“Shall he Find Faith on the Earth?”

Elder Wirthlin
Member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
General conference October 2002

Comprehensive summary:

In the primary hymn we read "Faith is like a little seed if planted it will grow." Children's song book Hymn 96. This is the basis of faith, our faith will grow as we put forth the effort to do what is necessary. Elder Wirthlin in the 2002 October general conference elaborated what it truly means to have, and exercise faith. He bases his talk around three requirements for faith, absolute confidence, action, and absolute conformity.

Absolute confidence: We must have confidence in those things which we cannot see. The example of Thomas, was brought up by elder Wirthlin, whom believed only after he saw, and the Savior commended those of us who believe and yet have not seen (John 20:29). I

Action: Elder Wirthlin encourages us to act on what we hear. He gives an example of president Hinckley and how those who heard his talk, acted, and were blessed. When I think of this principle I think of elder Eyring who shares the following experience, "Years ago I heard President Ezra Taft Benson speak in a conference like this. He counseled us to do all we could to get out of debt and stay out. He mentioned mortgages on houses. He said that it might not be possible, but it would be best if we could pay off all our mortgage debt. I turned to my wife after the meeting and asked, "Do you think there is any way we could do that?" At first we couldn't. And then by evening I thought of a property we had acquired in another state. For years we had tried to sell it without success." in the end Elder Eyring was able to pay off his mortgage through selling this piece of land. This story increases my faith to act. (2010 October General Conference, Trust in God, Then Go and Do, Sun Morning Session - Henry B. Eyring)

Absolute conformity: When I first heard this title I was a bit hesitant to find out what he was going to mean. I have a high need for control and do not like to be told what to do. I do however have no problem conforming to God's will. Elder Wirthlin gives an example of a sparrow who thinks he can fly through a hurricane. Because of the laws of nature this is not possible and the sparrow soon comes to this sad truth. We too must learn to conorm to the laws of God in order to have true faith. We must not invest our faith in those things that are not in accordance with the will and standards of God.

Personal Insights:

I was impressed with the three stages of faith, absolute confidence, action, and absolute conformity. The words Absolute stood out to me, because it has the assumption of no doubt. When we are absolutely certain we have no room for error. In the world of statistics if you used the word absolute in your statistics they would think you had gone mad. We are truly to be absolute in both of these cases to exercise true faith.

I have an abiding belief in Thomas S Monson as our prophet. I remember when President Hinckley died and President Monson was sustained. I was uncertain of having a new prophet. I prayed and remember receiving a confirmation that President Monson is the prophet of God. I have no problem following the prophet of God because I know that he is the prophet. This knowledge strengthens my faith.

The example given of Elder Wirthlin having a cataract that blinded him from the light, causes me to reflect in my own life what I am doing that might be holding my faith back. I could definitely increase my scripture time and personal prayer time. I feel that these activities done with real intent (Moroni 7:6) would help remove any spiritual cataracts from my life.

Elder Wirthlin talks about teaching his grandchildren the principles faith through challenging them to act and asking them questions. Teaching is fundamental in learning about any aspect of the gospel. I am impressed to learn everyday new and exciting ways to teach and inspire others to learn. I am inspired by elder Wirthlin's advice on how to teach others about faith.

I was intrigued at the question posed in the scripture found in Luke 8:18 "Shall he find faith on the earth?" It is almost an invitation for us to have faith. It is not guaranteed that the savior will find faith and he wants to know if he is going to find it. I will have faith, and be able to say yes He will find faith on the earth.

Questions:

- What are more effective ways to teach faith?
- How does faith and blind obedience differ?
- Is it possible to have too much faith?