulfilled promises... fulfilled dreams... fulfilled people?

Wouldn't it be great to live and minister in a place of fulfillment and not brokenness? Wouldn't it be great to go into the next year, and the next – full of a hope and expectation - that is part of something so strong it cannot be broken by the forces at work around you, by life in the big city... or small town... or wherever?

FAITH

Habakkuk 2:4 (NKJV)

*“Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; **But the just shall live by his faith.**”*

Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NKJV)

*“Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. **And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.**”*

There are many elements to faith. We will look at three. They form a threefold cord, which can be the cloak of security you wrap yourself in... the fabric of abundant life that you stand upon... the umbrella of protection you walk under... the place you live. In short, it can be everything you need it to be.

THE SUBJECT

The Threefold Cord of Faith

FAITH FAITH FAITH FAITH FAITH
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1. An unwavering commitment to the God of all grace!
2. An undisturbed confidence in the divine promises of His grace!
3. An unshakeable submission to the power of His grace!

THE PURPOSE → **Romans 12:2 NKJV**

Colossians 1:9, 10 NKJV

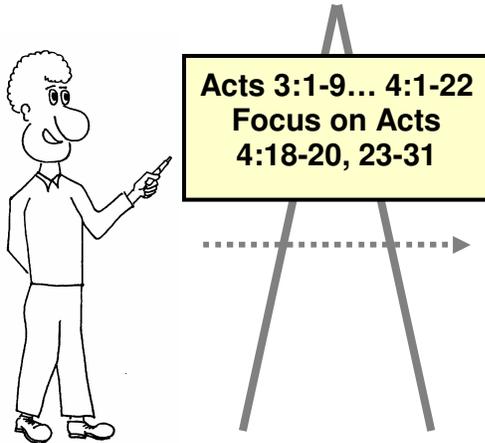
THE PROCESS → **2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV**

*“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth**”*

First Cord of Faith

An Unwavering Commitment to the God of All Grace!

The Miracle



(Acts 3:1-9 NKJV) “Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. {2} And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; {3} who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. {4} And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, “Look at us.” {5} So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive

something from them. {6} Then Peter said, Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. {7} And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. {8} So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them; walking, leaping, and praising God. {9} And all the people saw him walking and praising God.”

What happened next? An Unwavering Commitment!

(Acts 4:3, 7 NKJV) “And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening... {7} And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, “By what power or by what name have you done this?”

Acts 4:13, 18-20 NKJV) “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus... {18} And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. {19} But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. {20} For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”

(Acts 4:29-31 NKJV) “Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, {30} by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.” {31} And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.””

“...grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word”

Discussion Questions

The Peter and John we read of, in the Book of Acts, were unshakeable in their commitment to Jesus. They had seen Him resurrected and witnessed His miracles. We have not seen Jesus. Many of us have not worked miracles. None of us has walked with Him in the way Peter and John did.

1. How did God’s grace work in the Apostles lives?
2. How will God’s grace work in your life, should you find yourself in a situation beyond your control?
3. What does grace mean to you? Write down three different thoughts you have about this answer:

| Definitions of Grace |
|---|
| First Thought concerning the Definition |
| Second Thought concerning the Definition |
| Third Thought concerning the Definition |
| Combination of the Three Thoughts = A Definition of Grace |



Dr. Abramson's Definition of Grace

Grace is all the goodness of God, stored up in heaven, just waiting for your time of need. It is always based on the quality of His loving character – never on the quality of our human failings. It always draws us closer to Him, placing us in the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of His wing (Psalm 91). Grace gives us the unlimited benefits of His presence and power. It is the very thing we need but could never bring about. It is the ultimate expression of the agape-love of God. It is fully validated and eternally assured by the blood of Jesus (which is the ultimate, eternal expression and guarantee of grace).

4. Can you think of anything present in your life that would cause your commitment to God to waiver that is beyond the reach of His grace?

Our First Cord is our first great opportunity. We can live with an unwavering commitment to the God of All Grace!

Second Cord of Faith

An Undisturbed Confidence in the Divine Promises of His Grace!

The Problem (Daniel 3:1-15)

What to do when confronted with an Image of Gold

“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon... {4} Then a herald cried aloud: “To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, {5} that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; {6} and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. {7} So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, and lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up...”

They would not bow!

.....

{8} Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and accused the Jews... {12} "There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up." {13} Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego... {14} Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? {15} Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"

They would not bend!

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Undisturbed Confidence... and Its Result! (Verses 16-25)

{16} Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. {17} If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. {18} But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up..."

"Our God is able to deliver us and He will... But if not..."

They would not burn!

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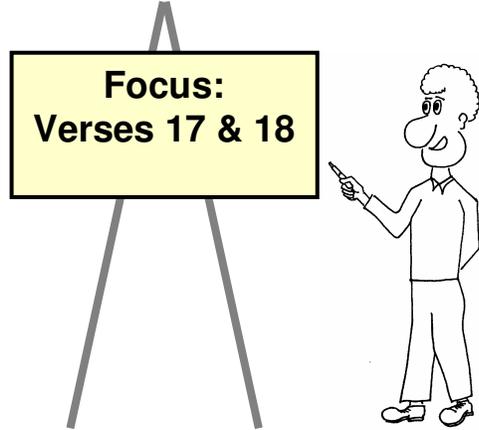
{24} Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." {25} "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.""

Paraphrase Verse 18

"Even if God does not deliver us, that is not the issue! We will only bow to Him!"

Discussion Questions

1. What emotions do you think they were feeling?
2. What did they say to the king that revealed how committed they were and showed their confidence that God would be faithful to them?
3. Even if they burned, what can be learned from their statements to the king?
4. Describe their attitudes about serving God.
5. Describe the deeper issue that the three young men faced, beyond whether they would be saved from a fiery death.
6. How might this apply to you today (even though nobody is trying to throw you into a literal furnace)?
7. Have you ever thought about what might cause you to deny God? Let's not think about furnaces. Let's think about everyday temptations?
8. Has the power of His grace ever kept you when your own power to resist abandoned you? Discuss this!



Our Second Cord is our second great opportunity. We can live with an undisturbed confidence in the divine promises of His grace!

Third Cord of Faith

An Unshakeable Submission to the Power of His Grace!

What does “the ‘power of submission’ mean to you?”

| The Power of Submission | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |

Submission is always seems the hardest part. You can believe in Jesus as the God of all grace. You can even have an undisturbed confidence that He can do what He says he will do... and that He has the power to do it! However, submission means surrender, denial of self and obedience without boundaries... twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week! Otherwise, Christ becomes your Divine Santa Claus. You only see Him as Savior and Gift Giver, but not Lord.

The Power of His Grace

We have already defined grace. Now let's look its power. Power has many definitions. One of them is, "the ability to act or produce an effect." Another is, "the right to govern or rule."

God's power can be stated as, "Exercising absolute control through His limitless ability and unchallenged legal authority to influence outcomes in all cases." God always has this ability and authority. The theological term describing this is "omnipotence."

Dr. Abramson's Definition of "The Power of His Grace."

"The power of His grace" is "the exercise of God's inherent, limitless ability and authority to send His grace to arrive on the scene, and bring to bear its full influence so that every outcome conforms to, and becomes the will of God."

Submission to the power of grace is twofold.

- **Externally:** Grace has an inherent ability to influence any situation to change, so that the situation you may find yourself in, submits to, or "bows its knee," to the name, the authority and the will of the Most High God. That is why Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego could say with confidence, "*He will deliver us!*" they knew the furnace had to submit to the will and omnipotence of Jesus in action!
- **Internally:** Grace has the inherent ability to cause not only the situation, the problem and its sources to "bow the knee," but more importantly, to influence you and me to do the same! Experiencing God's grace can be a life-changing thing.

Grace can be the overwhelming force that brings revelation and its resulting conviction in the believer. Grace can cause a person to press toward a holy life... a life that pleases God... a life fully submitted to Him. This is what we call sanctification. The Bible tells us Jesus is the Sanctifier. You need His grace to become saved and sanctified. Are you fully submitted to it?

(Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV) "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, {9} not of works, lest anyone should boast."

(Titus 2:11-14 NKJV) "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, {12} teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, {13} looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, {14} who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."

(Philippians 1:6 NKJV) "being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;"

Put it all together!

The Threefold Cord of Faith

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1. An unwavering commitment to the God of all grace!
2. An undisturbed confidence in the divine promises of His grace!
3. An unshakeable submission to the power of His grace!

*May God richly bless and keep you,
as you live by faith in the Son of God!*

Dr. Bob Abramson