

## Growing in Faith

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for...*

Hebrews 1:11 KJV

When I learned this verse I learned it in the King James Version of the bible. When I quote this verse to myself I usually don't use the NIV. My mind remembers how I first learned it. I like how the KJV interprets it because faith truly is the substance of our Christianity.

The word substance is defined as that which underlies outward manifestations, real, unchanging, the essence or nature of something, that which constitutes anything that is. Faith is the rock that our hope and our reality in Christ are built on. Therefore, now that we know Jesus, we see things from a different perspective.

One day I was sitting with a group of Elim brothers at a restaurant in South Jersey. As we were having breakfast and talking I saw this guy get out of his car and take two cages out of his hatchback. He set them in the parking lot of the restaurant and then opened the small latched doors. Suddenly out came pigeons. They flew quickly away and then were gone. The passenger side of the car opened. The man's wife got out and they both came into the restaurant. I was sitting way back in the restaurant, far from the front door, but I wanted to get up and ask this guy what in the world he was doing. My guess was that he was taking pesky pigeons from his home someplace in New York and letting them go here in NJ! Now they were our problem.

It was amazing that later that week I saw a program on TV that was about these very same birds. There are pigeon-like birds that were bred to carry news from city to city many years ago. They are still being bred and the owners will take them up to 600 miles away from home and they will find their way back. These birds have an accuracy to find home even in the worst weather. Does that speak to you about developing a sound faith? People of faith can find Jesus in any and all circumstances.

A. W. Tozer in his book, *The Root of the Righteous*, wrote: "A real Christian is an odd number anyway. He feels supreme love from One he has never seen., talks familiarly everyday to Someone he cannot see, expects to go to heaven on the virtue of Another, empties himself in order to be full, admits he is wrong so he can be declared right, goes down in order to get up, is strongest when he is weakest, richest when he is poorest, and happiest when he feels the worst. He dies so he can live, forsakes in order to have, gives away so he can keep, sees the invisible, hears the inaudible, and knows that which passes knowledge."

Faith is real substance. It leads you home to Jesus. It finds hope in the midst of the storm. It provides strength to stand in the middle of uncertain times. It gives one the ability to fly above the earthly perspective and to see what Jesus sees.