

Faith in Constant Motion

It was Christmas night 2014, and I was at the end of a long, fulfilling day spent with our son, his wife and our grandchildren. Everyone else had gone to bed, but at 11 p.m., I was still up finishing some cleaning. After a few final touches, I left the kitchen looking good for the morning. It was time for some well-earned sleep.

I felt my way to the bed, so thoroughly exhausted from the events of the day that I don't even remember my head hitting the pillow. Then it happened. As soon as I lay down, the whole room lit up. It went from total darkness to bright as day in an instant.

Then I heard a voice speak, unlike any human voice I had ever heard. With a trembling soul, I realized God was speaking to me in my bedroom. He said, "Mary! You have been summoned by Me!"

Every cell in my body shook with awe and fear. The word "Me" carried with it an earth-shattering power. I knew this was the God who could split rocks with a word and command worlds into being. I can't begin to describe the terror that coursed my body.

The voice continued: "I want you to get a pen and a pad and write this down. I want you to teach My people the five principles of faith."

I scrambled around the room looking for something to write with and to write on. I could now see by the supernatural light of His presence. I fumbled through the items on my bedside table as the voice of God continued, and as my heart pounded with excitement and no small amount of fear, I finally found what I was looking for.

He declared, "The first principle of faith: Faith must be in

constant motion!" (For the other four principles, you can read my book, *Prayer That Changes Everything*.)

In an instant I saw that faith must be like a river—in constant motion. A rushing river feels like an ever-expanding force, and our faith should be that way too. If your faith isn't constantly moving, it is dead. Like the stagnant water of a pond that breeds bacteria and other harmful things, motionless faith breeds apathy, disappointment and barrenness. But faith in motion is expanding like the universe. Faith is supposed to be always growing and ever-increasing.

A rushing river doesn't stop when it encounters a boulder. Instead, with all its power, it runs around the boulder or even over it. Faith finds a way to move past obstacles and continue to roll on powerfully toward its goal. Even if its energy or speed is diminished by the obstacle, faith picks up speed again as soon as it goes past it.

Have you noticed that God loves to do new things in our lives and on the earth? He is forward-looking, progressive in His plans for each one of us. He is in constant motion and wants you and me to be in constant motion through our faith, through our love, and in expectancy and readiness for all the new things He is about to do in our lives.

Faith Leads to Increase

Let me illustrate with a biblical example you might initially find strange. It is about being productive, increasing and filling the earth with good things. The Bible says the wickedness grew so great in Sodom and Gomorrah that God made the decision to destroy those cities. Recent archaeological evidence has found signs of collapse-inducing heat "perhaps as hot as the surface of the sun." I know it was fire and brimstone from heaven.

One day I said to the Father, "Help me to understand what was so wicked about those cities."

I saw that God's command to Adam and Eve was to multiply and replenish the earth. I felt God was showing me that, due to sexual perversion, Sodom and Gomorrah were no longer increasing and expanding according to this command. The men of Sodom were so deep in perversion that it disrupted normal married relations.

I wonder if Abraham was thinking about his own desire for a child, a baby to be born to Sarah and him. Maybe he was pleading for the babies and children in Sodom when he was asking God's messengers not to destroy the city if even 10 righteous could be found in it (Gen. 18:32). Could it be that God destroyed the cities because no babies or children were found in them due to all the perversion?

When our faith stops producing, multiplying and increasing, we are in dangerous territory. Jesus told several parables to the effect that we are given abilities, money and more in order to produce increase. This is part of what He meant when He told me that faith must be in constant motion. Nothing in the kingdom of God is stale or remains the same from day to day. God is always moving things forward.

Turbulence Before Unity

Motion often involves turbulence. Rivers are not always placid, peaceful places. They have rapids, strong currents and waterfalls. One river flowing into another is a powerful picture of what it looks like when God adds new things to what He already has in motion.

When you get married, you and your spouse are like two rivers flowing into each other. Each of you has your own way of thinking. Many married people discover that when their two rivers merge, in the natural, it is turbulent, topsy-turvy and all over the place. That is why couples often experience relational difficulty in the first year or two.

The same thing happens when God begins a new movement or work

on the earth. The existing works often have a hard time accepting it right away. The old and the new works are like two rivers—both good, both exciting and both with something to give—learning to flow together.

Don't you love how God works?

The benefit comes downstream when these rivers, movements and relationships become a mighty force. Once unified, these two rivers are much stronger together than they were apart. This is a picture of faith being in constant motion. We are always moving forward and new things are always being added to the rivers of our lives—things that are designed to make us more powerful in Christ.

A Prophetic Symbol for Forward Motion

God gave me a picture of the power of forward motion when I was just 21 and leaving my home city in Jacksonville, Florida, to attend Oral Roberts University (ORU) in Tulsa, Oklahoma. My father knew I did not have much money, so he said, "I am going to get you a car." I was so excited that the Lord had laid it on his heart to bless me that way—that is, until I saw the car. Sometimes you get tested by what God provides. Are you going to have an attitude of gratitude, or will you murmur and complain?

Dad had gone to the junkyard and bought a brown 1965 Bonneville that had been in a wreck. One door was crushed. The owner of the junkyard told Dad, "Yeah, it will start, and it will run, but the transmission drinks transmission fluid, and the oil is leaking like crazy." So Dad put four used tires on it, gave me a case of transmission fluid and a case of oil, and taught me how to refill these fluids every hundred miles or so.

"One other thing, Mary," he added, "the car's transmission is so bad that you cannot go in reverse. So wherever you pull in on your way to Oklahoma, make sure that you can keep going

forward. There is no reverse in this car.”

I worked hard to choose gratitude at that moment.

But as I was driving that car across the South to school, the Spirit of God showed me that He had put me in a prophetic automobile. It would only carry me forward. There was no going backward. It was a picture of the power of constant motion—moving forward in Him, growing in Him. Mile after mile, God instilled in me the importance of forward motion.

The prophetic analogy that came from that automobile was so powerful that it remained ingrained in me from that day forth. When I have been tempted to get stuck in some negative emotion or circumstance, some destructive thought pattern or relational response, I remember that Bonneville that wouldn't go backward.

Let Your Faith Flow Powerfully

As we go through the various seasons of life in relationships, businesses, family, career, child-rearing, marriage, friendships, and ministry, we must stay tuned into the overarching truth: even when things aren't going smoothly, our faith must keep broadening like a river and remain in constant motion, always growing. This requires us to constantly examine our faith, where we are in life and how long it has been since we allowed God to do something new.

But many people have faith that is stopped up and stagnated. For some, their dreams didn't come to pass in the way they expected, and some have quit dreaming altogether. Many have been hit with multiple disappointments and letdowns, and they feel so disheartened. Their faith rivers ran into the boulders and just stopped flowing. They grew discouraged and quit praying faith-filled prayers.

Others have settled into complacency about expanding or improving their lives. They are comfortable right where they

are, and they don't want anything new flowing into their lives— it will mess up their plans! They are like little offshoots of a main river that flow for a short while on their own but then hit a dead end in the terrain, stop moving and become stagnant.

It doesn't take a midnight encounter with God to show you the state of your faith. He can speak to you right now as this principle is revealed in your life. This revelation is not just mine; it's yours too. That is one reason He told me to write it down—for you. He wants your faith to be in constant motion, always growing in power. If your faith has become dormant, will you put it in motion again? {eoa}

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This article has been excerpted from Mary Colbert's Prayer That Changes Everything (Charisma House).