

6 Main Culprits for Dangerous Spiritual Fainting Spells

My first hospital visit was a fiasco. I was a teenage preacher and had never been in an Intensive Care Unit. The man I visited had had open heart surgery and was on a ventilator. As I prayed for him, I was overcome by the sights, sounds and smells and became dizzy. The room started spinning, so I stepped into the hall to gather myself. I saw his wife, called her name, tried to shake her hand but blacked out and hit the floor. Moments later, I regained my senses via smelling salts. So much for being God's man of faith and power.

Fainting is "a loss of consciousness due to abnormal blood circulation." In a spiritual sense, to faint means "to lose heart or courage, to give up, or to quit." Many believers today suffer from spiritual fainting spells—they abandon their faith and give up on God. Here are six main culprits:

- **Hardship:** "For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb. 12:3, KJV). Considering the hardships Jesus faced, our problems seem petty. Jesus never promised trouble-free living, but predicted the opposite, "In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, MEV). Paul challenged Timothy, "Endure hard times as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. 2:3). The Christian walk can be difficult, because you're going against the current. Any dead fish can float downstream, but it takes guts and grit to go against the grain of what is culturally popular. When the straight and narrow way seems tough, remember, "The way of transgressors is hard" (Prov. 13:15b). Carrying the cross is easier when we, like Jesus, focus on the future crown.

- **Prayerlessness:** In Luke 18:1 (KJV), Jesus told the Parable of the Unjust Judge “to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Prayer taps us into a supernatural power source that keeps us strong and prevents us from giving up. Isaiah 40:29-31 describes how prayer produces the power to persevere: “He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” We are only as strong as our prayer life.

- **Slow Progress:** “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9). Sometimes spiritual progress is painstakingly slow. In an instant society, we are used to getting what we want when we want it. We get things done instantly with the push of a button, the click of a mouse or the swipe of a credit/debit card. So, it’s easy to get discouraged when we don’t see rapid results. A farmer doesn’t plant seeds one day and curse the ground the next day because no progress is visible. No, he knows something is happening beneath the surface. There is a time gap between planting and reaping. Discipleship is a lifelong journey of becoming Christlike. It doesn’t happen overnight. In due time, the plowing, planting and watering of the seed (God’s Word) will pay off. Hold on, harvest time is coming!

- **Malnutrition:** Jesus said of the hungry multitude, “I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way” (Matt. 15:32c). Without proper nutrition physically, the tendency to faint increases. The same is true spiritually. In John 6:60-66, many disciples defected and quit following Jesus because of His “hard

sayings.” They were offended because He spoke the unvarnished truth. Just as a healthy diet keeps us physically fit, a steady diet of God’s Word keeps us spiritually strong. Otherwise, we’ll become weak, and our commitment will waver. Jesus taught us to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11, Luke 11:3), meaning God has fresh manna for us every day. This spiritual nutrition keeps us from having a fainting spell.

- **Correction:** “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him” (Heb. 12:5b). Periodically, God will prune our tree to ensure maximum fruit bearing. Like surgery, God’s discipline is short-term pain in exchange for long-term gain. As a skilled butcher trims the fat from a choice cut of meat, God removes the carnal things that stunt our spiritual growth. The Good Shepherd will often “make [us] lie down in green pastures” (Ps. 23:2) because He knows what’s best for us. Chastisement isn’t pleasant, but it is necessary. If a wandering sheep isn’t corrected, it will fall prey to a predator. The Psalmist wrote, “Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me” (Ps. 23:4c). The staff (crook) was used by shepherds to retrieve sheep that strayed. The rod (club) was used to repel predators and to break the leg of a persistently wayward lamb. Then the shepherd would carry the lamb until it healed. This “discipline” might save its life in the long run. So, don’t faint when God corrects you. His tough love is for your long-term benefit.
- **Wrong Focus:** David admitted, “I [would have] fainted unless I believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Ps. 27:13). Every day we have a choice: we can focus on the goodness of God or the badness of circumstances. In David’s darkest hour, when his city (Ziklag) was burned, his wives and children

were taken hostage and his own men turned mutinous, he “encouraged himself in the Lord” (1 Sam. 30:6). He focused on who was for him rather than what was against him. Hebrews 12:2 reminds us where to fix our gaze, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. ...” Quit looking at how massive your mountain is and start focusing on how great your God is.

In 1965, Jim Ryun set a world record as the youngest runner (17) to run a mile faster than four minutes. He talked about his training, “I would run until I felt I couldn’t take another step; then I would run until I felt my lungs were going to burst. Then I would run until I thought I was going to pass out. When I did this, I was making progress.” The true test of our character is what it takes to stop us. “If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small” (Prov. 24:10, MEV). While many are quitting, “let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1c). Friend, don’t be the victim of a spiritual fainting spell.

Ben Godwin is the author of four books and pastors the Goodsprings Full Gospel Church. To read more articles, visit his website at [and take advantage of his four-book bundle for \\$25.](#)