

## **BACK TO THE BASICS OF FAITH**

### *Faith Formula - Part 2: The Stuff Nobody Tells You*

The distance between ketchup sandwiches and an adequately stocked pantry is a long one...and I've traveled it. I've seen the extreme side of lack and I can tell you for myself that it's no fun. Those of you who have been with me for a while have heard me talk about how extraordinary my faith community was growing up. My mentors and teachers were tremendous and poured into me everything that they had, but even within them the limiting beliefs about God's Will and Plan was evident. Despite my very best intentions, these limiting beliefs were passed on to me and kept me moving at a snail's pace to success and happiness for many, many years.

The most paralyzing was the belief that my failures existed because God was punishing me...that His Will was so precarious and clandestine that I could never know or have confidence that He would let me succeed. Therefore, I faced every situation, every challenge, not with faith, but with uncertainty. I faced every possibility for abundance with something as unsteady and unsure as doubt. This doubt had me constantly guessing whether or not God would let me succeed.

What does Hosea 4:6 tell us? It very clearly declares, "*my people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge.*" Oh yeah, what you don't know can destroy you, and what's worst, you can die believing that God caused you to be defeated. Not only is that a terrible way to die, it's a terrible way to live.

Think about it, you can only go as far as you are willing to believe. You cannot grow beyond what you have learned thus far, and how you think God views you really does shape and mold how you view yourself. If, for whatever reasons, you believe that God will not let you get ahead, then there is no possible way for you to get ahead. As children of the Most High, our boundaries are self-imposed; we limit ourselves. The only way for you to move beyond those limitations is to change what you think about God, His love, and what He desires for you. You have to know more than what you know now, or you have to be reminded of what you use to know and have forgotten.

#### **Galatians 5:1 (The Message)**

*Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you.*

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Through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we are free from any shackles of doubt, insecurity, fear, lack, or any other form of darkness. We can take a stand because he has provided us something to stand on. We have the impenetrable, unrelenting, and firm foundation of God's Word.

Last week we began to talk about building your own personal platform. YOU build this platform, not Heavenly Father. He has provided you with the foundation to build upon. He's given you the blueprints of His Word, and through Christ He's given you a picture of how your construction ought to look, but make no mistake about it...you are the builder. If you don't like what you've constructed thus far, if you're not pleased with the way your life has turned out, then you have to change your building material. Change what you do, think, and say.

Your platform is made from everything you do...everything you think....and everything you say. What you DO, THINK, and SAY builds your reality. This is an astounding piece of information. It's the stuff nobody tells you. You can live the greater part of your life without knowing this jewel, and when someone finally does tell you, it's sometimes too big a piece of mind-blowing revelation for you to chew on. But rest assured, this is the truth. With every passing moment you are constructing. You are building a platform that either supports or destroys the full expression of your soul's intentions and desires.

Let's go back to what the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:9-15 (The Message):

*"9-15 Or, to put it another way, you are God's house. Using the gift God gave me as a good architect, I designed blueprints; Apollos is putting up the walls. Let each carpenter who comes on the job take care to build on the foundation! Remember, there is only one foundation, the one already laid: Jesus Christ. Take particular care in picking out your building materials. Eventually there is going to be an inspection. If you use cheap or inferior materials, you'll be found out. The inspection will be thorough and rigorous. You won't get by with a thing. If your work passes inspection, fine; if it doesn't, your part of the building will be torn out and started over. But you won't be torn out; you'll survive—but just barely."*

Paul warns us to take particular care in picking out our building materials. What are your building materials? What you do, think, and say... remember that those are the things that shape and mold your reality. Paul says " *If you use cheap or inferior materials, you'll be found out.*" What are cheap and inferior materials? Cheap and inferior materials are negative thoughts, negative habits, and negative conversation. If you have developed a habit pattern of negative and defeatist thoughts...if your conversations and friends are negative, then more than likely you will have disappointment after disappointment, because you most definitely will reap

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what you have sown. You will reap the harvest of where and how you invest your time and energy.

In his letter to the Philippians, chapter 4, verses 8-9, The Apostle Paul wrote: *"Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies."*

The Apostle Paul understood that we are required to build a platform that will support the things we want most out of life. You can't do that if you don't know or understand #1) God's Will and #2) how you fit in it. Just the other day an acquaintance who is quite a few years older than me had stopped by for a short visit. As she was leaving I said, *"I hope to see you next week..."* She replied *"If it be God's Will..."* I was instantly taken back to some of the most challenging years of my life, when I believed as she does...that it made no sense to fully believe and trust in anything because one could never be sure as to what was in God's plan. This is nonsense. God's Word is His Will. This woman was implying that she couldn't fully trust that God would allow her to live another week. It's wrong believing on so many levels.

God has woven our success and happiness into His plan, and you cannot really begin to live as robustly as He intends until you trust that. Audibly saying that you trust in God's desire for your success isn't enough. James 2:18 (The Message) says *"I can already hear one of you agreeing by saying, 'Sounds good. You take care of the faith department, I'll handle the works department.' Not so fast. You can no more show me your works apart from your faith than I can show you my faith apart from my works. Faith and works, works and faith, fit together hand in glove."*

Let's be clear, our works cannot save us, only Christ can. But our works back up our faith. In order for faith to produce results it has to be backed up by the right action. So when we say that we believe in the goodness of God, we ought to prove it through our next level thoughts, next level talk, and next level walk. You and I don't have any time to be looking at someone else's life...trying to figure out how they got over. You don't have the luxury of being gob smacked by someone else's success. You ought to be tipping over with joy about what God is doing in your own life.

### **Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)**

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*"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."*

We are God's masterpiece! What master artist who has the good sense to produce their very best work-- would do so only to destroy it? What artist would put everything into a masterpiece and then lock it away in some closet? You wouldn't expect this of a human, so why would you expect it of God? We were not created to be defeated. We were not created to be put away or thrown into bondage by limitations, self imposed or otherwise. We were created to be the full expression of our Father's love. We were created to grow, triumph, and flourish by using the extraordinary gifts that He has provided. So shift your mind and heart in high gear and mastermind your blueprints for success. Get busy turning your life into the masterpiece it was meant to be!

There's more....stay tuned for Part 3

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