

# ***Not by Sight: Chunky Christianity!***

by Sonny Bowman

Slide Notes

## **Today's Goal & Purpose**

- We will be looking at faith
  - But not focusing on getting or using faith
- How to live an effective and overcoming life...
  - That glorifies God
  - That fulfills God's purposes
  - That brings peace and joy in general
- It's a simple message with profound implications

## **By Faith or By Sight?**

- "For we walk by faith, not by sight."  
— 2 Co 5:7 (NKJV)
- Two options
  - Walk by faith, or
  - Walk by sight

## **Your Walk**

- Paul used "walk" to help us focus on the *process* of living out our lives
  - "Walk" is motivated and guided by the destination
  - But "Walk" focuses on the journey (the process)
- Every Christian must make the transition
  - From living life in discreet chunks
  - To living life as a continuous process

## **Chunky Christianity**

- Example of a "chunky" Christian life...
  - At this moment you are in the Church "chunk"
  - Later you will be in a home "chunk"
  - Tomorrow you may be in a work "chunk"
- Paul is calling us to live an integrated and cohesive life of faith
  - Where you are the same is all parts of life
  - Where God's rules & protocol apply throughout
  - Where you are more focused on the journey than what's in it for you

I prefer chunky peanut butter. But chunky Christianity is not a good thing.

Your life is broken up into large chunks of time. Each chunk has its own set of rules and protocols. Often, the rules and protocols in one chunk will not play well in one of the other chunks. And, if people from one chunk of your life see how you are in a different chunk, they would probably label you as a hypocrite. Maybe that is why your life is so bumpy—chunky Christianity!

## **Smoothing Out the Chunks**

- “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”  
— 2 Co 5:7 (NKJV)
- The more you walk by sight, the more “chunky” your life becomes
- The more you walk by faith in God’s truth, the less disjointed your life becomes

## **How?**

- It sounds simple: walk by faith, not by sight
- Why do we have such trouble doing it?
- First, let’s look at walking by sight

## **To Walk by Sight...**

- Believe that you see things accurately and judge situations correctly
- Follow your emotions and feelings
- Do what seems best for now without thought for the long term
- Go with the flow
- Make sure your own needs are met
- Don’t spend much time reading, studying, meditating on, or applying the Bible in your life

It helps to look at what we need to do to walk by sight, then we can stop doing it!

Every one of us tends to believe that we see things accurately and we judge situations correctly. We know better, but we still do it! How stupid is that?

## **What Does “Walk by Sight” Produce?**

- Selfishness and pride
- Demanding your rights
- Unfulfilled expectations and anger
- Discouragement
- Disobedience to God
- Frequent confusion
- Disabling depression
- No long-term direction or purpose other than what seems to benefit you for the moment

## **Garbage in, garbage out**

- We tend to make decisions in life based on faulty input
  - what we see, hear, feel or otherwise perceive
- As a result, our choices are poor, our emotions are out of control, and we are defeated
- We need better input

## **Misplaced Faith**

- We can put our faith/confidence in a lie
- We do it often
- We believe and trust our own judgments and perceptions more than we believe God’s. That is arrogant and stupid!
- Faith that is not rooted in the nature, character, and Word of God is not godly faith

## Our Problem...

- First, we don't know what God says about a situation, so how can we walk in faith?
- Second, we trust our own ability to discern truth about a situation. We trust our perceptions based on what we see, hear, feel, or think more than we trust what God has said about it.

## The Bible Says Faith is...

- Evidence of things we hope for
  - “Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.” — Heb 11:1 (NLT)
- Required if we are to be pleasing to God
  - “And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.” — Heb 11:6 (NLT)

These are excellent verses about faith. Unfortunately, they don't help me understand exactly how to walk in faith.

## Faith is...

- Simply believing what God says
  - “By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.” — Heb 11:3 (NLT)

This verse is useful in helping us understand what Paul meant by “walk by faith.”

How did this faith about creation come. By believing what God said about it. We know God created the cosmos out of nothing because He told us so in Genesis 1.

In the 70's, a popular bumper sticker: God said it, I believe it, that settles it. Later, another version came out that said: God said it and that settles it—whether I believe it or not.

## Which Reality is Really Real?

- Only God accurately perceives reality – that which is really real
- Therefore, we must walk by what God says instead of by just what we see, hear, feel, or perceive on our own
- Otherwise, we are highly susceptible to believing lies
  - To Walk by FaithRead
  - Study
  - Meditate
  - Apply

Only God sees reality without distortion. Our view of reality is always limited and distorted. Our perspective cannot provide a full or accurate view of reality. So we must rely on God's view rather than our own.

## What Does “Walk by Faith” Look Like?

- Obedience – Jam 1:22
- Love – 1 Cor 13:2, 13
- Serving God and others – Gal 5:13-16
- Patience – Heb 6:12
- Purpose – 2 Tim 3:10
- Joy – Rom 15:13
- Peace – Isa 26:3

The more you are walking in faith, the more you will see these things in your life. Remember, the walk of faith is a growing process. Enjoy the journey!

## Increasing Your Faith

- Faith is not just “I hope so”
- Nor is faith simply ignoring circumstances
- Faith must be rooted in the nature, character, and Word of God
- “So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” — Ro 10:17 (NKJV)
- To have faith about something, you must first know what God says about it

I hope I will a million bucks! I hope my family and I stay healthy all our lives. I hope there is someone who will love me.

“The cat didn’t eat my bacon”

Since living your life by faith is a process, there are ways you can speed it up.

Hearing is more than simple hearing the words with your ears.

When I read in the Bible, I am sometimes aware that I am hearing the words in my mind. But sometimes, I realize that I am not really hearing the words, I am simply mouthing them in my mind. I am not hearing what the words are saying. When that happens, no faith is produced, no change is empowered, no life is imparted.

It is critical that you really hear what God is saying in His Word. Think about what He means and how it should impact your life. Spend time meditating on the things you are reading.

## Helpful Tips

- Establish a daily Bible reading plan
- As you read, ask yourself...
  - What does it say?
  - What does it mean?
  - How does it apply to my life?
- For specific areas of concern, use resources
  - [www.life4square.com/verses](http://www.life4square.com/verses)
  - Topical Bible (Nave’s, others)
  - Quick Scripture Reference for Counseling by John G. Krus ( & others)

References that we have used in our *Finding Light in Darkness* course which is another great resource along with *Building Blocks of Life*, both of which you can download for free from the Life Church web site.

## **Faith In Spite of Feelings**

- “For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life.” — 2 Co 1:8 (NKJV)
- “For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside *were* conflicts, inside *were* fears.” — 2 Co 7:5 (NKJV)

Having faith does not mean you will not have conflicting emotions such as fear. Faith empowers you to move forward in opposition to the feelings. And as you move forward in faith, you will overcome your feelings rather than being overcome by your feelings.

## **Time to De-Chunk!**

- It’s time to tear down the walls (lies) that separate your life into various chunks
- Live your life as one cohesive process while you pursue walking in faith
- The choice is yours, the time is now!

## **Strip Down for the Race**

- “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won’t become weary and give up. After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin.” — Heb 12:1-4 (NLT)

The picture Paul is painting for us is one of a runner. In a major race, runners wear and carry only a minimum of stuff to keep from being slowed down.

Endurance is another critical part of a race. A runner may be in the lead, but if he collapses 5 feet from the finish line, he will not win the race. A runner must be in it for the entire duration. We must have the same determination.

The best way for us to keep things in perspective is to keep our eyes on Jesus. The minute you take your eyes off Him, you will begin to slow down and get distracted. And when (not if) we get discouraged, we have the example of Jesus and others to show us it can be done and that the reward is worth it.