



“We walk by faith, not by sight,” the Apostle Paul wrote to the people in the first church in Corinth.

I’ve been thinking about that this week, given that we learned on Wednesday that our redevelopment project was officially awarded tax credits. I’ve been thinking about what Paul meant when he said, “We walk by faith, not by sight.” I’ve decided that somehow the knowledge of good and evil blinds us to the non-physical realities all around us. Somehow,

gaining knowledge and relying only on our brains to process the world in which we live has confined us to our five physical senses: taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing. We have become adept at studying our world in these ways while our ability to recognize that we are connected with each other and with God in non-physical ways has atrophied.

Take Adam and Eve, for example. THEY didn’t have to differentiate between faith and sight. They had a close relationship with God, who walked with them and talked with them. Their physical reality and the reality we aspire to after we physically die were one and the same: they were with God. What they saw, what they had, was what we hope to get in heaven: an eternal place to be, at peace with absolutely everything and in communion with our creator.

Here’s what Adam and Eve had, and what we hope for: No pain. No need for gain. No losing. No winning at another’s expense. No haves and have nots. No war. No immigrants. No domestic violence and no graffiti. Just love and harmony and life with one another and God.

Paul differentiated this ideal life after our death from our current “home” in our physical bodies. Paul said that now we are at home in our bodies, but in future we will be at home with God. Adam and Eve didn’t need faith to be at home with God, not at first. They had what we hope for and trust in.

But we humans are not in Eden any more. Paul called this situation being “at home in the body ... away from the Lord.” I call this being “blinded by sight.”

Paul said that faith allows us to overcome our difficulty in directly perceiving God while we are in our earthly bodies. Hebrews chapter 11 verse 1 provides the classical definition of faith: “Now faith is

the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” This means that faith is trust that God exists and will deliver what he promised.

Adam and Eve didn’t need faith at first because they were one with God. After they got ejected from Eden, THAT’S when they needed faith, faith that they would be given what they had lost.

I’ll tell you who lived in faith throughout his life: Abraham. Abraham trusted in God, who told him to leave where he was and go to a foreign place to put a new salvation plan in motion. Abraham trusted in God, who gave him a mission and a destiny. Scripture says God counted Abram’s faith as righteousness because he did what God had given him to do.

Did you know that Abraham’s gravesite, which he purchased in that foreign land, gave his descendants legal right to the land that God promised them? That little beachhead, right there, in the middle of “nowheresville,” would later become the Cave of the Patriarchs in the city of Hebron, 19 miles south of Jerusalem. Even today, Jews believe the Cave of the Patriarchs is the point of entry for people traveling to their eternal Promised Land.

I’ll tell you who ELSE needed great faith: Moses. Talk about a person with a perception of God! God created Moses to lead his kin from slavery in Egypt—crooned that little love song in his ear while his lifeboat of a basket was rocking among the bulrushes waiting for Pharaoh’s daughter to rescue him and set God’s freedom plan into action. With this destiny from birth, why are we surprised that Moses should hear God talking to him from a burning bush?

In faith, Moses led his people from Egypt through the wilderness to the edge of the future that God had promised them. If Moses had led by sight, he would have died of thirst in the desert, surrounded by rocks filled with water. This water was only available if Moses turned faith into action by striking the water-filled rock as God had commanded.

Moses had faith, the rock-solid faith that he was doing what God had instructed him to do. Moses had faith that God had the outcome under divine control. As our own Vestry recently said, “God’s got this; we just have to do our part.” THAT’S faith, faith in action.

There are a lot of people in the Bible who didn’t live in faith. Jonah, for example, was so sure of his analysis, so confident that his brain could most accurately predict the future, that he ignored God’s call to mission and headed the other way. You know how THAT response played out.

There are unseen realities at play in our world, realities we cannot see, realities we need faith to be assured about. And if we have faith, if we act in faith, God will count our faith as righteousness. I am

comforted to know that faith can make up for our lack of perfection. Because by ourselves, “No one is righteous; no not one.”

If we had proof of the spiritual realities of this life, we wouldn’t need faith. However, faith is necessary, somehow, to crossing the great abyss after death to ultimately be with God. Time and again throughout Jesus’ life here he said, “Your faith has made you well,” and “Your faith has saved you.”

We at Church of the Resurrection are walking by faith. We have faith individually that there is more to life than we can see or experience physically. As individuals, we have faith that, after our life here is over, we will return to the Lord if put our faith into action while we are here. Will we be like Abraham and Moses? Will we walk the walk and strike the rock as instructed by God? Will we rest in the Cave of the Patriarchs or pass through on our way to the Promised Land?