

How to Live a Life of Breakthrough Faith

Author and columnist Larry Sparks just released his first published book, *Breakthrough Faith: Living a Life Where Anything is Possible* (Destiny Image). Now *Charisma*'s Jennifer LeClaire interviews him in an exclusive interview about how his book seeks to revolutionize the way Christians see and activate their faith.

Does every Christian have the same amount of faith? Do you think that someone can get more faith? Why/why not?

I have been around the block when it comes to the so-called *faith movement*. This has been one of the most damaging theological deviations that has come against the body of Christ in the last 100 years. The problem is that there actually *is* some truth buried in the midst a lot of confusion and sloppy theology. To set the record straight, *no*—I do not believe that Scripture makes a clear case for different “levels” of faith.

When you give your heart to Jesus Christ, you become supernaturally transformed. You become a new creation (see 2 Cor. 5:17). How is this spiritual process made possible? No religious act or ritual could ever purchase your salvation; it was secured completely by the redemptive work that Jesus accomplished on the cross. This is what made it possible for you to become a Christian. It is vital that we remind ourselves that *Jesus did the work*. This means that you were not saved by anything you did or could do; you were redeemed by God's unmerited favor. We call this *grace*.

Now consider the familiar Scripture in Ephesians 2:8, “*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.*”

How do you actually believe in the grace of God that saves you? *Through faith*, according to Paul. Where does saving faith come from? There is only One Source that can give you a supernatural faith that empowers you to make the supernatural decision that ultimately yields a supernatural transformation. God gives the faith so that you can ultimately say “Yes” to the gospel. You make the choice to say “Yes,” as I believe the cross is open to *whosoever will*. And yet, faith is not something you can just muster up in your own human strength. I repeat, it takes supernatural faith to say “Yes” to a supernatural gospel. Supernatural faith comes from God. It stands to reason then if you have received faith that empowered you to believe in God’s grace to save you from sins, make you a child of God and secure you an eternal home in Heaven, there are *no limits* to what this faith can produce in your life *today*.

We build our faith. We exercise our faith. We understand the parameters of what this faith can produce. But I do not believe we can get *more* faith. This perspective keeps us running around on a proverbial hamster wheel, constantly begging God to give us something that we already have. It’s not a matter of crying out to heaven for more faith; it’s stepping out and learning to steward the faith we already have. That is the essence of *Breakthrough Faith*.

In your book, you make it clear that in order to start walking in breakthrough faith, we need to believe that God is both able and willing. Why is believing both of these truths necessary?

From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible makes it undeniable that Almighty God is able to do anything. He is able to create the universe out of nothing. Likewise, He is able to heal our sick bodies, raise the dead to life, deliver the tormented and perform miracles. Many of us don’t question God’s ability; we struggle with His willingness.

It is important for us to know that the same God who is able is also willing. When we understand His willingness, we have a greater vision of His heart, His love, His compassion and His kindness towards us. How do we know *what* He is willing to do? The greatest example is Jesus. Truly, Jesus is the ultimate picture of what the Father is willing to do on behalf of humanity, since Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God (see Col. 1:15). When we marry the ability *and* willingness of God, we are able to activate our faith to see the impossible become transformed.

Jesus talks about people doing even “greater works” than He did (see John 14:12). Do you believe this is possible for Christians today—and are there any people in the Bible who actually started doing these works?

I heard someone say recently that we shouldn't really focus too much on operating in the *greater works* until we start doing the *same* works. In part, I agree. On the other hand, Jesus' invitation for us to perform *greater works* summons us to a greater hunger. When we understand that, theologically, this invitation for *greater works* applies to Christ-followers throughout the centuries (not just the apostles), we actually have the ability to *live* in a place of sustained, increasing hunger for God. Why? Because with God, there is no limitation to what *greater* looks like. He has no ceiling. Our eyes have caught but a faint glimpse of the fullness of the great God who lives inside of us.

In *Breakthrough Faith* I try to let readers in on what Scripture suggests is the key to moving in these *greater works*. After all, we love keys. Secrets. Tools. Tips. Strategies. They help break down the complicated. They give us easy-to-replicate formulas. They have a place, yes. But when it comes to *greater works*, the key is *not* reducing them to a key; it's living so saturated in God's presence that our physical bodies become habitations for His glory. We actually see *greater works* in action through the life and ministry of

the Apostle Paul. You can read more about this in the book as I discuss the relationship between walking in greater works and cultivating a lifestyle of intimacy with God.

Can you list some examples of people walking in a lifestyle of Breakthrough Faith today?

I could list quite the extensive list of individuals who fit this description. In fact, I have many heroes of the faith and spiritual mentors who I am *not* going to list here, not because I don't think they walk in breakthrough faith, but because I want to list two specific individuals who most of us will be familiar with (and both of whom I mention in the book).

Kathryn Kuhlman: Even though Kathryn is no longer with us, this woman was *first* and foremost, one of God's dear friends. We are all invited into this place of intimate friendship; I just think Kathryn *really* took the Lord up on that. Out of this intimate place, miracles came. She did not embrace the title "faith healer," as she never made herself the focal point. Rather, she was a woman who walked in continuous fellowship and intimacy with the Lord and miracles simply flowed as a result.

Billy Graham: From everything I read about Graham, he is first a man of the secret place. He does not live for crowds, stadiums and numbers; he lives as a yielded vessel for the Holy Spirit to speak through. As a result, this general of evangelism preaches in a dimension of supernatural power that breaks off the scales blinding people to the gospel and lovingly beckons them to the cross.

Kuhlman and Graham might come from different streams, but their common denominator is undeniable. History records the results of their ministries being powerful and effective, with Billy for salvation and Kathryn for miracles, because their private lives were so saturated in God's presence. There is a vital link between our hunger for God's presence and the

expression of mountain-moving, breakthrough faith.

What three things will Breakthrough Faith do to help every Christian live a life where anything is possible?

1. *Breakthrough Faith* will build within you a tenacity to persevere through the impossible to watch the miraculous in your life.
2. *Breakthrough Faith* will give you practical, everyday tools that strengthen your faith so that you are ready to believe God for the impossible.
3. *Breakthrough Faith* will take your personal relationship with God to a new dimension. The book is not about giving you some new gimmick, formula or principle. I do not approach faith as some spiritual magic wand to get whatever we want, need or desire from a Celestial Santa Claus. The goal of this book is simple. Faith is not about plugging in a formula; it is a lifestyle of imitating God and seeing the character of Jesus accurately represented through His people in the Earth. When you bring the kingdom of God into impossible situations—through healing, deliverance, signs, wonders, miracles, etc.—you are representing a superior reality called heaven and you are giving expression to what the King and His kingdom look like.

Larry Sparks is author of the new book *Breakthrough Faith: Living a Life Where Anything is Possible*. He is a conference speaker, popular blogger, columnist and host of the weekly radio program, *Voice of Destiny*. Featured in *Charisma* magazine and on CBN's *Spiritual Gifts Webcast*, he is also founder of *Equip Culture*—a ministry that equips believers with the tools and resources to live victoriously through the power of God.