

How to Overcome Doubt and Mature in Your Faith

Faith is a gift from God, a seed planted in the heart of the believer at the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. However, maturing the seed of faith demands discipline. Herein lies the challenge for many believers taking the next step to climb the mountain that separates doubt from faith. A recent episode of *The Power of Intimacy With Christ* on the Charisma Podcast Network reminds us that climbing this mountain requires a backpack filled with Godly resources and devotion.

I remember that initial struggle to accept that it was God courting me into faith when I first accepted the Lord. It was not some spiritual encounter with the subconscious hocus pocus, but I had actually met the Lord Jesus Christ. To accept the seed of faith that the Lord was offering, I simply had to believe in Jesus—not in gimmicks or special physical feats. Simple faith granted me the opportunity to grow into something great as I got to know Jesus.

Our carnal flesh shaped in the old sin nature must be born again and washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. It is the enemy of our faith, and if we don't do the work of building faith, carnality will cause us to doubt the promises of Scripture, limiting us to what we can see and do in the flesh. Our natural inclination is to only trust what we can see, touch and feel, but the core of faith is to believe when we cannot see. By trusting in God, we are able to pull into existence the result of faith, to bring the invisible into the visible realm.

We must conquer the emotions that are born out of doubt, emotions that seek to capture and weaken the faith required to overcome the things that tempt us to doubt God. This spiritual

warfare between doubt, the flesh and faith in God is a lifetime battle that solicits a level of intentionality and violent determination to bring into subjection the doubting mind of unbelief and self-dependence. God's word by faith must be planted in our hearts, minds and spirits by hearing and believing the gospel, reading the Word of God, and allowing the Holy Spirit to write upon the tables of our hearts as he engraves His truth into our spirits through life events that test our faith and purge it into more.

To grow our faith, we must commit to developing deep roots in the Word with confidence that it is absolute truth and cannot fail—that the Word of God is the revelation of Jesus—and in it is that which God has given us to know both God and the world. We'll never get up the mountain enough to be able to weather the storm and the winds that come with the elevation of the climb without it.

To secure faith is to first believe God is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Faith climbing is all about fortifying our confidence in God through on-purpose living that moves our faith up the mountain and into answered prayer, victorious living and a lifestyle that is on fire for God with passion and full assurance. This assurance in Jesus must be cultivated, protected and employed. Therefore, this step of faith is simply believing that Jesus Christ is and will help us live out our faith in Him daily. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

To grow our faith, we must embrace the fight and strengthen our spiritual legs to climb the heights of God. In this, we develop the spiritual understanding and skills required to overcome the weariness of the climb. When we are desperate for more of God and want to understand what is available to those who live in God, we discover steps on the mountain that lead us up into a deeper relationship with God. The very tenacious conquering of fear and doubt in this place propels our faith

upward into the power of God, resulting in gaining and maintaining a confidence that refuses to be denied. Faith demands tenacity, and when we read the Word and began to employ it for disciplining our mind, we grow out faith and learn to survive the things that war against us on our climb into a place of assured hope in God. We then must train our intellect and heart to see beyond what is present to that which can be.

For more on strengthening your spiritual growth, listen to *The Power of Intimacy With Christ* on the Charisma Podcast Network.{eoa}