



When It Seems Your Faith Isn't Working

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Grace Fellowship of Morehead, KY



Where are all the answers to prayer?

YES...we have seen too many people that we've known and loved seemingly lose their battle of faith. It raises many questions...why didn't it work?

NOW...I have NOTHING to say about our loved ones.

God didn't reveal anything that they did or didn't do...so I will not even guess-timate!

But we **MUST** remember that our experiences **NEVER** change the Word.

So, we need to dig in and find answers for our battles.

It is easy to allow your circumstances to affect your faith.

HOWEVER: Nobody's experiences change the Truth of the Word of God.

Why Faith?

Matthew 21:20-22 (*Matthews account of the fig tree*)

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, ***If ye have faith, and doubt not***, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

22 ***And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.***

Galatians 3:13,14

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; ***that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.***

Whether people like to hear it or not...your answers to prayers...your manifestations of the promises come from FAITH!

Faith doesn't expect God to come down and do something...faith accepts the work that Jesus did on the cross as FINAL!

Well, Pastor Thad, why doesn't it seem that my faith isn't working?

We need to have deeper understanding of faith!

1.) Faith isn't an action!

Faith isn't something you do...it is something you have and because you have it, you do things!

We **MUST** remember that just because you **DO THINGS** doesn't mean you have faith.

Just because you say a confession or two, doesn't mean that you have faith...

James 3 – fresh and salt water.

Romans 12:3 – “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, ***according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.***”

Every man has been given a measure of faith...but not everyone's faith has grown beyond the seed state...infancy state. Not all faith is mature.

Faith is a substance!

Hebrews 11:1 – “Now **faith is the substance of things hoped for**, the evidence of things not seen.”

QUESTION: Who do you know you have faith?

ANSWER: By what comes out of you instinctually...automatically!

ILLUSTRATION: Stress! You may think, “I don't feel stressed...I don't have anything to be stressed about! I have everything under control.”

But your blood pressure is up, losing hair, grinding teeth, sore muscles (etc)...guess what, you are stressed. What is inside is being shown on the outside.

UNDERSTAND: Doing things consistently can help increase your faith, but it doesn't mean you have faith or that your faith is mature.

REMEMBER: **The substance of faith demands actions...**but it is not an action!

2.) Learn from those who had GREAT FAITH!

It is clear that there are measures of faith. Levels of faith. Not all faith is equal!

IMPORTANT: These people with great faith or just faith in the Bible were NOT responding to a book, or sermon...they were just convinced! They simply were completely convinced that God would do it!

They were NOT working a formula!

Romans 4:20,21

20 **He staggered not at the promise of God** through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 **And being fully persuaded that**, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

With GREAT FAITH your actions are instinctual!

There are TWO accounts in Scripture where Jesus identifies someone's faith as being GREAT!
Both of them reveal a different OUTFLOW of faith!

A.) The Centurion and the Authority of the Word!

Matthew 8:5-10,13

5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, **my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.**

7 And Jesus saith unto him, **I will come and heal him.**

QUESTION: What do you think God's will is?

ANSWER: He immediately went! He didn't ask any questions!

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: **but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.**

9 **For I am a man under authority**, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, **I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

NOTICE: The TWO things the centurion said that identified his faith.

- a.) Speak the Word ONLY!
- b.) He understood authority!

BELOVED: The man understood the authority of the Word of God!

That man HAD AUTOMATIC CONFIDENCE in the Word of God!

The authority of the Word of God!

If the Word says it...that settles it! No questions asked!

We can have tendencies to listen to everyone's explanation of the Word or every one's scale down efforts of the Word...but that does NOT matter AT ALL!

What does the Word say! **Stand on that and don't move!**

Ephesians 6:15 – “And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;”
Don't let your circumstances move you off of your stance on the Word.

Matthew 8:1-4

- 1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.
- 2 And, behold, **there came a leper and worshipped him**, saying, **Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.**
NOTE: This may seem harmless or even seem like nothing, but what this man is doing is seeing what the Word says about his situation!
- 3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, **saying, I will; be thou clean.** And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

He looked into the Word...got the Word and it healed Him.

Psalm 107:20 – “He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.”

Matthew 14:24-32

- 24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.
- 25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.
- 26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.
- 27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.
- 28 And Peter answered him and said, **Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.**
- 29 **And he said, Come.** And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

HE GOT HIS WORD! He responded to the Word only!

He acted – on that Word and guess what...the storm didn't stop, but he walked on the storm.

- 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; **and beginning to sink**, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.
- 31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, **O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?**

“Little faith” - faith of short duration.

His GREAT FAITH didn't last long when he got his thoughts off of the WORD and on the STORM!

He responded to the Word ONLY and it worked!

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

ALSO NOTICE the storm didn't stop when Jesus got involved, **but the Word got BACK in control of Him** and he walked back to the ship **IN THE STORM!**

Jesus didn't calm the storm immediately...He calmed Peter. **The Word calmed Peter!**

BELOVED: We need to GET THE WORD IN US...be CONVINCED of it's authority and don't let anything move us off of the Word.

BELOVED: If we believed the Word like we believe...

- ~ The news
- ~ The doctors report
- ~ Social media

...we would see REVIVAL in the land!

B.) The Tenacity of the Syrophenician Woman!

Matthew 15:21-28 (**Marks account calls her Syrophenician**)

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, **Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.**

23 **But he answered her not a word.** And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; **for she crieth after us.**

NOTE: That wasn't a normal cry (quiet weeping), she screamed and exclaimed...crazy loud!

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 **Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.**

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.

27 **And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.**

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, **O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.** And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

NOTICE: She absolutely wouldn't give up! She was convinced that HE HAD HER ANSWER to prayer, and wouldn't give up!

In the face of opportunities to quit, she didn't quit!

Too often we fail to see our answer after a short time and we give up...we walk away sad.

Faith is SO CONVINCED in the answer that they stay after it!

Bulldog faith!

QUESTION: How do you know if you have quit?

ANSWER: When you change your words!

Matthew 5:21-34

Jairus had Jesus come to heal his daughter.

24 And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and **thronged him**.

25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

NOTICE: Two things...

a.) Her condition of weakness.

b.) The press that was around him.

27 When she had heard of Jesus, **came in the press behind**, and touched his garment.

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

“For she said and kept saying” – she never stop saying

She also kept pushing, even though it took all of her strength! Even though there may not have been anything left when she was done.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and **she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague**.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, **thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague**.

Again, she hadn't read anything...she was just SO OVERWHELMINGLY CONVINCED about WHO JESUS WAS...Who the Word was...that she wouldn't change her mind or what she was saying!

Two main keys to receive your answer:

We must be convinced of the authority of the Word

We must not be willing to let go of what we know!

3.) Two under-emphasized areas of faith!

A.) Resting in What God Has Already Done

Too often when we are going through a battle...specifically a tougher battle...we spend our time reading what everyone else has done and then we jump from DOING THIS to DOING THAT...TRYING THIS and TRYING THAT!

Surely something will work for me!

Surely something I do will bring me the victory!

If you check out what the Word tells us...you will begin to see that is the wrong thought pattern.

FIRST: Jesus finished the work!

2 Peter 1:3 – “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:”

Romans 10:6-10

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, ***Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)***

7 Or, ***Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)***

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Ephesians 2:6 – “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:”

NOTICE: Sitting is a position of rest!

REMEMBER: Faith isn't about what you do...it is about what FLOWS from the substances of faith!

If your faith is a conglomeration of I will try this or that...it isn't faith!

ALSO REMEMBER: You can DO things to build your substance of faith...but faith is more than just an action. It is an overflow!

THEREFORE: We do need to fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12); we need to build our faith...

HOWEVER: If Jesus has FINISHED the work...then we need to learn to REST IN HIM! In what He finished!

Rest doesn't mean lazy...

BILL JOHNSON: As soon as you learn to rest in His work He tells you to get to work. Rest in God is not inactivity! It is a place of trust that all our labors are to flow from!

“REST” – having confidence, trust, reliance upon God.

REMEMBER: Jesus was “busy about His Father's business” (Luke 2:49), NOT because He was trying to EARN ANYTHING...but because of the substance of FAITH that was in Him!

Resting is about having FULL CONFIDENCE in what has already been done...therefore, not being overwhelmed and knowing it has been done!

Psalm 37:7 – “**Rest in the LORD**, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.”

NOTICE: “*In the Lord*” – find your spot IN HIM and stay there!

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come unto me, **all ye that labour and are heavy laden**, and I will give you rest.

29 **Take my yoke upon you**, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 **For my yoke is easy**, and my burden is light.

“Yoke” – a bar or frame attached to an animal so they can pull a plow or a heavy load.

A yoke defines there is work going on!

NOTICE: If you are carrying the load and WORKING the load...it will be over-whelming and it will TAKE IT OUT OF YOU!

HOWEVER: If you learn to REST in what He has done...you will get FAR MORE reward for your work and do GREAT THINGS easily!

Because what you DO will flow from what you have...in Him!

Let God carry the yoke! Our job is to stay with Him!

ILLUSTRATION: Have you ever shared an umbrella with someone?

They held the umbrella...you only had one job, walk as close to them as you could. You don't have to do anything else...but walk close to them.

Whoever is holding the umbrella is doing the work, all you have to do is walk close to them...stop when they stop...move when they move!

BELOVED: To get what God has for you, you don't need to be “*doing the work*”, you need to be staying close to Him. **Relationship!**

(perhaps Matthew 6:25-29 – anxious thoughts – **WOODY WOODSON:** God said that we can be anxious when He is anxious and there is no anxiousness in heaven.)

BILL JOHNSON: “Great faith doesn't come out of great effort, but out of great surrender!”

Mark 4:35-40

35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

37 **And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.**

38 **And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow:** and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

BELOVED: Sometimes the GREATEST thing we can do IN FAITH is take a nap!

Hebrews 4:9-11

- 9 There *remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*
10 For *he that is entered into his rest*, he also hath ceased from his own works, *as God did from his.*
11 Let us *labour therefore to enter into that rest*, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Two things in this passage:

- 1.) What did God do after He had done the work of creation for six days?
He rested!
The work was over! No need to strive...JUST ENJOY! (Hebrews 4:3,4)

When Jesus said "IT IS FINISHED"...He was saying it was time to do what?
REST!
He had done the work...we just trust in what He has already done!

- 2.) We have a labor to do...but that labor is to do whatever is necessary to enter into that
REST!
Increase in your substance!

Why Can't I Find Rest?

Psalm 38:3 – "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin."

Sin will make you miss the mark of REST!

Proverbs 29:9 – "If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest."

Whether you are the wise one or the foolish one...**arguing or contentions bring** NO REST!

Psalm 95:10-11

- 10 For forty years I was angry with them, and I said, 'They are a people whose hearts turn away from me. They refuse to do what I tell them.'
11 So in my anger I took an oath: 'They will never enter my place of rest.'
Not listening or obeying God will keep you from rest! **Learn to hear His voice!**

Hebrews 3:17-19

- 17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness?
18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?
19 So we see that they could not enter in **because of unbelief.**

Hebrews 4:6 – "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:"

NOTICE: When you lack the substance of faith...you will lack REST!
You will keep DOING AND DOING and never find it!

How to Enter Into Rest

- 1.) Read the Word!
Read it, listen to it, find the man/woman of God who preaches it!
Find Scriptures that deal with your situation!
Matthew 11:28-29
28 **Come unto me**, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
29 Take my yoke upon you, **and learn of me**; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

REMEMBER: Luke 10:38-42 – Mary was AT HIS FEET!

- 2.) Meditate on that Word!
Bring it up time and time again during you day!
(Like a cow chewing its cud.)
Keep your mind set on what God has already said and done!
Isaiah 26:3 – “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”

- 3.) Let that Word change your way of thinking!
Romans 12:2 – “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
Not something that you have to RECALL but it is RENEWED and at the front of your mind!

You know when your mind has been renewed when the impossible seems logical!

- 4.) Speak the Word!
Have you ever heard someone speak and it brings stress to you?
BELOVED: Don't be the source of your own stress!

- 5.) Learn to Hear His Voice!
Psalm 16:7-9
7 I will bless the LORD, **who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.**
8 I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: **my flesh also shall rest in hope.**

“Rein-trained” - When a horse is young and immature you have to really force it to turn to its right or left or to stop or start. Lots of smacking it on the back side...tugging and pulling.

HOWEVER: Once a horse has been rein-trained they recognize the smallest nudge or touch to move a certain way.

That is how God is wanting us to move. It is more peaceful and restful!

REMEMBER: Samuel was in a place of rest when he heard God's voice!
What was Eli's direction to continue hearing? Go rest some more!

6.) Praise and Thanksgiving!

UNDERSTAND: Where God is is rest! No stress in heaven!

Psalm 100:4 – “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

Psalm 16:11 – “Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Psalm 22:3 – “But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Acts 7:49 – “Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: **what house will ye build me?** saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?”

NOTICE: Where God inhabits (takes up residence) is a place of rest!

BILL JOHNSON: “We’ve been designed as a resting place for the Spirit of God. Changing every environment that we walk into.”

Psalm 132:13-14

13 For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation.

14 This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

7.) Pray in the Spirit!

Psalm 55:6 – “And I said, **Oh that I had wings like a dove!** for then would I fly away, and be at rest.”

NOTE: A dove is a type of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:2 - “For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.”

Jude 1:20 (AMP) – “But you, beloved, build yourselves up [founded] on your most holy faith [make progress, rise like an edifice higher and higher], praying in the Holy Spirit;”

B.) Walking in the Joy

BELOVED: If you REALLY BELIEVE it is finished...then you can rest...and you will experience joy!

Hebrews 11:1 – “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Faith says it is already done...**so chill and be happy!** **Don't worry, be happy!**

Good news brings joy and the good news is that the victory is won!

REMEMBER: It is called the GOSPEL for a reason!

When you are in a battle...it is easy to get REAL SERIOUS about the situation. Don't let anyone laugh around you...nothing light, only taking things serious.

Whatever you do when fighting a battle...make sure you increase you joy!

UNDERSTAND: You are NOT proving your spirituality by your serious face! You prove your spirituality by DOING what the Word of God says to do!

1 Corinthians 2:14 – “**But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God:** for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

Grief and sorrow are NATURAL emotions. Joy is from the SPIRIT.

Galatians 5:22,23 – Fruit of your spirit!

Joy is supernatural...from God...YOU ARE supernatural!

Joy is more than happy! Happy leaves when the battle comes! Happy is natural!

Galatians 3:3 – “Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, **are ye now made perfect by the flesh?**”

Isaiah 51:11 – “Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come **with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head:** they shall **obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.**”

“Zion” - means it is talking about the church!

THEREFORE: The church is to have upon them joy and gladness...everlasting!

NOTICE: The church has joy upon them...that joy causes sorrow and mourning to FLEE AWAY!

James 4:7 – “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

When you do things God's way...sorrow and mourning shall flee!

THEREFORE: Build up your joy!

Stir Up Your Joy

UNDERSTAND: Just because you walk around sad and gloomy doesn't mean you don't have joy, it **simply means you have suppressed it.**

You have not tapped into it!

If you haven't tapped into the joy, you are missing His strength.

Nehemiah 8:10 – The joy of the Lord is your strength!

YOU MAY SAY: Well, Pastor Thad, I keep waiting for God to get my joy going...but nothing happens.

Well, I have good news and bad news (depending on how you look at it):

Good news is it is up to you.

Bad news is that you have to do some stuff to stir it up, and if you are lazy...then, well...

YOU must reach into your spirit and tap into the joy!

James 1:2 – “My brethren, **count it all joy** when ye fall into divers temptations;”

“**count it**” - to govern or rule over

UNDERSTAND: It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to get your joy moving!

How to stir up your joy?

1.) **Find knowledge and wisdom in the Word.**

Proverbs 3:13 – “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.”

(NLT) – “Joyful is the person who finds wisdom, the one who gains understanding.”

Joy isn't stirred by stuff or outward circumstances...it is in knowledge of the Word.
Knowing!

Psalms 30:5 – “For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”

NIGHT is when you can't see.

MORNING is when the light come on...revelation of the Word.

IMPORTANT: We fight FROM victory (joy), not FOR victory!

2.) *Praise and Worship! Act like Heaven Acts!*

Deuteronomy 11:21 – “That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.”

Matthew 6:10 – “May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

UNDERSTAND: JOY is a major part of heaven! No sorrow! No depression in heaven!

Psalms 16:11 – “Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

Psalms 100:4 – “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

Stirring up joy by praise and worship! Where His presence is...joy is!



Grace Fellowship of Morehead, KY

905 Clearfield Street

Morehead, KY 40351

(606)776-7089

gracemorehead.org