

Faith is Not Lived Out In Isolation

Luk 22:31-32 ESV "Simon, Simon, behold, **Satan demanded to have you** (*plural speaking of all the apostles*), that he might **sift** you (*plural*) like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you (*singular*) **that your faith may not fail**. And when you have turned again, **strengthen your brothers.**"

Our faith is under attack (that your faith may not fail)

- SIMON SIMON --- Jesus reminds him of his weakness - a reed (issues to be worked out)
- DEMANDED - to demand (for trial): - **Satan needs permission** (think of Job)
- SIFT - it is not apparent to me that Satan is aware of the good that will come from the sifting
 - (Paul -- a messenger of Satan to buffet me - grace sufficient it was to keep him humble)
- If sifting separates wheat from chaff, is that not a good thing? ---
 - Weak SIMON was arguing who is the greatest, overconfident - I will die for you -- will turn into one who is able to STRENGTHEN YOUR BROTHERS

Jesus prays FAITH will not FAIL --- why? There is a risk it will - Satan wants to destroy our faith

- FAIL - cease (die): - fail ---
- **WHEN YOU** HAVE TURNED AGAIN - strength the brothers (no more "Who is the greatest?")

Strengthen the brothers -- Faith is not lived out in isolation, but lived out in community with others

Thessalonian church - Paul was there 3 weeks, and had to run from persecution

Chap 2 - they were chased out of the city, but now there is a burden to see how they are doing

- 1Th 3:1-13 ESV Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, 2 and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, **to establish and exhort you in your faith**, 3 that no one be **moved by these afflictions**. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. 4 For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know.
- **Afflictions can MOVE us** Or affect our faith negatively (shaken)

Paul's burden, fear that the tempter had gotten to them and FAITH had failed...labor would be in vain

- 5 For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, **I sent to learn about your faith**, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.
- **The tempter can affect their endurance of faith**

Paul's Great joy when their FAITH was intact - We live if you are standing fast

- 6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the **good news of your faith** and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you-- 7 for this reason, brothers, **in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith.** 8 **For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord.**
- 1Th 2:18-20 ESV because we wanted to come to you--I, Paul, again and again--but Satan hindered us. 19 For **what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting** before our Lord Jesus at his coming? **Is it not you?** 20 For you are our glory and joy.

Desire to go back and supply what is lacking in their FAITH

- 9 For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, 10 as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may **see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith**? 11 Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, 12 and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, 13 so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Faith is not lived out in isolation

- 1) Our faith is under constant bombardment, affliction, suffering, work of Satan
- 2) Jesus is praying for us - yet our faith must remain intact.....
- 3) When we are turned back again -- he has a mission for us - strengthen the brothers

We need each other - this is the way God designed the church to be
Get in community in order to be encouraged
Get into community to be an encourager