

Quintessential Faith

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“Quintessential” describes an example or important part of something. Merriam-Webster said “philosophers and scientists of the ancient world and the Middle Ages believed that the world we inhabit was entirely made up of four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. Aristotle added a fifth element, the *ether* [or] material that fills the rest of space, mostly invisibly but sometimes taking the form of stars and planets. In the Middle Ages, it was referred to as the *quinta essentia* (fifth element)... so perfect it seemed to surpass the limitations of earth.” Hebrews 11

describes people with “quintessential” faith as those with *the assurance (title deed, confirmation) of things hoped for (divinely guaranteed), and the evidence of things not seen [the conviction of their reality—faith comprehends as fact what cannot be experienced by the physical senses]*.

Have you ever wondered how someone could trust God in seemingly impossible situations, remain joyful in adversity, or hope when life seems hopeless? As believers in Jesus Christ, we can have “quinta essentia,” training our minds to rest in God instead of relying on the world’s empty promises. What does that look like in everyday life?

For perspective I asked my husband Alan, a person I’ve observed living by faith amidst real-life challenges for the past 54 years. He said anyone can keep walking with God by practicing three things:

1. **Spending time in the Word every day**
2. **Living in the moment**
3. **Fixing our eyes on Jesus, running the race He sets before us**

King David prayed, *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer* (Psalm 19:14, NKJV). When our minds and hearts are focused on God rather than ourselves, we can move beyond “big feelings” to follow God’s command to *have dominion over...all the earth* (Genesis 1:28-30). We weren’t designed to focus on ourselves but were made with purpose, to bring glory to God.

Sometimes purpose includes doing something to benefit the environment. When my husband and I learned monarch butterflies are becoming extinct, we planted milkweed plants, the only food monarchs eat. Almost immediately, delightful monarch butterflies began to feed in our yard. But when we returned from a brief out-of-town trip, they butterflies were gone, the milkweed plants destroyed. Alan carefully wrapped one plant in plastic so that whatever disease had destroyed its leaves wouldn’t bring disease to the nursery where the plants were purchased. The owner kindly explained, “The life cycle of monarch butterflies includes eating milkweed leaves.”

Sometimes God calls us to do something to change the world. With approximately 400,000 people trafficked in the Western World, some of us must speak out; some of us must provide practical help, hope, and healing for survivors. Whether helping with social concerns or simply taking a friend to a doctor’s appointment, it takes quintessential faith to move out of our comfort zones and listen to God’s heart for people He loves.

Praying for you: that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:16-18, NKJV).



For help managing life’s challenges, you could contact the South Florida Association of Christian Counselors at sfacc.net or the American Association of Christian Counselors at acc.net. To develop quintessential faith and/or lead groups to help others grow, *Core Healing from Trauma* is a workbook available on Amazon and audible (<https://cutt.ly/occdejH>), with a free facilitators’ guide available on my website (www.pbcounseling.com) at the Resources link.