

Overcoming Faith Or "What To Do While You're Waiting"

- **I John 5:4** "For whatever is born of God **overcomes** the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world - OUR FAITH."
- **Luke 5:17-26** "And it came to pass on a certain day, as He was teaching..... **the power of the Lord was present** to heal them. And behold, some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed.....and **SEEING THEIR FAITH**, He said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven you.....but in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins'---He said to the paralytic, 'I say to you rise, and take up your stretcher, and go home.' And at once he rose up....."
- **Mark 5:34** "And He said to her, 'Daughter, **YOUR FAITH** has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.'"
- **Matt. 8:10 & 13** "Now when Jesus heard this He marveled, and said.....'Truly I say to you, I have not found such GREAT FAITH with anyone in Israel.....and Jesus said...Go your way, let it be done to you **AS you have BELIEVED**. And the servant was HEALED that very hour."
- **Luke 17:19** "And He said to him, 'Rise, and go your way; **YOUR FAITH** has made you well.'"
- **Matt. 15:28** "Then Jesus answered and said to her, 'O woman, **YOUR FAITH** is great; be it done for you as you wish'. And her daughter was HEALED at once."
- **Mark 9:23** "Jesus said unto him, '**If you can BELIEVE**, all things are possible to him who believes.'"

All of the above scripture verses talk about OUR FAITH as being the primary reason for our prayers being answered. If that is so, then could it be possible we have a wrong idea of what FAITH really is? What kind of faith is the kind that God SEES, and that moves Him to answer our prayers?

Two Examples of "Faith" from God's Word "Doubting Thomas" "Believing Abraham"

<p>John 20:25-29 - Jesus calls Thomas "faithless" in verse 27, because he would not believe unless he could SEE and FEEL something. Jesus said, "...blessed are they that have NOT SEEN, and yet have believed."</p>	<p>Gal. 3:9 says, "So then they which are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham." Rom. 4:16-23 says we are to have "the faith of Abraham" (vs. 16), and says he was "not weak in faith" because he did not consider the physical evidence before Him (vs. 19), but was rather fully persuaded of God's word (what He had promised - vs. 21).</p>
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Galatians 3:6-29 says that we are the children or "seed" of Abraham through faith in Jesus Christ, and that the blessings of Abraham are therefore ours, but **we won't get Abraham's blessings with the Thomas kind of faith!** II Corinthians 5:7 says "For we walk by FAITH **not by SIGHT**" and Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now FAITH is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things **NOT SEEN**." Romans 8:4-13 says that we are to "walk NOT according to the flesh (our five physical senses - what we SEE, FEEL, etc.) but according to the Spirit." If we allow our physical senses to be our evidence, rather than God's word, we will be defeated. Hebrews 4:2 says "...but the word preached did not profit them, not being **mixed with FAITH** in them that heard it." Hebrews 3:17-19 and 4:1-6 tells us that it was the sin of UNBELIEF that kept the Israelites from entering the Promised Land. The Greek word for **unbelief** here means "**failure to be persuaded to ACT on**" - the Israelites failed to be

persuaded to ACT on God's word and His promises. We must be persuaded to ACT ON God's word, or MIX the promises of God with OUR FAITH in order to enter our promised land of victory, and to have our prayers answered. Jesus said it another way, "Whoever HEARS these sayings of Mine and DOES them" will be the one who overcomes and doesn't get overwhelmed or blown away by the storms of life (Matt. 7:24-27). James calls it being a "DOER of the word" (James 1:22-26). It is not enough to just hear the word of God, unless we also ACT UPON IT. Romans 10:17 says "FAITH comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," but real faith has corresponding ACTION with it (see James 2:17). In Luke 6:45-49, Jesus puts being a DOER of His word together with the WORDS that come out of our mouths - "For out of the abundance of the heart, his mouth speaks."

CONCLUSION: The kind of faith that will cause us to be overcomers and have victory (see I John 5:4) comes from hearing God's word, speaking or confessing God's word, and ACTING on God's word, even before we have physical evidence that tells us it is true. Make a decision to confess what God's word tells you rather than what your physical senses or emotions tell you. FAITH is the evidence of things NOT SEEN" (Heb. 11:1), so if you are waiting until you SEE something, **that is not FAITH!** If you say you have prayed and believe God has heard your prayers, but you still go around TALKING like it hasn't happened or it isn't going to happen, then you are being DOUBLE-MINDED, and you are sabotaging your own prayers! Mark 11:22b-24 says "...**Have faith in God.** For assuredly I say to you, that whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and **does not doubt in his heart, but BELIEVES** that those things **which he says** will come to pass, he will have **whatever he says**. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you desire, when you pray, **believe that you receive them**, and you shall have them." James 1:6-8 "But let him **ASK IN FAITH**, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let NOT that man think that he shall receive ANYTHING of the Lord. **A double-minded man** is unstable in all his ways." That "wavering" or "instability" is doubting, yes, but it is more of a flip-flopping back and forth - one minute you believe God, and the next minute you don't.

You may say, "All this sounds very strange to me. What are some examples of being a "doer" of the word, or ACTING on your faith, even though you don't see it happening yet?" Romans 6:11 says "Likewise, you also, **RECKON yourselves** to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." **RECKON** means to accept something as certain; place reliance on, even when you don't **SEE the evidence**. YOU MUST BELIEVE the TRUTHS of the word of God, and not just live by your feelings and physical senses! If God's word says you are dead to sin, start ACTING like you are dead to sin! Also, Paul and Silas in prison, praising God at midnight, even though they didn't SEE any way out, or SEE how any good could come out of that situation. Do you think they FELT like praising God? If you wait until you FEEL like obeying God's commandments, or wait until you can SEE what good might be coming out of this or that situation, you are making your feelings and your own judgment your god! (See Prov. 3:5-6, "do not lean on your own understanding")

- **I Thessalonians 5:16-18 "REJOICE ALWAYS, pray without ceasing, in EVERYTHING give thanks;** for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
- **Acts 16:24-25** "Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight Paul and Silas were **praying and SINGING HYMNS to God**, and the [other] prisoners were listening to them."
- **Romans 8:28** "And we know that **ALL things WORK together for GOOD** to those who LOVE GOD, to those who are the CALLED according to His PURPOSE."

In what other kinds of ways can you SHOW your faith and ACT on it, while waiting for the ANSWER to your prayer to come to pass (Psalm 37:4-5)? If you have prayed for healing, start THANKING GOD for healing you, even when you still FEEL sick! Start ACTING like you would if you FELT well. If Satan attacks, and puts symptoms on you AFTER you have prayed and believed for your healing, use your AUTHORITY in Christ, and run him off! Tell Satan to leave you alone, and take his lying symptoms with him! You might say something like this, **"I command you to LEAVE MY BODY and be REMOVED FROM ME in the name of the Lord**

Jesus Christ. I do not doubt in my heart, but I believe that I was HEALED as of, _____, when I PRAYED and asked the Lord to heal me. I thank You, Lord, that You said WHEN I PRAY I am to believe I RECEIVE the ANSWER to my prayer, and if I do that, that is FAITH. FAITH is believing You have answered my prayer even BEFORE I SEE THE RESULTS."

- **Psalm 37:4-5** "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you **the desires of your heart**. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and **He shall bring it to pass.**"
- **I John 5:14-15** "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ASK anything according to His will (His WORD), He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ASK, we know that **WE HAVE THE REQUESTS that we have asked of Him.**"

What is it you NEED from God? Phil. 4:6-7 & 19 tells us to "Be ANXIOUS for nothing, but in everything by PRAYER and supplication with THANKSGIVING, **let your REQUESTS be MADE KNOWN to GOD**. And the PEACE of GOD, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" and "...my **God shall SUPPLY ALL your NEEDS** according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." If you are out of work, and have prayed for a job, start THANKING and praising GOD, and also tell your friends that the Lord has answered your prayers for a job! Tell them that God has the perfect job for you, but you just don't know where it is yet. Keep sending out resumes and making phone calls, that's YOUR part, but start confessing that God HAS already given you a job. If it's money you've prayed for, and you need it by a certain date, start thanking God for giving you the money you need, even before you have it in your hand, or before a check arrives in the mail! Remember, "whatever things you desire, when you pray, **believe that you RECEIVE them, and you shall HAVE them.**" What you do in that INTERVAL between BELIEVING you RECEIVE and "HAVING" is critical! Allow the peace of God to guard your heart and mind, do not be anxious while waiting for your answer, but realize that God will bring it about at the "proper time" according to His schedule. Find some scripture promises in His word that you can HOLD ONTO while you are waiting, and **continually PRAISE God** for the answer.

- **Matthew 6:31-33** "Therefore, DO NOT WORRY, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?..... For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But SEEK FIRST the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and ALL THESE THINGS shall be added unto you."
- **I Peter 5:5-7** ".....Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you **at the proper time** (in due time), casting ALL your care (worry, anxiety, fear) upon Him, because He cares for you."

Last of all, what if your request to God is of a more sensitive nature, such as praying for God to give you a mate, or a couple praying to have a baby? God's word is FULL of PROMISES you can grab a hold of, and while you are waiting for God's perfect timing, PREPARE yourself to BE the best wife, husband or parent that you can be! Prov. 18:22 says "He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord." Get honest with yourself and God! Maybe if God answered your prayer RIGHT NOW, it wouldn't be a good thing! Make whatever changes you need to make in your life, in your attitudes, in your character, while waiting for God to answer your prayer. Make sure that you are READY for God to entrust another human being into your life. His timing is perfect, and "No GOOD thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly." (Psalm 84:11)