



FAITH LIKE DAVID'S • Eric Silverman

Faith is essential to our walk with God. It is so critical, that the writer of Hebrews actually states, “Without faith it is impossible to please God” (Hebrews 11:6). Furthermore, in all of Jesus’ life, there are only two events where the Bible records that Jesus was amazed. Mark 6:6 says that while among the people of his hometown, Jesus was “amazed at their lack of faith.” Conversely, in Matthew 8:10 Jesus was amazed by the faith of a Roman centurion. Faith amazes Jesus in a way that nothing else does.

Why is faith so important to God? First, it acknowledges our inability to change ourselves. Faith is the opposite of self-reliance. When we exercise faith, we specifically reach beyond the boundaries of our own wisdom, abilities, and actions. Faith demonstrates our dependence on God as we trust that His ways are best. When we walk by faith we invite God to work in and through us. As we trust Him, God shows Himself faithful and discloses Himself to us in greater ways.

The issue of trust and faith is one of the first issues dealt with in the Bible. When we review Genesis 2 & 3, we find that the initial failure of humanity was a failure of faith. When man and woman were created in Eden, God provided them with all sorts of blessings. However, they were given a single issue to trust God with: “The Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die’” (Gen 2:16-17 NASB). Would they have faith in God, seeing that He had displayed His goodness and trustworthiness in so many ways, or would they trust our own judgement? Sadly, Genesis 3:1-7 records that they trusted themselves and the serpent’s words rather than God. Sin and death entered the world. Every time we place our faith in God, instead of trusting in ourselves, we are symbolically rejecting the direction that humanity chose back in Genesis 3.

Throughout the Bible, the issue of faith is at the heart of mankind’s relationship with God. Today, learning to live by faith in all situations is vital. Our relationship with Christ began by faith. “It is by grace that you have been saved, through faith” (Ephesians 2:8). It is only by faith that we grow at each step in the Christian life. “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness” (Colossians 2:6-7).

We can learn some basic principles on how to walk by faith from the story of David and Goliath. Although we will probably not face any literal nine-foot giants, God will present us with opportunities that require us to exercise faith. Instead of fearing these situations, we should embrace them as blessings from our loving God. Some examples of situations that you might face as a college student include:

You fail an important class within your major. Would you still believe that God has a good plan for you in that area of work?

You realize that your girlfriend/boyfriend is seriously hindering your spiritual growth. Would you be able to break off the relationship?



You get together with an old friend from high school who is not a Christian. Would you be able to tell her about the difference Jesus has made in your life?

You get straight A's for the semester. Would your primary response be thankfulness towards God instead of pride in yourself?

Note that faith is required even in situations that look positive. A gifted student who does well may face the temptation to be prideful or to put an overemphasis on school work. A new dating relationship requires faith in many ways, including: trusting God's wisdom in reserving sexual activity for marriage, trusting God with the direction of the relationship, and trusting God by continuing to serve Him and not letting the new relationship absorb all of one's free time.

David's walk of courageous faith grew over time. As a shepherd, he first trusted God to help him fight lions and bears. Each time he stepped out in obedience, David saw God's faithfulness and his faith grew. Later, when he came face to face with Goliath, he was able to recall specific acts of God's past faithfulness. These memories encouraged his faith and enabled David to trust God with even greater things. As in David's life, our area of comfort becomes like an ever-widening circle. Events and activities that used to require a major step of faith become increasingly comfortable. As a result, we need greater and greater challenges to continue to stretch our faith.

Another key to David's faith was the recognition that God could use him as he was. David was aware of his own youth, weaknesses, and limitations. Yet, David knew it was God's power that mattered. By faith he stepped out and did something that he could have never accomplished on his own. We need to follow this example and be willing to make ourselves available to serve God right where we are today. While more biblical knowledge, experience, training, etc., can certainly better equip us to serve, we should never let the lack of these things be used as an excuse not to serve God.

The most important thing to learn from this study of David is that faith ought to be our response to whatever circumstances we find ourselves facing. Faith is the proper response to trials, temptations, success, and literally every other circumstance we face in life. A life of genuine faith will never stagnate. Every circumstance we face, today and everyday ought to be met with a deep faith in God.

Exercise

The following is a short list of biblical characters who walked by faith in various circumstances. Examine each of them and observe how their actions expressed faith in God. You may need to dig in to get the full context of each story.

Esther 3:6-17.... Walking by faith in the midst of personal success

Context: Esther had recently been crowned Queen in a foreign land where there were some who despised the Jewish people who lived among them.

Job 1:13-22.... Walking by faith in the midst of great personal tragedy

Context: Job was a godly man whose life was suddenly turned upside down by a series of personal catastrophes.

Genesis 39:1-12.... Walking by faith in the midst of temptation

Context: Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, falsely accused, and unjustly thrown into prison.

Acts 17:16-34.... Walking by faith in the midst of a pagan society

Context: Paul took a stand for the gospel in the city of Athens.

End 

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