

BACK TO THE BASICS OF FAITH

Faith Formula - Part 1: Your Own Personal Platform

In the previous teaching, "*Beware of the Sin Formula*", I wrote, "*Faith and sin are building material. They both have the ability to shape and mold our reality.*" This statement goes hand and hand with 1Corinthians 3:10, where the Apostle Paul referred to himself as a wise masterbuilder. He understood that through Christ, God had given him foundation building material. He was responsible for using it to craft a life that would yield something of consequence for the Kingdom. His reference in 1Corinthians 3:10 lets us know undeniably that when it comes to the structure of our lives, we can be masterful at building them by using the sturdy material of God's Word.

As Christians we should always have a sense that our lives are a work-in-progress. We should feel as though we are working towards something, and this particular something lifts us higher and higher to new spiritual heights. That "*particular something*" is our understanding of and belief in God's Word. This Word is our bread of life. It provides access to our Heavenly Father's promises, and it tells us how to follow the example of Christ. These are two of the most important building blocks for an abundant life, because our trust in the promises of God and how we prepare to receive those promises builds our catalog of faith. This catalog is our own personal platform. It keeps us steady as we stand during those times when we need to trust and believe God the most.

Hebrews 10:23 (NLT)

Without wavering, let us hold tightly to the hope we say we have, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.

God doesn't want us vacillating back and forth, unsure about whether or not He'll bless us. No...absolutely not. He wants us standing flatfootedly, fully persuaded, completely sold out on the great truth that what He said He would do--He beyond a shadow of doubt will do it, but our faith is positively a requirement. You can know His promises and say that you trust Him all day long, but it isn't so much about what you say...it's about what you DO to backup what you say; it's your responsibility to backup what you believe. That's how faith works!

Your lifestyle must stand on something steady or else you will have a lot of *misses* in life. You must have a platform built from trusting Him through whatever comes your way....time and time again...no matter how hard it gets. You have to trust Him enough to remain committed to your stand in Christ even when it looks and feels like defeat. You cannot expect to employ a powerful instrument like faith when you are unsure of God's goodness. And if you continue to sin, that's the exact message you are sending...that you have doubt in your mind and heart about who God is and what He will do for you. Sin is unbelief. Its trusting that something else will extend to you more happiness, satisfaction, and abundance than living by God's Word will. This is a lie, and believing it is a big no, no.

God is a God of order and He changes not. Numbers 23:19 says "*God is not a man, that he should lie. He is not a human, that he should change his mind. Has he ever spoken and failed to*

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act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?" God is consistent. He's overwhelmingly fair, and He never bends His precepts to accommodate our failure to measure up to them. He is fifty million percent faithful to His Word. Because of this...because God is faithful and does not change, the bible has withstood and will forever withstand any test of time.

The rule book is closed. In His Word, God has already established the differences between right and wrong, good and bad, darkness and light. Just because the world considers something to be right doesn't make it right according to God's standard. He created the universe and all the laws that govern it, and there is nothing that any of us can do to change them, nor should we wish to. Our Heavenly Father is a great big wonderful God. He's perfection through and through, and a huge part of our faith practice is to trust that. He set up the system for us to win, and to do so His way.

The world is incapable of extending true victory to any human being, but for the sake of argument, let's just say that there are two kinds of success, one that is temporary at best and is achieved through worldly pursuits and the other lasts an eternity and is achieved through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To win his way, you and I are to submerge ourselves in Godliness. Our demeanor should be God-like because we are His kids. God has told us to put on the mind of Christ because that is the essence of His mind. We are to be patient, loving, and kind because He is patient, loving, and kind.

God has very high expectations of us. We are capable of measuring up to His standards because we are the result of His best work. Ephesians 2:10 (NLT) says "*For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*" Our Heavenly Father calls us His masterpiece because we have the capacity to measure up His intentions. Through Christ, you and I can embrace all the good things that He planned for us since He first spoke the universe into existence.

Really take that one in. We are the masterpieces of the One who created all that we survey. We are His *pièce de résistance* because we can choose to become the embodiment of His only begotten son, Jesus Christ. By accepting Christ as the head of our lives, we can spiritually grow and develop to the point of demonstrating in the earth all the power, love, wisdom, and strength that he demonstrated. This is God's plan...that we become like Christ.

God created us in HIS likeness because He wants a relationship with us. We are made in His image for that sole purpose. He instilled within us the longing for a spouse. He gave us the longing for a mother's or father's love...the longing to belong...so that we would understand His longing to share a connection with His people. He has been so loving, so patient as we've muddled our way through. We could have built stronger platforms from which to exercise faith; we could have made greater progress on our spiritual journeys had we just been more attentive to His Word. We could have studied more, loved more, shared more, but instead we, all of us, have forfeited some of the most critical aspects of our spiritual destinies for selfish gain. And yet, God still helps us. He still loves and forgives us.

God's Word teaches us how to build a solid platform, one that will assure an extraordinary life, and an incredible walk in faith. We make mistakes out of selfishness and greed because we flat out refuse to understand what God is teaching us about life. We have neglected to

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recognize how God designed life to work, and we waste valuable time trying to concoct a way that isn't based on His Word.

2Peter 1:3 (NLT)

As we know Jesus better, his divine power gives us everything we need for living a godly life. He has called us to receive his own glory and goodness!

Most of us want to stay alive, and we love life because "life" is the way of all spiritual things. 2Peter 1:3 (NLT) gives us a simple prescription for platform building. It tells us that as we get to know Jesus Christ better, as we put on more Word knowledge in our minds and hearts, we will grow in his divine power. That power will give us everything we need to live a godly life. There is no other way to live a spiritual life in Christ other than living God's Word. There is no other way to demonstrate faith other than to walk by the light of Christ.

2Corinthians 4:15 (NLT)

All of these things are for your benefit. And as God's grace brings more and more people to Christ, there will be great thanksgiving, and God will receive more and more glory.

The knowledge of God's Word gives us everything we need for living a godly life. The Word is life-sustaining. It's wisdom helps us to navigate safely through all the traps and pitfalls of existing in a sinful world. God gave us His Word so that we could live and not die. He wants us to stick around on earth for as long as we can. The only way to do that is to live according to His Word. Why is that important to God? Why does He want us to live more than abundant lives on this earth amidst all its turmoil and danger? Why does He want us to live long lives? The answers to these questions are not complicated at all. Our purpose for being here is to learn and to prove God's Word. Each and every time we win His way, we are demonstrating the power of His love. We affirm that He is who He says He is, and we bring glory to His throne.

As we put God's Word to work in our lives, we will undoubtedly witness positive results. This is why 2Corinthians 4:15 (NLT) declares that as His grace makes it possible for more and more folks to come to Christ, the more glory God will receive. He knows that as we grow in the spirit, we will bear fruit. We'll share the Word with others, they'll be delivered and made whole through Christ, and they will in turn do the same thing for someone else. This is a system that yields eternal rewards, and it works. Know that as you share the gospel and live a peaceful and productive life, you are building a solid platform, one that will steady you as you trust and believe God for good health, great relationships, spiritual growth, and true abundance. Stay committed to a Christ kind of faith. Know that everything you do for Him matters, and have confidence that even if you can't see it, your platform is firmly in place.

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