

Moving Forward in Faith When You Feel Like Your Faith Is Gone

By Marti Wibbels, MS, LMHC

How do we move from doubts to peace, from stress to rest? How can we live as new creations in a world filled with despair? We need to **remember the character of God and the design of His Church!**

God said, *I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness* (Jeremiah 31:3, NASB). In the Message, that reads: *God told them, 'I've never quit loving you and never will. Expect love, love, and more love!'*

1. When we **feel like God isn't answering our prayers**, we need to **change our perspective and seek Him** instead of what we think we want or need. In Psalm 37:4, God directs us to *Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart*. God is not "Santa in the Sky," He is our living LORD! We can ask Him to show us what *to* want rather than demanding what *we* want.

A loved one dies; a friend betrays; a business fails; we experience abuse; nations collapse—each the opposite of what we could possibly want. We can allow ourselves to feel grief, sadness, hurt, or disappointment—being **informed** but not **controlled** by those feelings. As we acknowledge how we feel, we can remember God's words, in both the Old and New Testament:

The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed (Deuteronomy 31:8, NASB). This promise is repeated in the New Testament, paired with a warning: *Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, 'I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you, so that we can confidently say, 'The LORD is my helper, I will not be afraid, what will man do to me?'* (Hebrews 13:5-6).

Thomas Watson said, "A Christian is discontented because he is in want, and therefore he is in want because he is discontented." In our world, filled with all kinds of tribulation (see John 16:33), **we have a choice to turn to God or from Him**. And it's the turning **to** Him that builds our relationship **with** Him. It's then that we experience the depth of His love along with an increasing ability to entrust all our concerns to Him.

2. **Instead of focusing on division**, we can **focus on Christ**. At the **Sing! 2021** conference, Keith Getty said, "We are one in a bond that is infinitely greater than any of the issues that have been tearing us apart." Jesus prayed for our unity: *The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me* (John 17: 22-24, NASB).

3. **Faith must have an object**. If you feel like your faith is gone, it's vital to notice the "object" of your faith. Is your faith in the Lord or in circumstances; **are you trusting in God's promises or in people?** Are you focused on the world's FUD (Fear, Uncertainty, or Doubt) or placing your hope in God?

For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you (2 Timothy 1:12 -14, NASB).

Is your perspective heavenly or earthly? **When we know our purpose and live in God's hope, we'll be able to live in confidence**, wherever we are, **regardless of circumstances**.

From prison, Paul wrote, *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus* (Philippians 1:6, NASB).

What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God's giving. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met (Matthew 6:31-33, MSG).

4. When you **feel like your prayers are hitting a wall**, it can help to **read God's Word** aloud (perhaps begin with the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-11) **or listen to music** like:

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand

When darkness veils His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found;
In Him, my righteousness, alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne.



**On Christ the Solid Rock I
stand; all other ground is
sinking sand!**



YOU are invited to a workshop, *Helping People Heal from Trauma*, I'm teaching at Christ Fellowship Church, 5343 Northlake Blvd, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418, on **Saturday, October 23**, from **9:00am** through **1:00pm**.

Sponsored by Palm Beach Atlantic University, the workshop utilizes *Core Healing from Trauma* to equip you to live in hope and freedom in a world of increasing anxiety, depression, and other emotional concerns—and learn how to help others, too.

There is **NO CHARGE** for this event. However, the event sponsors need to know by **October 16th** if you plan to attend. Breakfast is included. **Please send your reservations ASAP** to Dr. Phil Henry at philip_henry@pba.edu.



For practical ways to move from stress to rest, you can work through *Core Healing from Trauma*, a biblical counseling workbook for individuals or groups, available on Amazon (<https://cutt.ly/occdeiH>), and now available as an audiobook on **audible**. You can subscribe to my blog at <https://corehealingfromtrauma.com/>.