

How This Assaulted Missionary Learned to Walk by Faith and Not by Sight

Living in Africa was one of the most amazing experiences of my life. The culture, the people, the life change.

No words can adequately express the feeling of watching God change the storyline of someone's life. It's truly a miracle.

But before the end of my adventure in Malawi, the locals weren't the only ones who walked away with a change in their narrative; so did I.

In February of 2016, I was walking home from visiting some of the locals I had befriended when a group of men followed and assaulted me from behind. Using a small metal pipe, they landed a devastating blow to the back of my head that immediately knocked me unconscious.

Fortunately, as the men were rolling me over, a gentleman ran up and chased them off before they could inflict anymore damage to me. He then carried me home where I was then taken to a medical clinic for evaluation.

When I woke up the next morning, all I saw was darkness. The damaging blow to my head had resulted in a brain injury that left me blind. I can't even begin to communicate all the emotions and thoughts that ran through my head: "Would I ever see again? Would I ever get to see the face of my future wife and children? What church would hire a blind pastor?"

But even in the midst of all those fearful thoughts, I clearly heard God speak to me, "Keeton, continue your ministry."

I remember thinking, *What? That makes no sense. Yesterday I was assaulted. I'm now blind and you want me to go right back*

out on the same trail and walk two miles blind?

Immediately God spoke to those thoughts, "Yes, trust Me. I'll be with you."

I wrestled over this with God for hours. But in that, I remembered all the times God has been faithful. He had never once let me down. And I knew that even in this situation, no matter how helpless it seemed, was no different.

So I obeyed.

I'll never forget the moment my security guard walked me over to the trail and the feeling I had when he first let go of my arm. I was so scared. And as the tears ran down my face, I cried out to God that I trusted Him and then took my first step. In that moment I felt an overwhelming peace as God spoke to my heart: "This is true worship." I knew everything was going to be okay. My situation hadn't changed. I was still blind and more vulnerable than ever, but God was with me. And He wouldn't let me down.

Obedience. Faith. Trusting God with every single step that I could not see. I was learning to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7).

Over the next eight days I faithfully embarked on this adventure. And every single time, I would never complete it alone. Each day God would send a different person who would call out my name, grab my arm and accompany me the rest of the way.

And as a result, not only did many Malawians come to know Jesus, but I fell more in love with Him myself! And to top it off, nine days later God fully restored my sight! God is so faithful! I'm so amazed at how He works all things for good if we will just trust Him!

Today, maybe you're facing a difficult situation that is

overwhelming and God is asking you to step out and walk by faith, not by sight. If that's you, I want to encourage you, because the challenge for many people is that it's often the start that stops them. It was for me. And I learned that you'll never finish something that you don't start.

You don't have to have the faith to say, "I can see how this is going to unfold in the end." You just have to have faith to take the first step.

Learn more about how I learned to walk by faith and not by sight on this episode of *Missions in the Modern Day* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eo}