Faith, Hope, and Love Lesson 27 April 21 Acts 25: 13-27, 26 King Agrippa

Q1. (Faith) This chapter contains the third recitation of St. Paul’s conversion experience. But, his faith was not based solely on that one time event, powerful though it was. His faith was also based on a continuing, day to day relationship with the Risen Lord. How can you have that same relationship with Jesus?

Acts 26:22

22 But I have enjoyed God’s help to this very day

Q2. (Hope) St. Paul is telling the king that the twelve tribes of Israel have long shared the very hope that St. Paul professes the hope of the resurrection and eternal life with God? He even cits Moses as sharing that belief. So it is with Christians today. But, he asks the question of why so many do not believe. How would you answer his question?

Acts 26:6-8, 22-23

6 But now I am standing trial because of my hope   
in the promise made by God to our ancestors.

7 Our twelve tribes hope to attain to that promise as they fervently worship God   
day and night; and on account of this hope I am accused by Jews, O king.

8 Why is it thought unbelievable among you that God raises the dead?

22 But I have enjoyed God’s help to this very day, and so I stand here testifying to small and great alike, saying nothing different from what the prophets and Moses foretold,

23 that the Messiah must suffer and that, as the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

Q3. (Love) St. Paul’s faith was not limited to his own personal welfare and hope of the resurrection. He was impelled by the Lord to take that faith into the world of Jews, Gentiles, and pagans even at the risk to his life. How can you take your faith into the community and world around you as St. Paul did?

Acts 26:17-18

17 I shall deliver you from this people and from the Gentiles to whom I send you,

18 to open their eyes that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may obtain forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been consecrated by faith in me.’

A1. A relationship with Jesus requires the same types of efforts necessary to maintain an important relationship with another person.

* You have to spend time with that person. With Jesus we call that prayer
* You want to find out more and more about that person. With Jesus, the best source is the Bible and related activities: Bible Study, retreats, spiritual reading,
* You want to do the same things that person does. With Jesus, he was all about making life better for people through teaching, healing, and casting out demons. Although I cannot do much healing or casting out demons, I can help people learn more about Him and have greater confidence in Him.
* You have to be willing to do the things he asks you to do. Primarily that means serving my neighbors through Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

A2. I don’t think I can answer that question. I can only answer for myself why I do believe that God raises the dead. I believe in God and in His Son, Jesus. That He is who He says He is, the eternal Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. As God, Incarnate and risen from the dead under His own power, I believe that he has the power to raise anyone from the dead. He is the Lord and giver of life. If he can create life, He can restore life. And, He has promised to raise me from the dead to share eternal life with Him if I persevere in fith to the end and serve my neighbors with love.

A3. One of the Spiritual Works of Mercy is to instruct the ignorant. I think this is most important in matters of faith. Of course, everyone is ignorant to some degree or another, so we all need instruction. But, as an adult, aware of my own ignorance, I can take it upon myself to seek instruction to advance my faith. For that, my principal vehicle is Bible Study. What I learn I try to pass on by instruction and example.