

Michael Brown: Has God Failed You?

If God of the Bible is who the Bible says He is, then, by His very nature, it's impossible for Him to fail. Then why ask the question, "Has God failed you?"

It's because, for all too many people, it feels as if God failed them. Perhaps you are one of those people?

Maybe you suffered a devastating loss, something that was almost impossible to bear. But what made things even worse was that you felt abandoned by God. With tears of anguish you cried out, "God, where are You?"

To this day, you still wonder, *Where was God when I was hurting? Why didn't He let me feel His presence? Why didn't He speak to me or send help my way when I needed Him the most? What kind of God is that—if He even exists? Or was there something wrong with me?*

Some of you wonder why your prayers for healing or provision or deliverance were not answered. As a result, you concluded that the Bible was untrue or, worse still, that God did not exist. And to this day, you have so many questions.

The truth be told, there are no easy answers to questions like these, no trite responses. To offer cheap answers is to insult you more than to help you, to minimize the pain you endured. Yet there *are* answers. And you are still here, reading this article. That means that there is still hope.

My newest book, *Has God Failed You? Finding Faith When You're Not Even Sure God Is Real* has just been released, and it addresses many of these deep, difficult questions.

But I want to be totally candid with you. Although I have

written more than 40 books, I felt deeply inadequate when it came to writing this book.

The issues are so personal, so weighty—literally matters of life or death. What makes me think that I could possibly help you? What “magic” formula could I supply? What could I tell you that you hadn’t heard before?

That’s why, as I wrote the book, I put no trust in myself. Instead, I put all my trust in the wisdom and goodness of God. Only with His help can I help you, which is why I wrote some pages of the book while kneeling by the side of my bed in deep dependence on Him. “We really need Your help, Lord!”

There is a remarkable verse in Isaiah 45:15 (ESV) where the prophet says, “Truly, you are a God who hides himself, O God of Israel, the Savior.” Isaiah calls the Lord the “God of Israel,” meaning that He is in covenant relationship with the nation, and he calls this God the “Savior.” Yet at the same time, He says this God sometimes hides Himself, even for protracted periods of time.

In my heart, I am confident that this same God is your Savior too, even if, for a time, He seemed to hide Himself from you. But, to say it again, you’re still here. You didn’t die. You didn’t cross the point of no return. You didn’t commit the unpardonable sin (if you had, you wouldn’t be interested in reading this book). It is not too late for you.

As for the devastating losses you may have experienced—the death of a loved one—God can bring life out of death and healing out of loss. It is in His very nature to do so.

In the midst of a terrible trial of his faith, King David wrote in the Psalms, “Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am faint; heal me, Lord, for my bones are in agony. My soul is in deep anguish. How long, Lord, how long?” (Ps. 6:2-3, NIV).

Yes, this is in the Bible too, and even godly men like David

passed through seasons of deep pain, both emotionally and physically, wondering out loud, *How long, Lord, will You let me continue to suffer? How long until You intervene?*

He continued, "I am worn out from my groaning. All night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears. My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes" (Ps. 6:6-7).

Yet despite the pain in his body and the agony in his soul, and despite the attacks of his enemies, David's hope remained firm: "The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer" (Ps. 6:9).

That is the character of God. He *is* near to the brokenhearted. He *does* care about human suffering. But sometimes the breakthroughs take time. And always, His ways are above our ways.

And in the midst of our trials, wherever we are, we see Jesus, who knows about suffering and betrayal and abandonment firsthand. He is the one who understands our weaknesses, our temptations, our trials and our pains, having been subject to weakness just as we are. He has perfect compassion, complete empathy, endless mercy and infinite hope.

If I can point you to Him, He will take things from there. In the words of the author of the book of Hebrews, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Heb. 4:14–16).

In the days ahead, I'll be sharing some excerpts from *Has God Failed You?* But for the moment, remember this: we can only get

a full understanding of the nature of God by looking at Jesus. And when we look at Him, one thing is for sure: It is not in His nature to fail us. {eo}

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