

It's Time to Believe

As a preacher, I've noticed something tragic about the body of Christ: We have lost our fear and reverence for God. We have taken His holy Word and turned it into an entertaining book of fables, some of which we halfheartedly believe, and some of which we don't believe at all.

We are interested in the Bible, but rarely are we inspired by it. Sure, we love the stories of victory, but we do not walk in its promises. If the truth were told, many of us would find out we've been in outright rebellion to God's Word.

We jump and shout in church over themes such as faith, obedience and fellowship, but we're not blessed because the Word has simply become a book of amusing stories instead of life-changing truths. It's like the movies: We cheer our favorite biblical characters on to victory with only a dream that someday that same victory will be ours.

Not only do we mistreat the Word, but we also entertain strongholds in our lives that have developed as a result of immaturity. And even though the Bible tells us to lay aside every sin and weight that easily besets us, we continue to entertain these strongholds.

One of the most common strongholds I see in the body of Christ is unbelief. This sin is detrimental because it keeps us barricaded from the power and blessing of God. The Bible makes it clear that there's not one situation we will go through for which God hasn't already made a way of escape through our

belief. But we simply don't have faith in God.

In the book of Joshua, God commanded an uncommon faith in His Word by instructing the priests to take up the ark of the covenant and to walk around the city seven times, blowing their trumpets and shouting so the walls of Jericho would fall down. The people, hungry for the presence and power of God, obeyed and were victorious (see Josh. 6).

Many believers have heard this story and countless others like it, and they still don't believe God for personal victory. Some enter the boxing ring of life with a fight-and-see attitude. But mature Christians go in knowing they will come out champions. This is not a name-it-and-claim-it thing. It's simply trusting God.

The situations in life that seem to knock us out of the ring hold the greatest promise. But we will not enjoy the fulfillment of the promise until we have defeated the problem. Although we have heard this many times, we still don't believe it.

If we are walking by sight, then we won't be able to see the victory. But if we are walking in the Spirit, we know that when we get tired, He will help us. All we have to do is show up for the battle, and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon us.

God has anointed believers to accomplish what He has ordained. But many Christians have spent their lives running away from battles, not realizing that it's the enemy who is afraid. God is telling us to take the city, but we are so wrapped up in our religion that we can't hear Him.

There was a time in my church when some religious people were complaining that the congregation was standing up too long during the worship service. Obviously these people didn't understand that spiritually hungry people don't want to sit down. In fact, those religious people didn't come back to church the next Sunday because they decided that "it didn't take all of that" to worship God.

Unfortunately, believers fail to understand that it's going to take that and more to be what God has called us to be. When God wants to move, we need to be willing to follow His lead. We have no authority to tell God no.

His blessings are reserved not for religious folks but for hungry folks—those who hunger and thirst after righteousness (see Matt. 5:6). But people who are caught up in the laziness of religion, performance and protocol will miss the move of God.

Don't be among those who miss God's blessing. You may have heard the promises a hundred times before. It's time to start believing them.

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