

THE STRENGTH TO

TO CARRY ON



F E A R

1 Corinthians 16:13

When Faith Becomes Sight

Faith has a purpose. It serves as a strength as we go through life and head for final victory - eternal life. Faith is rarely developed in comfortable surroundings. Think of the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11. They faced the impossible; believed the incredible; and watched God perform the miraculous. Faith defined their relationship with God. This is what is so inspiring about them. What is the process by which faith becomes sight?

I. Believe Like Moses

- A. Hebrews 11.27-29 - Moses **persevered** as one who sees him who is invisible.
- B. Exodus 35.5 - Moses receives the command from God and delivers the message to the people. This was an act of faith for everyone.
 - 1. Exodus 12.30 - *there wasn't a house without someone **dead**.*
 - 2. Exodus 35.4-5 - God asks for a response ... and v. 21 says they did.
 - a) 36.5-7 - They had to stop giving. *There was **more** than enough.*
 - b) Faith becomes sight in the completed tabernacle.

II. Prepare Like David

- A. 1 Chronicles 17.1 - David lives in a palace. God dwells in a tent.
 - 1. David moves into action and then God says, "wait," 17.4, 11-12.
 - 2. 29.1 - *the building will not be built for a human, but for the **Lord God**.*
- B. The faith that becomes sight is:
 - 1. 29.2 - Zealous. *I have made provision ...to the **best** of my ability.*
 - 2. 29.3 - Affectionate. *Because of my **delight**...*
 - 3. 29.3 - Sacrificial. *I now give my personal treasures **over and above**...*
- C. Faith is more than a profession...
 - 1. Colossians 3.23 - *Whatever you do, do it from the **heart**, as something done for the Lord and not for people...*
 - 2. Colossians 3.2: *Set your **minds** on things above, not on earthly things.*

III. Build Like Nehemiah

- A. 2.17 - *Come, **let's rebuild** Jerusalem's wall, so that we will no longer be a disgrace.*
- B. 2.18 - he prayed fervently.
- C. 2.19 - he acted decisively.
- D. This project, which had been neglected for almost a century, got completed because Nehemiah took the initiative and saw the task through. It's a huge testimony to his faith.

IV. Conclusion

- A. During this year of uncertainty and discomfort, how is God calling you to make a difference?
- B. 1 John 5.4 - Will you step out in faith?

Courageous Spirit

Today I want to share with you some good news... exciting news ... words that will fill your heart with hope: *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.* Paul is describing a Christian life that possesses strength of character, boldness, and courage. It is the spirit that stands strong ... no matter what comes. It is the ability to act with complete faith and trust in God. How do we get there? What does it look like? Today we'll examine 2 Timothy 1.6-7 and learn how.

I. Rekindle Your Gifts

- A. 1.6 - *I remind you to rekindle the **gift of God** that is in you.*
- B. 1 Peter 4.10-11 - *Just as each one has received a gift, **use it** to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.*
 1. What talents are you not using presently that God has given you?

II. Remember Your Resources

- A. 1.7 - *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.*
- B. The *spirit of **fear*** is the same thing as *timidity* or fear.
- C. Notice God **has given** you these things.

III. Three Spiritual Resources You Possess:

- A. 1.7 - Power (*dynamite*) might/energy; capability; ability; force; or vigor. *The energy that produces results.*
 1. Ephesians 1.18-20 - Paul prays that we come to a greater understanding of this power and how it is working inside of us.
 2. Ephesians 3.20-21 - When our trust is only in Him and our only desire is to serve Him, God is willing and *able to do **above and beyond** all that we ask or think.*
- B. 1.7 - Love
 1. Romans 5.5 - This hope will not disappoint us, because *God's love has been **poured** out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*
 2. Ephesians 3.17-19 - so great it goes beyond understanding.
 - a) John 15.13 - *No one has greater love than this: to lay down his **life** for his friends.*
 - b) 1 Peter 4.8 - *love **covers** a multitude of sins...*
 - c) 1 John 4.18 - *There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love **drives** out fear,..*
 3. What you love, controls your action.
- C. 1.7 - Sound judgment
 1. This is self-control / discipline / the properly prioritized mind.
 2. Romans 12.3 - another form of the word is found here.
 3. 1 Corinthians 9.26-27 - *I **discipline** my body and bring it under strict control...*

Conclusion

- A. You have the resources. You have the strength to carry on.

B. Ephesians 3.20-21 - when these things come together ... amazing things happen!

When Trials Come

James 1.1-12 presents us with a serious challenge. Sooner or later there will be a time of trial for us. Heartache; sorrow; disappointment; betrayal. It's not a matter of "if," but "when." While it is human nature to want to run or hurry through these things, we must view them as a chance to grow closer in our relationship with God.

I. Trials will Come

- A. 1.2 - Consider it a great **joy**, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials,
- B. 1.2 - **various**. (polka-dotted) Trials come in all sorts of sizes and shapes.
- C. 1.2 - **trials**. (Context determines how this word is translated)
 - 1. Trial - times of difficulty that God uses as an opportunity to test us.
 - a) 1.3 - trials help us learn endurance, steadfastness, or patience.
 - b) 1.4 - This is where God aims for our growing maturity.
 - 2. Temptation - something sent by Satan to cause us to stumble.

II. Wisdom Helps Us Prepare for Trials

- A. James 1.5 - God gives to all **generously** and ungrudgingly.... it will be given to Him.
- B. Proverbs 2.1-8 - wisdom comes as you apply Scripture to your life. Will you:
 - 1. 2.1 - accept God's words? **Store up** His commands within you?
 - 2. 2.4 - search for it like *hidden treasure*?
 - 3. 2.7 - God stores up success for the upright and is a **shield** for those who live in integrity.
 - 4. 2.8 - God **protects** the way of His faithful followers.
- C. Proverbs 2.6 - *The Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.*
Now is the time to seek God's wisdom and understanding.

III. Wisdom Helps us Evaluate the Source of Trials

- A. Sometimes our trials come directly from us.
- B. Sometimes difficulty comes from Satan by his using people to hurt us.
- C. Sometimes trial comes from things outside our control.
- D. James 4.7-8 - If Satan created the trial, then we learn to **draw near** to God...

IV. Wisdom Enables us to Discern the Purpose for the Trial

- A. 1.3 - **Trials bring the testing of our faith.** 1 Peter 1.6-7: *the **proven** character of your faith is more valuable than gold...*
- B. Matthew 16.24-26 - **Trials test our devotion to Christ:** *Let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.*
- C. 1 Peter 1.7 - **Trials have a refining purpose.**
- D. 2 Thessalonians 1.3-4; 11-12 - **Trials allow God to demonstrate His sustaining power.**
- E. James 1.4 - **Trials produce Christ-like character in us.**
- F. 2 Corinthians 1.4 - **Trials equip us for service to others.** *So that we may be able to **comfort**.*

Conclusion

- A. James 1.12 - *blessed is the one who endures trials.*

B. While you encounter trials...draw near to God and use the wisdom He provides.