

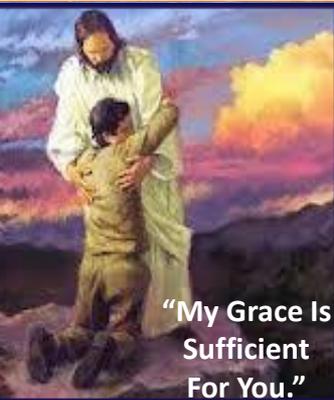
C.S. Lewis once said:

Relying on God has to begin again every day as if it had never been done. We need to trust that Jesus is there for us and enough for us in times of crisis.

Jesus said, "Surely I Am with you always, to the very end of the age and peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you....let not your hearts be troubled."

These are truths which can prepare us to respond when crisis and fear come into our lives. "For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

Romans 8:15



"We May Never Know The "Why?"

Philippians 4:8 - Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Note: Do not fix your thoughts on the problem! Dwelling on the problem will only make things worse. With a thankful heart dwell on all those things God has blessed you with ... and dwell on the hope and the promises found in Jesus Christ to help you through difficult times.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5) Remember, He warned us there will be great difficulties in this life ... but He promises great rewards for all who will place their trust in Him and faithfully endure the painful trials and afflictions which will come upon us during this short life. We are told the true child of God will go through periods of trials, difficulties, pain, and suffering in this life. We may never know the "Why?" until we get to Heaven. Jesus is our Hope . . .

Although there are times we may feel alone and abandoned, He will never forsake you or leave you. The Bible says the true child of God will find suffering in this life. Each of us will have our faith tested. Jesus waits for us to ask Him into our lives to help, to strengthen, to comfort, and to heal. He lovingly wraps His arms around the lonely and the brokenhearted. Jesus will never cast away or turn away any man or woman that willingly comes to Him, regardless of how young or how old, or how good or how bad. Any and all who come to Him with a sincere and humbled heart are welcomed with open arms. "But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. (2 Corinthians 1:9)



Let us ask an important question: Why do we fear? We are afraid because we feel powerless. We feel that we can't change something. We fear because we feel helpless. Regardless of our age, intellect, responsibilities, or experience, in God's eyes we are still just little children, and when we

fall into various trials He wants us to come to Him to seek His Will and His direction and to quit attempting to carry the burden ourselves. He loves and cares for each of us and promises to help us through the difficult "storms" we will face in this life. This requires faith.

"Faith And Fear Cannot Exist Together"

Faith and fear cannot exist together. Faith is described in Hebrews 11:1 as being "Certain of what we do not see." It is an absolute belief that God is constantly working behind the scenes in every area of our lives, even when there is no tangible evidence to support that fact. On the other hand, fear, simply stated, is unbelief or weak belief. As unbelief gains the upper hand in our thoughts, fear takes hold of our emotions. Our deliverance from fear and worry is based on faith, which is the very opposite of unbelief. We need to understand that faith is not something that we can produce in ourselves. Faith is a gift (Ephesians 2:8-9) and is described as a fruit (or characteristic) which is produced in our lives by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). The Christian's faith is a confident assurance in a God Who loves us, Who knows our thoughts and cares about our deepest needs. That faith continues to grow as we study the Bible and learn the attributes of His amazing character. The more we learn about God, the more we can see Him working in our lives and the stronger our faith grows.

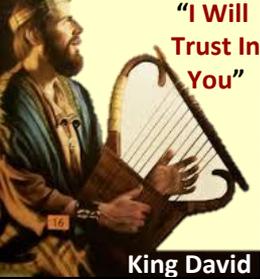
"Growing In Faith"



A growing faith is what we desire to have and what God desires to produce in us. But how, in day-to-day life, can we develop a faith that conquers our fears? The Bible says, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). The

careful study of God's Word is of primary importance in developing a strong faith. God wants us to know Him and completely rely on His direction in our lives. It's through the hearing, reading and meditation in the Scriptures that we begin to experience a strong, confident faith that excludes worry and fear. Spending time in prayer and quiet worship develops a relationship with our heavenly Father that sees us through even the darkest of nights.

"Words Of Wisdom"



King David

"I Will Trust In You"

In the Psalms we see a picture of David, who, like us, experienced times of fear. Psalm 56:3 reveals his faith with these words: "When I am afraid, I will trust in You." Psalm 119 is filled with verses expressing the way in which David treasured God's Word: "I seek You with all my heart" (v. 10); "I meditate on Your precepts" (v. 15); "I have hidden Your Word in my heart" (v. 11). These are revealing words which speak wisdom to us today.

"Fearless Faith"



"I Come To You In The Name Of The Lord Of Hosts..."

through fearful situations, and as we learn to obey God's Word and allow it to saturate our thoughts, we find each trial becomes a stepping stone to a stronger and deeper faith. It gives us that ability to say, "He sustained me in the past, He'll carry me through today and He'll uphold me in the future!" God worked this way in David's life. When David volunteered to fight against Goliath, he said, "The Lord Who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:37). David knew the God Who had sustained him through dangerous situations in the past. He had seen and experienced God's power and protection in his life, and this developed within him a fearless faith.

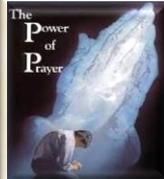
"God's Promises In Times Of Trails"

The Word of God is rich with promises for us to take hold of and claim for ourselves. When we face financial trouble, Philippians 4:19 tells us, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." If we are anxious about a future decision, Psalm 32:8 reminds us that God will "Instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you." In sickness we can remember that Romans 5:3 says, "Tribulation works patience." If someone turns against us, we can be comforted by the words in Romans 8:31, "If God is for us who can be against us!" Throughout life we will continue to face various trials that would cause us fear, but God assures us that we can know a calm peace through every situation, "The peace of God, which transcends all understanding" which He has promised will "Guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

"We Are Not Wired For Fear"

The one area that fear will attack is the mind. This is why Paul said that we have a sound mind. God did not create your mind to handle fear. Your mind is not wired for fear anymore than you are wired for electricity. Stick a fork in an outlet, and you will discover your body is not wired for electricity. Neither is your mind wired for fear. Jesus said, "Men's hearts will fail them for fear." Without faith in God's Word and courage we will never be able to win over our battles and continue to live in a world that is full of uncertainty.

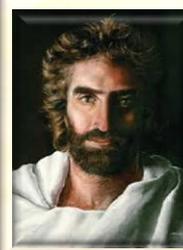
"Words For Coping"



We need to experience God's perspective, spiritual strength and wisdom in daily living to prepare us for crisis living. Here are some biblical principles for coping with crisis and stress:

1. "Pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" 1Thessalonians 5:17-18
2. "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up" (Luke 18:1).
3. "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (James 1:2,3).
4. "Do not be anxious about anything, but, in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God that transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4: 6-7).
5. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all." (Psalm 34:19)

Our basis for assurance in crisis: Jesus told us how to face trials with faith and with His strength. He promised to provide His peace in the midst of crisis and His presence always. "He said, and surely I Am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).



Even the sincere Christian will not escape the pain, heartbreak, sorrow, and distress found this life, but the Lord promises to help us, strengthen us, and to see us through all of them. His promise is not to take us out of the bitter storms of life, but to safely lead us through the storms . . . no matter how bad the situation might seem now, it will one day be over and behind you. Trust in Him.