

# The Story of Jesus

Published By Evangelist Van Billingsley

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## “That Thy Faith Fail Not”

*“But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” -- Luke 22:32*

All I wish to say about the term converted in this passage is to remind you that the finished work of the cross was not yet a reality and the Holy Spirit had not yet come down to indwell the believer. What I do wish to draw your attention to is that Jesus had prayed for Peter, that his faith fail not. As the song writer said, faith is easy when you're up on the mountain. It is in the valley that our faith is tested and tried. After hiding the baby Moses for three months, it appeared his parents' faith had failed them when they placed him in a basket by the river's brink, but it was then that their faith was truly tested and proven.

## Faith and Faithfulness

*by Evangelist Van Billingsley*

*“Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee. -- Daniel 6:16b*

*“So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.” -- Daniel 6:23b*

The theme in our last newsletter was faith. I am persuaded to continue that theme for this edition in light of what God has done in my life and what He has taught me through it all. This will be more of an editorial and a testimony than a sermon, but God has shown me and taught me some things I must tell!

We are all familiar with the story of Daniel in the lion's den. I will not be dealing with the story as a whole, but with two statements made

concerning Daniel's faith.

The first statement is made by the king who said, “Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee.” Do we serve God continually? Too many Christians live an on and off Christian life! I've even been around preachers who seem

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## *Our Ministry News. . .*



The update for this edition is a bittersweet report. God has done great and mighty things in my life and ministry in just the few short weeks prior to writing this news but this has come after walking through the deepest and darkest valley of my life. As I neared the end of my summer schedule I received the dreaded call that my mother had unexpectedly passed away. Upon dealing with this shock and subsequent grief I loaded my car during the night and began the eight hour drive home around daylight. This required cancelling several appointments remaining on that trip.

My mother was a faithful Sunday school teacher for well over forty years, the last ten of which she served at our mission church which we closed nine months earlier. Two of her former pastors summed up her life with the word "Faithful." One thing God comforted me with at that time was that life on this earth is temporary. As I shared at my mother's service, she lived her life on earth as though it was temporary by laying up her treasures in heaven and by pointing others toward that same goal.

God was good to me during this trial as He comforted me as well as how He has worked in my schedule. Getting back to business as usual was tough, but God allowed my schedule to gradually ease me back into that full swing of deputation and evangelism.

In the last few newsletters I have laid out the plan God has placed before me to work with small or struggling churches and church planters through missionary evangelism. One major part of this work is a partnership with the Paul Redmond family holding tent revivals with church planters across the United States. The Lord has shown me exactly what type vehicle was needed to convert to my RV and given us clear direction on the tent

that is needed. I have spent the past year on deputation raising support and raising funds for the bus and tent. After the first six months, I had virtually no funds raised until we sold the old school bus used in our mission church which my home church directed to my bus/RV fund. The Lord added to that during the following months and supplied the bus just a few weeks ago. This allowed me to turn my focus toward raising funds for the tent. Exactly one week after making the deal to buy the bus, one church donated much of the necessary funds for the tent after I presented this ministry and need to them. In fact, I ordered the tent a few days ago. "Praise the Lord!" We plan to pick the tent up at the end of October and we need to raise an additional \$900.00 by that time. If we were not able to pick it up at that time, it would cost us an additional \$500.00 to have it shipped. The Redmonds will be passing through that area at that time with the ability to haul it as they return home from their trip throughout the west. Please pray that the remaining funds will be provided by then so they can pick it up.

While God has blessed greatly in these last weeks by meeting these needs, my monthly support is a different story. In the present economy and the state of solid, fundamental Baptist churches across the nation, mission support is suffering. I hear regularly of veteran missionaries losing support and it is increasingly difficult for home missionaries to raise new support. I will reserve my words concerning faith in this matter for the article in this issue, but please pray that God will supply this needed support in due time.

In closing, I would like to publicly thank several of those who have allowed God to use them in meeting these needs. First, I would like to thank Oakside Baptist Church for directing the funds from our mission church bus toward my bus/RV fund. I would also like to thank Evangelist Mike Ragland and his family who previously made a generous donation

making the purchase of that bus possible several years ago. Then I would like to thank Para Daugherty of Pascagoula, MS as well as Watermelon Creek Baptist Church of Glenville, GA. Who each gave generous donations toward my bus/RV purchase. There were several other individuals who gave cash toward this ministry during my appointments, many

of which I do not even know. Finally, I would like to thank Harvest Baptist Tabernacle of Jonesboro, GA for giving a very generous donation toward the tent. To all who have and will help, I desire fruit that may abound to your account. Thank you!

A Servant of Christ,  
Evangelist Van Billingsley

## Our Support Needs:

### Monthly Support

Our monthly support is divided into three stages: (#1 not yet reached!)

1. *Required amount to survive while doing full-time ministry and deputation.*
2. *Amount to begin traveling with tent ministry.*
3. *Full support*

**Small Bus / Motorhome** (Supplied: Conversion to RV is underway!)  
**Tent and Trailer** (\* \$900.<sup>00</sup> needed to complete tent purchase)

(...continued from cover) **Faith, Faithfulness** to have multiple personalities or live double lives. Not that they have a life of sin and reproach, but simply that they have a life lived for the cares of this world which they must set aside when it is time to serve God. Paul said, "For me to live is Christ." To serve Him continually goes beyond church services and special meetings; it even goes beyond daily devotions and prayers at meals. To serve him continually means all day everyday. This is true faithfulness. You cannot schedule serving Him continually; there is no stopping and starting. It is not something we do; it is something we are! We can have families and friends. We can have hobbies and recreation, but these things should not be what we are about. I've heard it said and I believe it to be true that in this age of social media we can see what some folks really love and where their heart is. Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Today you might say, "Out of the abundance of the heart the finger typeth." It is clear that many Christians are not in love with the things of God.

The other statement is made by Daniel himself in the narrative of the story as he said, "No manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God." This is an interesting principle. God took care of Daniel because Daniel believed that He would! This is not as some false teachers claim, that if you believe it, it will happen and lack of faith is the only reason it doesn't happen. We cannot make something happen simply by believing it. This is no different from the world's holiday fairy tales of elves and magic when they say, "If you only believe" and "You have to believe." Believing does not make it so. Scripture does teach that we are to believe God and He expects us to have faith in what He has promised.

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(...continued from p.3) **Faith, Faithfulness**

These two statements in Daniel's life tells me two things: God honors faith, and God honors faithfulness!

Faith is not based on trial and error, nor is it based on logic and reason. Faith is based on God and His promises. Jesus said, "Have faith in God." It is that simple. As children of God, we walk by faith, not by sight.

We are told in Hebrews that it is impossible to please God without faith and that we cannot even become a child of God without faith. Faith is required to believe on Him in salvation. There is a song I hear on Christian radio which goes through a list of troubles and difficulties before declaring, "Try Jesus." That sounds pretty, but it is wrong. You don't "try" Him; you must trust Him! Many false professions are made by those at the end of their ropes so they try Jesus. That is not faith! You do not give Him a try. Faith is not taken on a trial basis.

There's been times when I've prayed and prayed but it seems my prayers went unheard. There's been

times when I've trusted God and claimed His promises when from a human standpoint it seemed those promises were just not true for me. I could have given up, but I knew better. Even when it seemed it would not work for me, I believed God. I believed His Word and I continued to trust in Him. It was some time ago that I realized I could honestly say I've never had a prayer He did not answer. I could not say that until I realized that "No" is an answer, and that "Wait" is an answer! Since that time, I've seen God do for me what seemed impossible.

When I wrote the article on faith for the last edition, I did so by faith, knowing there were things which seemed to not be happening that I was trusting God for, but now God has done. As I write these words, I am trusting Him to do more things that I depend on to go forward, but at present, do not seem to be happening. Not only do I believe in my heart but I act on that belief. I will continually go as He commanded and trust Him every step of the way because I believe God. I have faith in God. --VB

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proclaiming

### The Story of Jesus

-- A Missionary to our Homeland --

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