



God's Resources for Life and Healing

Part 6A: Faith

Growing our faith requires seeking God with all of our hearts (Jer. 29:13) as we sincerely study the Word of God, engage in daily worship and prayer, and join in fellowship with other believers. As we grow in understanding God and in personal relationship to Him, His life-changing power will become more and more evident in our lives, forming a basis for our faith to grow stronger.

Another factor that God uses to grow our faith is the trials and difficulties that we face in life (John 16:33), especially when they stretch us beyond what we feel we can humanly endure. If we can hold onto our faith at these times, we will see God either dramatically change the situation or give us extraordinary strength and grace to endure through it (2 Cor. 1:8-10; 12:9-10). These times are crucial in developing not only our faith but also our Christian character and maturity (James 1:2-4; Rom. 5:3-4; 1 Peter 5:10).

Growing our faith also involves making a deliberate determination to believe God (Mark 11:23-24), starting with all that He says in His Word. Every word spoken by God or inspired by Him in the Holy Scriptures is true (John 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16). Therefore, when we read a promise of His, we need to declare in our hearts that we believe it and then *expect* to see it happen in our lives. The centurion demonstrated this kind of faith when he heard the words spoken by Jesus and knew that his daughter would be healed (Mat. 8:5-13). Paul believed the words spoken to him by an angel of God that no lives would be lost in the shipwreck he was about to experience (Acts 27:21-25). These *rhema* words that God clearly speaks to us can be as powerful as the written words (*logos*) of God when we put our faith in them.

While it is easiest for our faith to grow when we see it bring positive results for us and those around us (John 2:23), Jesus said that even more blessed are the people who believe without seeing any evidence of that for which they are believing (John 20:29). Hebrews 11 gives a whole list of those who saw great and mighty things done by God through their faith but also includes in the list, as being just as honorable, those who steadfastly believed without seeing any evidence that their faith was accomplishing anything.

When we are not hindered in our faith by a lack of results, we have reached a very powerful level of faith, which opens a world of possibilities to us (Mat. 17:20). This is when we can dare to grasp hold of the truth that with God *all things* are possible (Gen. 18:14; Mat. 19:26; Luke 1:37). This is when we have the kind of faith that can move the seemingly unmovable mountains in our lives, bring the promises of God into full fruition, and cause the flourishing of our work for God (2 Thes. 1:11).

This is also when our understanding of God and all He makes possible for His children (Philemon 6) has so transformed our lives that we dare to live in absolute obedience to Him, even when the consequences seem overwhelming, as Job and Abraham did (Gen. 22:9-18; Job 13:15; James 2:21-22). This is when we are so convinced of God's unfailing love and presence with us (Isa. 41:10) that we can live in peace without fear and worry or quickly return to it when we become aware that we have lost it. It is also when we are willing to give sacrificially to those in need, knowing that our own needs will certainly be met by God (Mat. 6:33; Phil. 4:19; James 2:14-26). This is a much more reliable measure of our faith than the miraculous results we may or may not see in answer to our prayers.