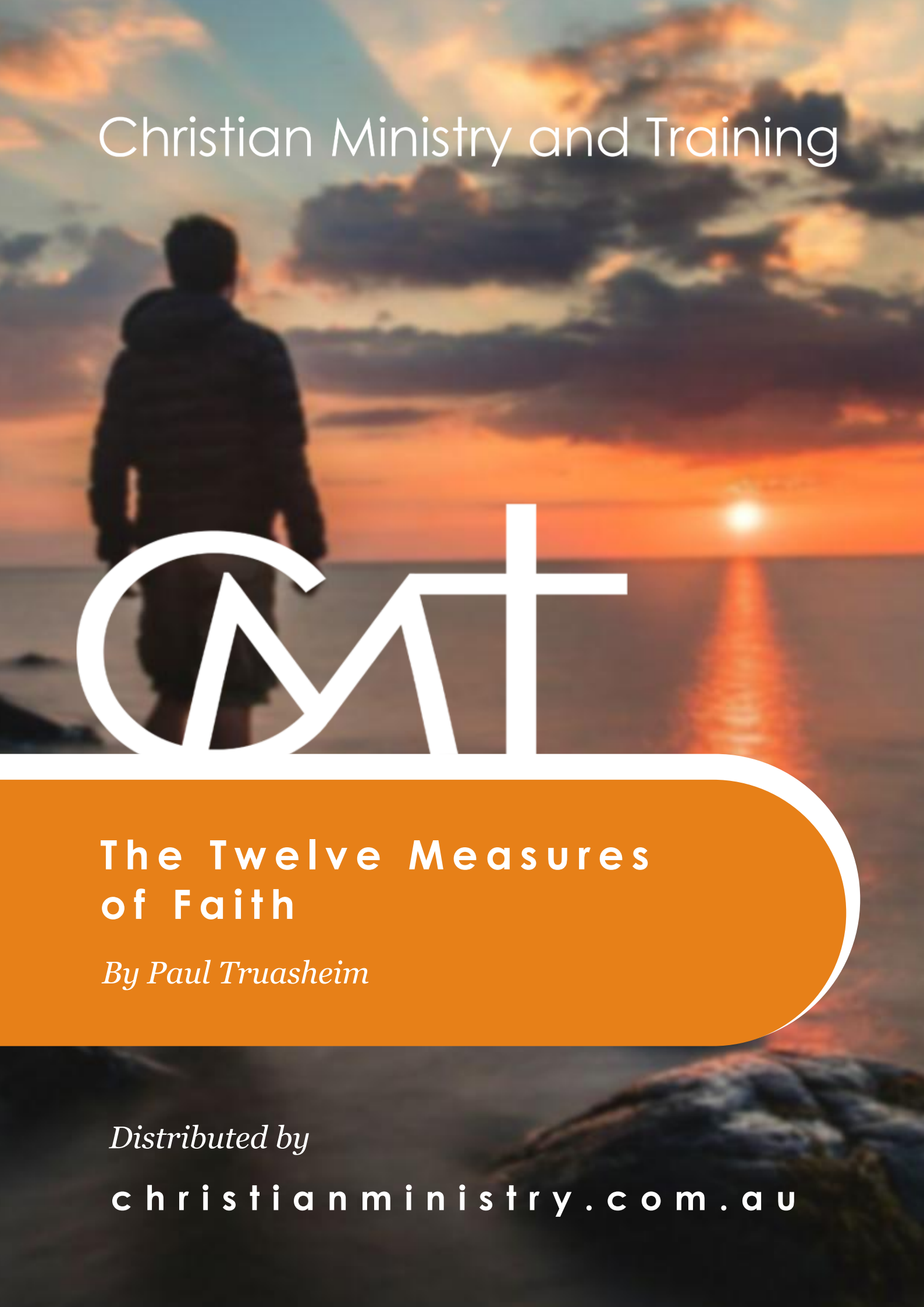


The Twelve Measures of Faith

By Paul Truasheim

Distributed by

christianministry.com.au

These Subject Notes are distributed by:
Christian Ministry and Training

www.christianministry.com.au

Christian Ministry and Training is a Division of
Universal Education and Training Ltd
Australia ABN 75 090 720 086

Copyright for these notes rests with Paul Truasheim.

About the Author

Paul Truasheim is a passionate educator and visionary Christian leader with over 40 years of experience in education and training, including more than 35 years specifically dedicated to Christian education.

As the Founder and CEO of Universal Education and Training Ltd (UNET) which operates through the Language Training Institute (LTi) and Christian Ministry and Training (CMT), Paul has helped equip over 20,000 students across Australia and around the world for lives of service and purpose in Christ.

From humble beginnings and countless faith testing moments, Paul has seen God's hand at work in extraordinary ways. Paul's career has spanned classroom teaching, school leadership, and large-scale program management. He has taught in Christian schools, managed training programs across Australia, and led international education and development projects in countries such as China, Vietnam, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Iran. His leadership has helped shape both vocational education and ministry focused training for students from diverse cultural backgrounds. His journey has always been marked by trust in God's promises, even through seasons of great challenge.

A key focus of Paul's current work is the establishment of a fully accredited Christian university on the Sunshine Coast. This proposed institution, Christian University for Australia, is envisioned as a world-class university offering a full range of academic programs, from certificates to doctoral degrees, within a Christian worldview and learning environment. The project aims to provide students with the opportunity to study a full range of disciplines within a Christ-centred environment. The initiative is not just an educational project; it's a step of faith for the future of Christian influence in the nation. To learn more, visit ChristianUniversityForAustralia.org.au.

Paul holds a Master of Education Studies, a Bachelor of Education, and a Diploma of Teaching. Paul lives on the Sunshine Coast with his wife Sheeree. They have been married for over 40 years and have four adult children. Their lives reflect a commitment to walking in faith and trusting God to fulfil His promises.

Contents

Introduction 5
Chapter 1: Faith in the flood 6
Chapter 2: Faith is not an option – it's an imperative 9
Chapter 3: Faith and Patience - The Part A & Part B of receiving what God has promised for you 11
Chapter 4: The 12 Measures of Faith 16
Chapter 5: Measure 1 - Faith for the basics 20
Chapter 6: Measure 2 - Just say the word faith 23
Chapter 7: Measure 3 - Sinking boat in storm faith 25
Chapter 8: Measure 4 - Visible, observable faith 26
Chapter 9: Measure 5 - Touching God faith 32
Chapter 10: Measure 6 - Emphatic faith 36
Chapter 11: Measure 7 - Walking on water faith 39
Chapter 12: Measure 8 - Persistent faith 43
Chapter 13: Measure 9 - Repeat performance FAITH 48
Chapter 14: Measures 10 & 11 - Corporate faith to cast out demons and move mountains 51
Chapter 15: Measure 12 – Fig tree faith – unlimited potential 56

Introduction

As I write this introductory page, I am sitting in a hotel room in Ipswich less than 100 metres from a vacant corner block of ground. About 45 years ago, my life was in the process of being transformed by the working the Holy Spirit during Church meetings held in a building that used to stand there. I was about 13 then, and now I'm 58.

My parents had always been in Church. My mother still sends me something inspirational every now and then. Apart from my wife, who is the guest speaker in a local Church meeting tomorrow – and hence the need for us to be in a hotel tonight - my mother has had more impact on my life than any other woman.

It is significant that Paul notes that he remembers Timothy's "genuine faith" which he also saw in Timothy's mother and grandmother. Paul says that "the same faith continues strong" in Timothy (2 Tim 1:5). Of all the other attributes Paul could have specifically highlighted in referring to a mother, Timothy's mother, it was faith that he referred to. Yes, faith – not love, or compassion, or kindness (as great as those things are). It was faith.

And, I include this following thought from one of the great fathers of faith because my mum took the time to email it to me as my wife and I continue on our own journey of faith believing for God's miraculous provision of the hundreds of millions of dollars needed to establish a Christian University in Australia. In many senses, this little devotional thought is the perfect introduction to what I have written in the pages that follow. Here it is:

"Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" John 11:40

Every time you venture out in the life of faith, you will find something in your common-sense circumstances that flatly contradicts your faith. Common sense is not faith, and faith is not common sense; they stand in the relation of the natural and the spiritual. Can you trust Jesus Christ where your common sense cannot trust Him? Can you venture heroically on Jesus Christ's statements when the facts of common-sense life shout – "It's a lie"? On the mount it is easy to say – "Oh, yes, I believe God can do it"; but you have to come down into the demon-possessed valley and meet with facts that laugh ironically at the whole of your mount-of-transfiguration belief. Every time my programme of belief is clear to my own mind, I come across something that contradicts it. Let me say I believe God will supply all my need, and then let me run dry, with no outlook, and see whether I will go through the trial of faith, or whether I WILL SINK BACK TO SOMETHING LOWER.

Faith must be tested, because it can be turned into a personal possession only through conflict. What is your faith up against just now? The test will either prove that your faith is right, or it will kill it. "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me." The final thing is confidence in Jesus. Believe steadfastly on Him and all you come up against will develop your faith. There is continual testing in the life of faith, and the last great test is death. May God keep us fighting trim! Faith is unutterable trust in God, trust which never dreams that He will not stand by us.

(Devotional message from "My Utmost for His Highest" by Oswald Chambers.)

Chapter 1: Faith in the flood

I was walking across the school campus almost in a daze. Things were really bad financially. It wouldn't look good for our Christian missions and ministry organisation to go broke. Think of the mess. Unpaid people, overdue bills, headlines in the newspaper: "Another so called Christian organisation fails to meet its basic commitments".

I was on my way to attend morning staff devotions. I sat in the back row deep in thought and hoping I wouldn't have to give an honest answer to any one of the 100 or so other staff that would attend and possibly sit down next to me with the obligatory "Hi Paul, how are things going?"

I didn't want to answer. Not that morning. Probably not that week, or month.

Neil had been scheduled on devotions – at the last minute. He was replacing the usual person assigned for that day.

He began his talk with photographs of an off-road vehicle about to cross a flooded bridge. It entered the water – something no one should ever do. As the vehicle continued forward, the photograph images showed the water level rising up to just under the level of the windows, partially covering the bonnet.

Neil commented on another slide where the vehicle appeared to have moved sideways as if it was beginning to be swept towards the edge. The enormous torrent of water sweeping downstream over the bridge was slamming into the side panels of the apparently doomed vehicle. The vehicle seemed to "settle" from the upward impact of the waters and miraculously continue towards the other side. Still, there was no guarantee if would make it. I thought it might not.

When it seemed nothing could be worse, everyone suddenly became more terrifyingly interested when the next photograph showed the slightly blurred image of what appeared to be a young 7 or 8 year old child peering over the dash from the front seat next to the driver.

My mind was racing. Where was Neil leading with this morning devotional. More especially, was there a message in it for me? I began to think that perhaps he was going to use these frightening images to make a point along the lines of "such stupidity is indicative of those who truly need to learn what it is to have God's true wisdom" and that consequently "idiots like this could certainly not expect anything but God's wrath".
I drew a parallel in my mind between the "sinking ship" of our Missions and Ministry organisation and the apparent fate of this "idiot" and the "innocent child" at his side in the front seat.

Amazingly, earlier that morning in my own personal devotional time I had read these very words: "Save me, O God, for the floodwaters are up to my neck... I am in deep water, and the floods overwhelm me" (Ps 69:1-2).

I was bracing myself for what God's message to me (through Neil) might be that morning... when Neil suddenly broke from the commentary on the perilous bridge crossing, looked at me in the back row and spoke my name. For a micro second I was petrified.

"Like Paul," he said referring to me, "this guy driving across the river and proudly boasting on the other side of what were of the virtues of his 4 wheel drive vehicle … this guy had absolute faith in the power and strength and ability of that vehicle to get him and his young son to the other side." Neil was now pointing to me and saying: "Like Paul, who has the faith to believe for God to carry him through every challenge and every difficulty with his missions and ministry organisation, we also should have faith.... just like this fool who had faith in his vehicle to get him across this flooded river."

I was stunned. It was as if every word Neil said was spoken in slow motion, slowed by the fear in my heart that the Lord would bring the answer I had been seeking in the form of a rebuke. But the answer I'd been seeking was not a rebuke, it was the most amazing confirmation that the Lord wanted me to continue trusting him – even when it seemed that I was heading in the direction of complete disaster, taking innocent and good hearted, hard-working people with me.

Now hear me – I am totally opposed to anyone trying to enter flood waters. At all. Ever. We have a saying in Australia: "If it's flooded, forget it." I agree with that. So would Neil.

But sometimes, we find ourselves in circumstances that are NOT of our own choosing. I never wanted the insane pressure of mounting bills and no money. I never wanted to be in a situation where I had to think about the consequences of bankruptcy, of financial ruin leading to personal shame and humiliation. I never wanted to have to think about what I would say to friends and family, to Board members, and employees who would never be paid. I never wanted the pounding thoughts in my mind, day after day, night after night. We don't want these circumstances. And we don't understand why the Lord even allows us to end up in these places of near disaster, even when all we are trying to do is follow Him with all of our heart, all of our mind, all of our soul, and all of our strength.

But that's where David found himself in his Psalm 69 world. He wrote that he was "exhausted from crying for help" and that his eyes were "swollen with weeping, waiting for my God to help me" (Ps 69:3). This was not written when he had sinned with Bathsheba. This was written at a time when he could honestly say to God: "Passion for your house has consumed me" (vs 9)… the very words Jesus himself quoted on that "notorious" occasion of driving the scum that were turning his Father's house into a "den of thieves". Jesus used David's words of this "flood water" Psalm because those words were most fitting. Jesus the son of God, and God in the flesh, chose to use the very words spoken by a man in the midst of a flooded river, a man on the verge of being washed away into oblivion, into destruction… and shame and embarrassment – far from being on the throne as King of Israel.

As I had read early that morning, David prayed: "Don't let the flood waters overwhelm me, or the deep waters swallow me, or the pit of death devour me" (Ps 69:15).

David wasn't in flood waters because he wanted to be there.

It makes no difference how he got there. What made all the difference was that David knew what it was to have absolute 100% trust in the Lord his God even when he was there.

Throughout that Psalm we see David modelling what it is to have faith in the wonder of God's "unfailing love" (vs 13, 16), His plentiful "mercy" (vs 16), His "saving power" (vs 29).

David knew with absolute certainty that even in the worst of times when everything screams at us to think that God is not anywhere in our circumstances that we need to be reminded that: “The humble will see their God at work and be glad. Let all who seek God’s help be encouraged. For the Lord hears the cries of the needy…”. (Ps 69:32)

And that was me that day. I needed Neil’s voice to be the voice of God to me that day.

His voice said: “Trust me. Have faith in me. Keep believing. I AM with you.”

If you are facing “the mother of all giants” or it seems as if you are going to be “swept over the bridge” by the waters of your circumstance, you should definitely read Psalm 69. Take it from me – it’s God’s word to you.

This book is written to encourage your faith. I have started with this story because Neil’s message on that day was God’s word to me to encourage my faith. Our Missions and Ministry organisation got through that time. I left that morning devotions knowing God had spoken to me in response to my desperate cry to Him.

I pray that God will use the words of this book to speak to you and strengthen your faith in the same way that God spoke to me through His word (Psalm 69) and Neil’s message on that day.

Chapter 2: Faith is not an option – it's an imperative

When God speaks, we need to listen. Obviously.
But when he speaks four times, we REALLY need to listen.

On four separate occasions God says in His word, the Bible: "The just will live by faith" (Hab 2:4, Rom 1:17, Gal 3:11 and Heb 10:38).

Did you get that? Four times. Once in the Old Testament – the original "utterance"... and then that is repeated three more times – just to make absolutely sure that you got it. You have to get it.

The "just" – that's you and me if you know Jesus.

Will "live" – that's pretty much everything there is in this world ... it's what we do through all of life: we "live".

By faith. What's that? It's how God calls us to "live".

Try and find another statement repeated in the Bible four (or more) times....
Well, actually, that "other statement" would be: "Anyone who *trusts* (or *believes*) in him will never be shaken (or disgraced)" (Isaiah 28:16, Romans 9:33 and 10:1, and, 1 Peter 2:11).

Interesting. This other statement that is "repeated" four times has to do with "trusting" or "believing". That sounds like having "faith". Actually, you can't trust or believe without having faith – and vice versa. So, let's make that a double dose of essentially the same thing.

Anyway, let's get back to the fact that we must "live by faith"....

First, the only way we "live" spiritually as opposed to remaining "dead" in our sins is by faith in Christ (Eph 2:4-8). Entering into a relationship with Christ is the beginning of "living by faith".

Living by faith starts with accepting Christ, and then living by faith continues for the rest of our lives. Until we see the Lord face to face, we ***must*** live by faith. We must.

In 2 Peter 1:5 to 7 we see the progression of Christian life. It starts with…… faith, and to that we are encouraged to add the other things: moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, patient endurance, godliness, brotherly affection, and finally love. But the journey starts with faith. It's not an accident that this progression starts with faith. The list of qualities starts with faith. You can have the capacity to drive your car to a holiday destination, but the "key" that starts it all has to be involved in the process. Faith is what "activates" our life in God, and to faith other qualities can be added. It's not the other way around. You don't start by being knowledgeable enough and then get faith. You don't start by being "godly" enough and then end up with faith. You start with faith and things progress from there.

It's not possible to please God (at all, in any way) without faith (Heb 11:6).

Maybe that's why we find the word "faith" used exactly 27 times in the great passage on faith from Hebrews 10:38 to Hebrews 12:1. The number "27" is equal to 3 x 3 x 3 ... And with "3" being the "God" number, 27 is a number with "God all over it". The word of God really goes "overboard" to emphasise the importance of faith – using the word "faith" 27 times in 43 power packed verses. Faith, faith.

That passage on faith includes the great chapter on faith. It starts with one of the four "Just shall live by faith" instances, and it finishes with a reference to the great cloud of witnesses to "the life of faith".

Surely, we can see it: God wants our attention. Faith is essential. We MUST live by faith.

Chapter 3: Faith & Patience - The Part A and Part B of receiving what God has promised for you

It was early morning. It was dark. No one else at home was up.

My mind contemplated how alone I felt. I had almost no money and very few resources. Yet I had continued to feel that God had called me to start a Christian University in Australia. I knew this task would take tens and hundreds of millions of dollars. Actually, let's be honest, it would take billions over time.

There has been signs that God was truly "in" what I was telling "everyone" that He was calling my wife and I to do. But this particular morning the utter hopelessness of the situation bore down heavily on me. I didn't want to be wasting the life God had given me trying to do something He had never called me to do. And, I would not want to bring shame and dishonour to his name by declaring that I believed He was going to do something He had no intention of doing. I was really serious.

With everything within me, I wished I could just sit face to face with God and have Him confirm that He really had called me to do this task.

My normal early morning routine involved making a hot drink in the kitchen to have as I read my Bible and spent time with the Lord. That morning, somewhere around the refrigerator the thought that I should read Isaiah 51 came into my mind. It was so clear.

As I sat in the lounge chair, hot drink on hand, I turned to Isaiah 51.

The first two verses seemed to have been written by God himself as a direct response to my exact thoughts just 10 minutes earlier that morning.

I had been thinking... "It's like I'm all alone ..." and there it was:
"Abraham was only one man when I called him" (Is 51:2).

I'd been thinking "how could I achieve this enormous, seemingly impossible task…" and there it was:
"But when I blessed him, he became a great nation."

It was like God himself was right there speaking to me to directly answer the genuine and deep cry of my heart to hear from him.

As I read over the other statements in those two verses, I saw other thoughts that connected to my circumstances. For example, there was the reference to "Sarah who gave birth to your nation" ... This had a one to one correspondence with the fact that in my "alone-ness" my wife stood with me, believing with me for the impossible.
God had spoken to me that morning.

He knew I would need the absolute assurance that He was calling me to this task.

Many times I have needed to look back on that morning, and know with certainty that the Lord has spoken to me.

Hebrews 6 verse 12 refers to “those who are going to inherit God’s promises because of their faith and endurance (or patience in some versions)”.

There are two things linked together that enable us to end up receiving everything that God has for us – they are: “faith” and “patience”.

These two ingredients are like the “Part A” and “Part B” of “two pack” glues. The glue will not work unless you mix Part A with Part B. If you do mix Part A with Part B you had better be ready to apply it to whatever you want to stick together, because that “mix” is going to “set”.

Part A is going to make the glue “hard”. There is going to be a tough and strong bond.
Part B is going to make the glue “stick”. It’s going to “latch on” and stay stuck.
The two parts together make something “stuck hard”. There will be an unbreakable bond because of the “stickiness” and because of the hardness.

That’s like “faith” and “patience”.
Faith is like Part A. It’s strong. It’s tough. It’s sure. It’s certain.
Patience is like Part B. It latches on and no matter what it’s not going to let go. It “endures” anything. Any obstacle. Any set back. Any amount of time beyond the time you think it should have taken plus more.

Faith on its own may be “tough” and “strong” for a while. It may be there around the time it’s first needed. But if you don’t have the patience and the endurance to stay in faith, then your faith won’t remain “stuck” to the promise that God gave you.

In the very next verse, Hebrews 6:13, we have the ultimate example of the Part A and Part B “Faith Glue” that enables a person to receive all that God has promised them.

That example is Abraham.
We see in verse 13 that God made a promise to Abraham.
In verse 14 there is a quote of God’s word to Abraham spoken in Genesis 22:17.
BUT... verse 15 brings home the point that after God’s direct word was spoken to Abraham, he (Abraham) did something. He “waited patiently”. In fact, all up, he waited for about 25 years.

Abraham is known as the giant of faith. He’s the father of faith because he believed. But with his faith he also had “patience”. Part A and Part B. Faith and Patience.

Whatever God has spoken to you, get ready to receive it with faith and with patience.

If you’ve just got “faith” you are going to get all enthusiastic and be faith filled for a while. But then, after a while, and possibly some setbacks, you are going to be tempted to let go of what you thought God had called you to... or even promised to you in black and white (in his word).

So you need to remember that you MUST have faith AND PATIENCE. Sometimes that means lots of patience – and it feels like lots and lots and lots and lots of patience... which

actually means “endurance”. Patience through impossibly adverse circumstances over a long period of time is “endurance”.

Be strong and locked into God’s promise. Believe God’s promise. Believe that God will do what he’s said He will do. That’s faith.

Stay strong through difficulties, through delays, through the passing of time, longer than what you ever thought it was going to be. That’s adding endurance to your faith.

Through faith AND patience you will inherit God’s promises to you in your life. That’s what Abraham did, and eventually after about 25 years, the promise was fulfilled. In fact Abraham needed to have the Part A and Part B ingredients of faith, not just because it took 25 years, but because during that time both Abraham and Sarah passed the “medically possible” time of child bearing. Imagine the pressure to give up, to “let go”. These considerations are why Abraham is called “the father of all those who believe” (Romans 4:16). He earned the title. He got the reward. He hung on: he added **endurance** to his **faith**, and for that reason he received the **promise**.

The experience of “nothing happening for a long time” can be the worst and most painful kind of “death to faith” experience there is. But when patience is added to faith, you can continue believing for as long as it takes. Time doesn’t matter when you have faith, even when it takes so much longer than you ever imagined. Your faith “endures”. You just keep believing.

My wife and I needed to get another car. I had seen a program on TV where these three guys had a relatively small amount of money to buy a car. They had the option of a cheap small new car, or an old “classic” – the kind you would have paid much more for many years ago. In the end, the program tended to “justify” the purchase of the older, “classic car”. So I decided to try the same idea. We went looking for an old Mercedes Benz. After a LOT of looking, at a point we wondered about giving up, we found an amazingly well looked after car EVEN BETTER than what we had expected to find. This car had a number plate with the letters IKB. To my wife and I, those three letters stand for “I Keep Believing”. That experience and those letters remind me that with every situation “I keep believing”. I keep mixing my faith with endurance. The glue has stuck and held on because the mix is FAITH and PATIENCE.

Brian Houston in his book *Get a Life* says:

> “Endurance requires patience and the patience of an overcomer is not passive or weak. Neither is it idle…It’s TENACIOUS… It’s COURAGEOUS... It’s DELIBERATE AND DETERMINED.” [emphasis added]

This kind of “endurance” is the kind that Abraham had. It was “toughened” by faith. It was “powered” by faith. It was “infused” with faith. It wasn’t sitting around with the thought that “whatever will be will be”. The opposite is true. Abraham’s faith said: “No matter how old Sarah and I get, no matter how much past the age of childbearing Sarah is, I will keep believing, I will continue to have faith.” That’s Part A and Part B. Faith and patience. That’s enduring with powerful, strong faith.

There are three things that combining faith and patience will do.

Firstly, combining faith and patience leaves room for the details of:

To be different to what we think.

Can you hear the prophet telling you this in Habakkuk 2:3-4?

Vs 3 But these things I plan won't happen straight away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed.
Vs 4 Look at the proud…They trust in themselves… but the righteous will live by their faith.

Secondly, combining faith and patience allows God to **work in you** while He is bringing his word to pass for you.

Can you hear this message in the words of James 1:2-4?

Vs 2 …when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.
Vs 3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.
Vs 4 So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

Thirdly, combining Faith and Patience enables us to:
focus on the final destination, to complete the journey right to the end, to hang on until that final point in time when we will receive what God has promised us.

Can you see the connection between the present journey and the future destination in Hebrews 11:1?

Faith is the confidence [now] that what we hope for will actually happen [future]; it gives us assurance [now] about things we cannot see [yet].

I've added the words in [brackets like this] so that you can see that although the words "patience" and "endurance" do not appear to not appear in this verse, it is clear that there is a potential gap between the present and the future. Patience and endurance ONLY exist in such a gap. And, for faith to "survive" the "gap" between the present reality and the future promise, it must be mixed with patience.

James 1:3 says that "…when your faith is tested your endurance has a chance to grow" and verse 4 says: "So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

Rick Renner in his masterpiece of a daily devotional book titled "Sparkling Gems from the Greek" writes about the word "endurance" from these verses in James. He explains that in the Greek language of the New Testament the word endurance (or "patience" in

some translations) is the word "*hupomeo"*. He says that "*hupo*" means "under" and "*meno"* means "to stay" and:

> Thus, the word *hupomeno* conveys the idea of being *steadfast, consistent, unwavering, and unflinching.* It is the attitude that declares: "I don't care how heavy the load gets or how much pressure I'm under, I am not budging one inch! This is *my* spot, and I'm telling you right now that there isn't enough pressure in the whole world to make me move and give up!"

The ingredient that perfectly complements faith and must be joined to faith is "*hupomeo*". It's endurance. James says that endurance will grow when our faith is tested (James 1:3). It must grow because otherwise we will give up on having faith when we are "tested". We will give up on holding the ground that our faith is taking when things get too tough. But with endurance added to faith we become "perfect and complete, needing nothing." (James 1:4) So you MUST add endurance to your faith in order for faith to bring all that God wants to bring into your life.

Through faith and patience, that is, through faith and endurance, you will CERTAINLY inherit what God has promised you.

Chapter 4: The 12 Measures of Faith

Have you ever seen one of those talent shows with a panel of judges? In my experience, one of the judges usually has a reputation for being "honest"… some would say "brutal".

This is particularly noticeable when a performer seems to have done their best. They are very likeable, and, perhaps, they even seem worthy of "sympathy" because of their personal circumstances. Three out of the four judges struggle with their words to try and find something encouraging to say. They may even appear to completely contradict what they have said in comments on previous performers. But not the fourth judge. He or she just says it how it is. "That was awful," they say. It's what everyone else was thinking but wasn't "honest" enough to say.

On 12 occasions in the book of Matthew Jesus "measures" the faith of individuals who are "performing" in front of him.

Now, before we go on, let's establish something: faith can be "measured". That is, it can be "strong" or "weak", someone can have "little faith" or "great faith".

Romans 4:20 (NLT)

"Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God."

So, if Abraham's faith grew stronger, then that means that the "strength" of faith can be measured. It must have gone from a certain "measure" of strength to a greater measure than it had been before.

Matthew is a book of the Kingdom. That's fairly well accepted. For example, it contains the most comprehensive collection of the "kingdom parables". I believe that the fact that Jesus "measures" the strength of faith, or lack of faith, being exhibited by people exactly 12 times in this particular Gospel is no coincidence. In scripture, 12 is the number of "Godly Government" or "Godly Leadership". For example, Jesus chose 12 disciples. So, I believe that the fact that there are 12 "measures of faith" in the book of Matthew indicates that in the Kingdom of God it is faith that will determine the "authority" and success that Christians will have as they attempt to see the Kingdom of Heaven being manifest here on earth. If you want to "rule in life" and see God's Kingdom being manifest on earth, then you MUST have faith... And to be frank, Jesus wants you to have STRONG faith.

You will note that Jesus did not comment 12 times on virtues such as: loyalty, grace, imagination, creativity, ability to make money, speaking ability, or leadership. There are not 12 references to Jesus making a pronouncement about "performance" in any of these attributes... Or ANY OTHER ATTRIBUTE. But, on 12 occasions Jesus does exactly that in relation to faith. Doesn't that tell you something?

In every one of these 12 instances Jesus makes the "measure of faith" in front of his disciples – or directly to his disciples. This was the area that he wanted to coach them in - FAITH. And, there was no room for the "sympathy vote". He wasn't going to say something nice if there was no faith, or weak and pathetic faith coming from those he knew were

capable of better. He was going to say it like it was. If it was “great” he would “call it” great (eg Matt 16:28). If faith was lacking (almost non-existent) he would say: “You have so little faith.” (eg Matt 8:26). Jesus was the “super coach” and he knew that above anything else, his “team” would need FAITH.

Jesus explained to Peter that Satan wanted to “sift Peter like wheat” (Luke 22:31). That is, Satan wanted to throw Peter’s life up in the air so that the winds of circumstances would blow away everything of value and what fell back to the ground would be the “hard, heavy rubbish”. The end result in Satan’s sifting process would be that Peter’s faith would fail. We know this because Jesus told Peter that he (Jesus) had prayed that Peter’s faith would not fail. Jesus knew that Satan’s goal was to cause Peter’s faith to fail, so Jesus prayed that this would not happen. Satan knows that the thing that will “neutralize” or even “destroy” a Christian is for the Christians faith to “fail”… fail to exist, fail to operate, fail to be effective – fail.

Furthermore, Jesus knew that Peter’s faith “not failing” was absolutely critical for Peter’s survival against the onslaught of Satan. It was a case of:
If Peter’s faith **did not fail** ... He would survive and go on to life a victorious life.
And, if Peter’s faith **did fail**, Satan would successfully take everything of any value from Peter’s life – just as is the case when wheat is sifted so that the desired “material” can be kept and the unwanted material “blown away”. Satan, in his perverseness, wants the good to be blown away and only the rubbish to remain. That’s Satan’s version of a “successful sift”.

Jesus fervent prayer for Peter’s faith not to fail in “Satan’s sifting” (Lk 22:31) fits well with the picture of the Christian’s “shield ... to stop the fiery arrows of the devil” being “the shield of faith” (Ephesians 6:16). Faith is what is required to overcome what Satan throws at us in life. Jesus knew this essential truth as he trained his disciples in Matthew for their future Kingdom building roles and responsibilities.

Jesus knew that the disciples would also need “faith and patience” to “inherit the promises of God” (see previous section) ... just like Abraham had needed. Nothing had changed in that regard.

Jesus knew that faith stops the negatives (of the devil) and receives the positives (of the Kingdom of God). Yes, it’s by faith that all the great men and women in Hebrews chapter 11 achieved what they did, received what they did, stood against what they did... or had the courage to die doing what they did.

Jesus knew before Paul wrote to the believers in Rome that it was by faith that Abraham “even when there was no reason for hope... kept hoping – believing that he would become the father of many nations... And Abrahams’s faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age he figured his body was as good as dead and so was Sarah’s womb..... He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises” (Romans 4:18 - 21). Jesus knew that his disciples, like you and me, MUST have faith to receive all that God almighty has for us.

Jesus knew this Kingdom principle of “having faith” was foundational. That’s why he “made the call” on people’s faith on exactly 12 occasions in the Kingdom focussed book of Matthew with the 12 men he was calling to lead the charge forward in bringing God’s Kingdom to earth. Let’s look at these 12 occasions in the next 12 chapters. Listed below are the verses containing the word “faith” in the midst of each of these 12 occasions.

Measure 1: Matthew 6:30

And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have **so little faith**?

Measure 2: Matthew 8:10 [The Faith of a Roman Officer]

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, "I tell you the truth, I haven't seen **faith like this** in all Israel!

Measure 3: Matthew 8:26

Jesus responded, "Why are you afraid? You have **so little faith**!" Then he got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and suddenly there was a great calm.

Measure 4: Matthew 9:2

Some people brought to him a paralyzed man on a mat. **Seeing their faith**, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Be encouraged, my child! Your sins are forgiven."

Measure 5: Matthew 9:22

Jesus turned around, and when he saw her he said, "Daughter, be encouraged! **Your faith has made you well**." And the woman was healed at that moment.

Measure 6: Matthew 9:29

Then he touched their eyes and said, "**Because of your faith**, it will happen."

Measure 7: Matthew 14:31

Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have **so little faith**," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?"

Measure 8: Matthew 15:28 [The Faith of a Gentile Woman]

"Dear woman," Jesus said to her, "**your faith is great**. Your request is granted." And her daughter was instantly healed.

Measure 9: Matthew 16:8

Jesus knew what they were saying, so he said, "You have **so little faith**! Why are you arguing with each other about having no bread?

Measure 10: Matthew 17:17

Jesus said, "You **faithless** and corrupt people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me."

Matthew 17:20 (a)

"**You don't have enough faith**," Jesus told them.

Measure 11: Matthew 17:20 (b)

"I tell you the truth, if you had **faith even as small as a mustard seed**, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible."

Measure 12: Matthew 21:21, 22

Vs 21

Then Jesus told them, "I tell you the truth, **if you have faith and don't doubt**, you can do things like this and much more. You can even say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen.

Vs 22

You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it."

They are the 12 "measures" in the book of Matthew. The following chapters will dig deeper.

Chapter 5: Measure 1 - Faith for the basics

Matt 6:25-33 Jesus says "..not to worry about everyday life – whether you have enough..." (vs 25)
Vs 26 Look at the birds...your heavenly father feeds
vs 30 And if God cares so wonderfully for the flowers...he will certainly care for you....
"Why do you have so little faith?"
Vs 31 Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs...

Have you ever been thirsty? I mean REALLY thirsty … Like stuck on the side of the road in a desert and starting to ask yourself if you would really drink your own urine type thirsty. Yes, I'm probably not getting you on side with this line of thought, but let's then think about a million people who really were in the desert (without a GPS or mobile phone) with young children, nursing mothers, babies… and animals, lots of animals. Exodus 17 verse 1 says that when God's people were at Rephidim "there was no water there for the people to drink". That's not a TV news exaggeration of the situation, that's what the word of God records. It also records that the people were "tormented by thirst". Note that it doesn't say that they were about to run out of water, or that things were looking bad and they got worried thinking about what it would (hypothetically) be like if they did run out of water and got thirsty. THEY WERE THIRSTY!!!!! Yes, God let them get thirsty. Sorry, He did. His word records that He did. "Are you trying to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?" they screamed at Moses (Ex 17:3).

So, have you ever been thirsty? Have you ever needed something really badly, just to survive? Maybe you need finance right now, as I have shared that I have in my journey of faith towards God's promised land for us and our organisation. It's like you are not dead, but how much longer can things continue this way without you actually being "dead". I mean dead "financially" in the case of this illustration. You know, like me, that God has an amazing future for you. It's the promised land. It's flowing with milk and honey. It's a place of freedom and blessing, of abundance and safety. But right now, you are in a situation on the verge of "death".

This, my friend, is called "Massah" and "Meribah" (Ex 17:7). Moses gave Rephidim those new names to reflect what that place was to God and to the people of God. It was a place where their faith was "tested" (that's the meaning of Massah – See Ex 17:7). It was also a place of failure because "Meribah" means "arguing" (Ex 17:7). God's people failed to rise in faith and trust WHOLEHEARTEDLY in the most almighty, all powerful, most "gob-smackingly" amazing God who had just delivered them completely from the world's most powerful army. What's more, that came after they had witnessed ten of the most amazing "mass miracles" imaginable, which in turn, led them to being able to "just walk away from" hundreds of years of slavery and bondage.

Yes, they failed the test by having the audacity to ask: "Is the Lord here with us or not?" If you ever want to break God's heart, just ask that question. If you ever want to fail the test of faith, begin to question if God is with you or not… especially after all you have seen him do in the past.

Now, the thing is, those people, and their children, and their cattle were actually, really, truly, THIRSTY. They weren't having to imagine what it would be like to be thirsty. They were thirsty. It is at that very time that God's true plan is revealed. His plan is to bring water from a rock. Yes, water from a rock. Did you get that, water from a rock.

In your situation of desperation and thirst, maybe all you can see is sand and rock. It doesn't matter, because you had better believe it, your God CAN bring what you need out of the very midst of the rocks of your circumstances. Barren wombs, walled cities, giant warriors, uncountable armies of enemy troops, metal melting furnaces, lion's dens, and crucifixion on a Roman cross are no barrier to God's plan and promises being fulfilled. If God has you on a journey to a promised land, he will take you THROUGH the waterless desert to get you there. Water WILL flow from a rock. A promised child WILL come from a barren womb, four leprous men WILL rise and wander into a world of fortune and fame (2 Kings chapter 7), a few loaves and fish WILL feed thousands of men, women and children, the sun WILL stand still so you can have your day of victory (Joshua 10) or maybe the shadow on the sundial will move backwards instead of forwards just so you can know for sure that the word the prophet spoke a second time was the word of the Lord (Is 38:10 and 2 Kings 20:1-11).

These things will happen. The question is: when it seems impossible, when your "life" is on the line, when it seems that your dream will die and the promise will not come to pass WILL YOU BELIEVE at that point? When you are thirsty, when your wife and children (and even your children's pet dog) are "caught up" in the circumstances surrounding the journey God has you on, WILL YOU BELIEVE? Will you believe and have FAITH at your "Merribah"? Or will you fail the test of faith and begin to "argue" within yourself against faith with the debating raging in your mind that screams the question that should never be asked at any Merribah: "Is the Lord here with us or not?"

You might be thinking I'm making a big deal out of this. Yep. So does God it seems. In Psalm 81:7 God reminds us that he "tested your faith when there was no water at Meribah." And again, in Psalm 95:7&8 we read these words:

Psalm 95:7–11 (NLT)

7 for he is our God.
We are the people he watches over,
the flock under his care.

If only you would listen to his voice today!
8 The Lord says, "Don't harden your hearts as Israel did at Meribah,
as they did at Massah in the wilderness.

9 For there your ancestors tested and tried my patience,
even though they saw everything I did.
10 For forty years I was angry with them, and I said,
'They are a people whose hearts turn away from me.
They refuse to do what I tell them.'
11 So in my anger I took an oath:
'They will never enter my place of rest.'"

But wait, there's more (as those TV commercials say) and I know you want more (as they also say). In the book of Hebrews this little verse (Ps 95:8) is quoted no less than 3 times within 19 verses (Heb 3:7, 15 and 4:7) and if you include Hebrews 4:3 which is a quote of Ps 95:11 that's 4 quotes from the one Old Testament passage (Ps 95: 7-11 which itself is a reference to the original story in Exodus 17). That's a "Biblical Record". I don't know of any place in scripture where a single verse is quoted 3 times within the one short passage. It's done to make a point, and then to RAM HOME the point. It's done to make sure we don't' miss it. It's a very important point. The point is: when it seems like God is no longer with you because of the (very real) circumstances you face – DO NOT harden your heart and allow yourself to think "Is God really with me?" If you do that your "Merribah" has become your "Massah" - that is, your opportunity to rise in FAITH and believe that God is able to bring water from a rock has instead become your place of "debate" (or "questioning").

At Merribah, God does not want debate. He wants faith.

James says that "you know when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow" (Ch 1:3). And linked to that thought is his encouragement that "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God ... But when you ask him, but sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord" (James 1:5 – 8).

Putting this all together, Jesus was saying to his disciples (Matt 6): "Trust God for the basics. Don't worry about the essentials. God knows you need them before you ask." And Merribah teaches us that even when something we need for life itself (water) seems to be "lacking" don't stop trusting God. For whatever reason, God is allowing you to pass through Merribah on the way to the promised land. So, keep trusting him. DO NOT question if God is with you or not. If you do you will never enter his rest. If you cannot trust Him in the tough times, you will be tossed all over the place by circumstances. When things are going great, you will have faith in God but if things are not going great, you will not.

Be sure that "God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns" (Phil 1:6) God will get you there. He will take you all the way. A "life threatening challenge" is an opportunity for you to keep trusting God. Express your faith in Him just as you would if you were still dancing and singing to the sound of drums and electric guitars after standing on the banks of the Red Sea watching Pharaoh's mighty war machine eliminated from being a threat to you or your children ever again. Have faith in God at Merribah. Stand with Moses as the rock is struck and God's answer to your situation flows out. Exodus 17:6 says that "water gushed out". Don't test and try God's patience (Ps 95:9). Believe Him. Trust Him. Have faith in Him. Watch the water flow.

Chapter 6: Measure 2 - Just say the word faith

Matt 8:5-13 Healing of Roman officer's servant
Vs 8 Roman Officer to Jesus: "Just say the word..."
Matt 8:10 I tell you the truth, I haven't seen
faith like this in all of Israel.
Vs 13 "Because you believed, it has happened."

This guy was totally convinced that his servant would be healed if Jesus simply said he would be. If Jesus commanded it to happen, it would happen. This "guy" was an army officer and he knew all about the power of the spoken word – if the word was spoken by someone in authority.

The scripture says that "… Jesus was amazed" (Matthew 8:10) Now that's something. I mean, you would have to wonder what it would take to "amaze" Jesus with something. The explanation this soldier gave for suggesting that Jesus only need to "just say the word" demonstrated to Jesus that this man had "super faith". It was a special kind or strength or quality of faith. It was so special that Jesus said "I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel". Not anywhere else. In no one else. Not like this.

Now the added consideration here is that the "carrier" of this extra-ordinary faith was NOT a Jew. He was a Gentile. And this was a point not lost on Jesus because "Turning to those who were following him" he says that "many Gentiles will come from all over the world- from east and west- and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven." In other words this guy's faith was being connected to the great heroes of faith and to being with them in heaven throughout eternity.

Jesus hastened to make the point that many Israelites would end up in hell and the implication is that the difference is that they would not have faith like this Gentile solider had.

Now, what about us?

We face a situation. It could be that an employee is sick (as was the case here). Or maybe we have a board meeting that involves an issue that needs to be resolve without destroying the board. Maybe we need a job in an economic downturn. In all of these circumstances, we know that we have to go to Jesus. That's the first step. It's what this soldier knew he had to do.

Jesus is pleased to see that we come.

But he looks to see our faith when we come, and he "measures" it.

Sometimes he sees "weak" or "small" or "little" faith. This is exactly what Jesus saw in the next "measure" of faith when those who were close to him came in the midst of a potential disaster. Read the next chapter of this book – or just keep reading in this same chapter of Matthew (chapter 8... and take note of verse 26).

What Jesus wants to see when we come to Him is an absolute assurance that all He has to do is speak the word over our situation.

Most week-day mornings I'm up by 4am. My mind is bombarded by the needs of the day, often including the demands of the project at hand – establishing a "fully developed" world class Christian University on the Sunshine Coast, Australia. At the time of writing, there is not a single Christian University at which any of my four children could have done an Engineering degree in Australia. There is not a single Christian University in Australia at which a person could study law. Not one. So, as I continue working towards changing this "blight" on the Australian landscape with the team that the Lord is adding to us, we face many "Goliath size" obstacles standing in our way.

Nearly every day, I have to say: "Jesus, I know you can just speak the word over this situation and everything WILL be ok." I come before Him KNOWING that despite the fact that I am asking for an "out of the ordinary" miracle, NOTHING is too difficult for Him... and that He doesn't have to personally come "in the flesh" to the circumstances our team faces, He just has to "speak the word".

What will His word be that morning? What will it be in those circumstances? I'm listening. I'm waiting for Him to speak. And I'm waiting with faith and expectation.

My father is turning 87 this year. Sometimes he says: "That's God winking at you." He has taught me to use this expression when something amazing happens totally unexpectedly.

Matter, space and time came into being when God spoke.
Light appeared out of nowhere.
The world as we know it came into being because "God said....".

God will be pleased if you come to Him when your world is falling apart, and you know that all that needs to happen is for Him to speak the word. You KNOW He can do whatever it is that needs doing, You KNOW He can change whatever it is that need to change. You KNOW that He can lead you, guide you and direct you in every decision making process. You KNOW He can. He just has to speak...

But a huge part of the miracles of provision, deliverance and direction is your faith. He wants to see the calibre of faith He saw in the soldier coming to Him about a sick servant.

Yes, come, but come with faith. Come believing, he just has to speak the word.

That's how I try to come each morning. Usually by the time it's 4:30am and I've had time to come to Jesus with the circumstances that are challenging me to the core on that particular day, I know that Jesus has spoken the word. I know I've heard His voice. The ears of my heart have heard His word speaking to my spirit. Mostly, as I read His word, there is something real and relevant to the circumstances I face. Often, as I pray I sense I can hear His specific word being spoken over what I face. It comes out of my heart and mind believing that He only needs to "Just say the word..." and it will be well.

Chapter 7: Measure 3 - Sinking boat in storm faith

Matt 8:18, 23-27 The disciples in the storm.
Vs 18 “cross to the other side”
Vs 25 “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown.”
Matt 8:26 Why are you so afraid? You have so little faith.
Sinking boat faith will take you to the other side.

The thing about this story is that sometimes “stuff” can kill you. And then you need faith. One minute it’s a cruisy Mediterranean experience and the next minute you are about to be shipwrecked. Your boat is about to be smashed to bits and you will drown. Jesus is in the boat of your world… but he is asleep. What will you do?

The kind of “stuff” that “kills” Christians can come in many forms. It may be discouragement, it may be financial loss, it may be the opposition of people… especially friends. It may be bad media attention, or failure to achieve something at a first attempt. It might be a bad medical report. Your spouse might cheat on you. Whatever it is, sometimes it comes like a storm, howling and raging and blowing and threatening to bring disaster and destroy you and your world.

The storm would have taken some time to brew. But it wasn’t a lot of time because the word Matthew uses is “suddenly”. Another word used is “fierce” (NLT). Then there is the description of “waves breaking into the boat”. Can you imagine the New Testament finishing at Matthew chapter 8 with the story of the incredibly vicious and unexpected storm that killed all 12 disciples and Jesus? I can’t. But Peter did.

Hey, what’s your storm? Right now, what’s that “thing” that could “kill” you and your ministry, that could take down your business, that could ruin your chances of entering politics – or of being elected? One thing for sure is that Jesus DOES NOT expect you to accept the “inevitable” and “take what comes”.

Jesus wants you to stand up and fight. Just like Jesus himself did, He expects us to REBUKE the wind and the waves. Those negative thoughts about what the outcome might be are meant to be a trigger that causes us to rise up on the inside with faith, and stand in the face of the screaming, howling wind flaying our faces with stinging spray as our legs lose all sense of “groundedness” because the lurching small wooden vessel is heaving in every unknown direction whilst being crushed with the weight of yet another humungous dumping, drenching, smashing, truck load of water. It’s what Jesus did. In the face of all that “reality” Jesus “got up” and Jesus REBUKED the potential instruments of destruction: the wind and the waves.

Jesus would say: “Don’t be afraid. Have faith. REBUKE the wind and the waves.” That means in the midst of the storms in your life you will pray with faith, you will expect the storm to stop, you will believe that you will NOT be destroyed. You will believe with all your heart that Jesus will take you to the other side.

Chapter 8: Measure 4 - Visible, observable faith

Matt 9:2-7 Paralyzed man let down through the roof by friends (See Mk 2:1-12)
Matt 9:2 Seeing their faith.....

This is the faith of action
This is the faith that finds a way...through the ceiling, through the crowd, through the wall. It's VISIBLE. Everyone is going to notice. It's surrounded by mess and action.

The Board of Governors was meeting in relation to our ongoing Christian University For Australia initiative. I turned to Roland, a 70-year-old brother in the Lord - a warrior of faith – and I asked for his confirmation of the point I was making at the time. My point was something along the lines of this: every great Kingdom based endeavour requires both the action of man and the miraculous favour and power of God.

Roland didn't hesitate. He told the story. It was, to a large extent, his story. About 35 years back Roland and a few other families sold their homes, pooled the money and gave it to a small church with a huge vision. The vision was to establish a Christian school, pre-school, and retirement village – to be able to care for people from the "cradle to the grave".

When this small Brethren church started the journey they had about 50 people and $5,000 in the bank. Today, in 2017, the facilities and property they have "accumulated" are conservatively valued at about $150million.

When Roland and his wife made the decision to sell the family home and go live with relatives, it was so that the Christian school they had registered could build its first classrooms. Meanwhile, the school operated in the local "showgrounds". In Australia "the showground' is the venue for an annual gathering of local community groups focussed on produce and local arts and crafts, and farmers who raise livestock ranging from chickens to cows and horses, or grow crops such as wheat, cotton or corn. Along with this "core activity" at the Showground is the "entertainment" involving rides, food, and competitions or displays of talent such as wood chopping. In the first year of the school's operation, it used the vacant buildings at the Redcliff Showground while Roland's money, combined with other donations, was used to build the first school classrooms on the land that today accommodates about 1,200 school students and 200 aged care residents. Rising up from what was formally a grassy paddock is every kind of building imaginable that one would associate with any other hundred million dollar enterprise of its kind – including one single building valued on its own at over $75 million (Australian dollars in 2022) – the Mueller College multipurpose Performing Arts Centre with tiered seating for about 1500 people in the 4 storey high "cavity" housing the professional stage, lighting and sound equipment that roars into life for everything from a Pre-school event to a professional orchestra performance.

Roland told the story of how people opposed the development of the school as families laid all their material possessions on the line to see the vision become a reality. Influential members of the community did not share the same vision and their vocal objections threatened to stop the progress of the fledgling school, even from its first year of operation.

My point is that when you really BELIEVE that God is with you in a venture, you have to take action. You have to do whatever it takes. And as you do, people will see. What you do will inevitably attract a lot of attention.... not unlike the attention the four friends of the paralyzed man got as they dug a hole through the roof above Jesus head (see the version of this story as recorded in Mark 2: 2-12 and in Luke 5:18-26.)

Roland didn't sell his house to get attention, it was just something he felt he had to do (along with a few others) to get closer to the miracle that only God could do... Involving the full realisation of their dream. As the buildings went up in the paddock people began to see just like they saw when the roof above Jesus head began to give way so that a paralysed man could get one step closer to his miracle.

I challenge you just like I have challenged any group of Bible College students I've stood in front of over the years: list all the miracles in the Bible that did not involve a single person taking some kind of step of faith. Go on. Stop. List them. Now…

How many could you list?

Here's the miracles of faith you couldn't list:

- Abel bought a sacrifice believing that God would accept it.
- Enoch pleased a God he could not see with his eyes, touch with his hands, or hear with his natural ears.
- Noah built a boat. Now that's noisy, and outrageously sensationally noticeable. He was definitely "involved". The boat did not appear from heaven.
- Abraham left his father's home. Left his father's country. Left everything that was familiar .... without knowing where he was going.
- Sarah had a baby. Yep, she was "involved".
- Abraham put Isaac on the alter. Yes, he did.
- Isaac spoke about the blessing of the future to Jacob and Esau. Yes, he spoke. So did Jacob and Joseph.
- Moses parents hid Moses BY FAITH. They did something. They DID NOT just pray.
- Moses DID SOME "THINGS". Read about what he DID in Hebrews 11:24-28.
- God's people went through the Red Sea and marched around Jericho, and Rahab gave a friendly welcome to the spies. Yes, she did. Her faith was coupled with action.

By now you're probably bored and realise that I'm just paraphrasing the great chapter of faith… Hebrews chapter 11. Which, by the way, finishes with this statement: "All these PEOPLE earned a good reputation because of their faith..." In other words, the great chapter on faith is about people and WHAT THEY DID.

James 2:20 states that "Faith without works is dead".

In outback Australia, I'm sorry to say that Kangaroos are quite regularly hit by cars, particularly at night. The results are evident beside the road the next day. A tourist might be fascinated by the thought of seeing a kangaroo in the wild. But a dead kangaroo on the side of the road is not really what the tourist wants to see. It won't hop around in the familiar way that the tourist is keen to see. After all, kangaroos are all about hopping, bopping up and down, little paws in front and tail pumping up and down behind with regularity and clumsy poise. Faith without works can have the appearance of faith, but it's "dead". It kind of looks like "faith" – in some ways. Yet, in the long run, it does nothing – and is clearly "dead". James (2:26) says that "Just as the body is dead without breath, so also faith is dead without works".

On the other hand, a tourist seeing a live kangaroo from a great distance, jumping across the flat, arid Australian grassland would have no difficulty at all "recognising" and identifying what it was. There would be no need to be close enough to study its fur, paws, claws, nose, ears, teeth or tail (let alone its genetics). A moving kangaroo is clearly recongnisable as a "real kangaroo" – even from a distance. The faith of people digging a hole in a roof to let a lame man down right in front of where Jesus is standing is clearly recognisable as "real faith". The actions of these men shouted out their belief that getting their friend to Jesus was going to be worth it. That's why Matthew records that Jesus saw their faith (Matt 9:2). It was "measurable". It was "tangible". It was observable.

James says (2:18) "I will show you my faith by my works." (James 2:18) and in reference to Abraham that "faith was working together with his works" (James 2:22).

Faith associated with works is real faith. Sometimes people's faith is seen by their actions. This is like the kangaroo jumping in the distance. It's obvious that real faith is at work by what is clearly seen - even from a distance, and even by the casual "observer". The "jumping" gives it away. The action points to the reality.

What is God calling you to do? Whatever it is, your response of faith will be seen by the action that results.

Are you going to build a hospital?

Are you going to help people who have to sleep under a bridge or in their car?

Are you going to love a friend back to wholeness?

If you SAY you have faith that God can do it then you will most likely have to do something at some critical point in time that shows your faith is not dead, but alive, and real.

In most cases, almost always, the "measure" of your faith will be in the action.

And the "miracle" will "happen" because of God's connection and endorsement and empowering of your action.

In 2 Thessalonians 1: 11 and 12 we see a wonderful blend of our actions, our faith, and God's almighty power.

Verse 11 starts with Paul saying what he's going to pray for. He is going to be:

"asking God to enable you" …… and there it is **God**, and **you**.
Not just **God**.
And not just **you**.
The formula is **God** enabling **you**.

Paul's prayer is that you will "live a life" that is "worthy of His call".
There it is again: us living **our life**, but **His call**.

Then comes the really dynamic bit where faith is the connector to God and his power.

Paul prays (last bit of verse 11):
"May **he give you** the power to accomplish all the good things **your faith prompts you to do**."

Yes... It's going to be God giving us the power – which is so often what we need.

But that power is only provided to help US to accomplish the good things OUR FAITH prompts US to DO.

What things is your faith prompting you to do?
My prayer is that God will give you THE POWER to do those things.

It's your faith.
You are doing things that come from that faith.
God gives the power.

A. Your faith → **B. Action.** → **C. God's power.**

Yes. It's A and B, then C.

So, what is your B that comes from your A.
Is your B to:
Raise a million dollars?
Walk next door and try to speak to your neighbour about the love of God through Jesus?
Take a food box downtown and find someone to give it to?
Try to ring your wayward son... again?
Raise enough money to travel overseas as a volunteer worker for a year or two?
Give half of all you own to something God is calling you to support?

Those things prompted by your faith are things YOU need to do.
It's legitimate that we pray that God releases His power to enable you to do, to provide for you to do them, to be with you after you do them, to bring about circumstances to make them possible.

Verse 12 (of 2nd Thessalonians chapter 1) says that when there is this connection between your actions, your faith and God's power,

2 Thessalonians 1:12 (NLT)

"Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ."

Because of what happens:

- Jesus is honoured, and you are honoured along with him.
- The honouring happens to you because you are involved.
- It's inevitable that you are honoured because it could not have happened without you.
- God's power came when you stepped out in faith.
- If you had not stepped out, then His power would not have come.
- Paul refers to the fact that "you will be honoured along with Him" because Paul (and the Holy Spirit) wants to emphasise our involvement.
- We do things that our faith prompts us to do.
- Then we can expect God to step in with His power.

That's how Paul prayed.

That's in the Bible.

It's the connection between God and people when people live by faith that results in people doing great things that bring glory to God.

And all that happens by His grace.
Read the last bit of verse 11. It says:
"*This is made possible because of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

When I stepped out in faith to start a Christian University God began to move in power. People were amazed at what happened.
God began to move in power.

That working combination of us and God is only possible because of God's grace. But, still, nothing would happen, and there would be no display of grace or power if we did not step out and do the things that our faith prompts us to do.

Faith without works is dead.
God gets no glory when nothing happens.
When we step out, and God steps in, things happen, and people are amazed.
Jesus is honoured, and we are honoured with Him.

God working with man always points to His grace.
People may actually see us and what we do first, but it won't be long before they realise that what was accomplished was more than we could do on our own. They see God's power at work in us and through us.

That's why Paul said he would pray this way (in 2 Thessalonians 1:11)
He knew how it worked.

If Paul was alive today, he would know he was on solid ground to pray that God would "give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do."

So, I also say, go do those good things your faith prompts you to do.
Expect God's power to come through.
May you succeed by God's grace.
May God be glorified.
Amen Lord, let it be so, I pray.

Dig a hole in a roof.
Let down your friend.
Do it because your faith says you should.
See Jesus step in.
By His grace, healing will flow.
People will see you and what you did, and Jesus **will** be glorified.

Chapter 9: Measure 5 - Touching God faith

Matt 9:19 – 22 Woman who had suffered for 12 years with constant bleeding.
Vs 21 “If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed”.
Vs 22 Daughter, be encouraged!
Your faith has made you well.

See also Mark 5:25–34, **Matthew 9**:20–22, **Luke 8**:43–48

This story is more completely told in Mark 5:25-34 and Luke 8:43-48. We get the bigger picture from the parallel accounts. This lady “had suffered a great deal FROM MANY DOCTORS, and over the years had spent everything she had to pay them...” (Mark 5:26). She was not the kind of person to sit still and do nothing, she was a “go getter”. Even though the first doctor or two could not help her, and in fact they probably added to her suffering, she kept trying doctor after doctor… until she had nothing more to spend.

No crowd was going to get in her way as she pressed through to touch Jesus “For she thought to herself, “If I can just touch his robe I will be healed.”

Now, as far as I know, there was no precedent for this idea of “touching” Jesus. We don’t read of other people “touching” Jesus to get healed. We don’t hear of Jesus teaching people that one of the ways to access healing was to “touch” him. But she was convinced in her mind that she would be healed if she could.

She felt that touching Jesus was something she could do that would make the difference between being healed and not being healed.

My wife Sheeree and I used to drive around the Sunshine Coast region thinking about where the Lord would lead us to establish a Christian University. We were convinced that somewhere within the 2,000 square kilometre area there would be the perfect place.

We had our own ideas, and the local regional development authority representative was also a helpful source of information and ideas.

We didn’t have the money to build the University. We didn’t yet have the accreditation. We didn’t have anything except the absolute conviction that the Lord was leading us to get this job done.

Despite 200 years of settlement by British, European and people from other “western” and “developed” countries, Australia still did not have a single “fully developed” Christian University. There were Colleges with degrees in areas such as theology, education, business and nursing. But, for example, there was not a single Christian “evangelical, protestant” institution in which someone can do an Engineering degree. Neither can you do law, or aeronautics, or political science, or journalism... or many, many, many other courses that are available in our public universities.

Sheeree and I felt that the Lord was leading us to establish such a place right here in this region of Australia, right where we live.

At the start of 2014 I felt a strong leading to go to our local Council (Government) authorities and ask them where they would support the development of such a place.

As I drove into the meeting with the regional town planning and education development representatives, I was thinking about the potentially huge risk I was taking that the meeting was going to be a complete waste of time, if not a disaster. It wasn't as if we were ready to build. Far from it. It was just something that I had in my mind that I should do.

In my mind, the thing I feared most was being "presumptuous", I feared "defaming the name of the Lord". I feared getting ahead of God. I feared doing something that would bring dishonour to His name. I wanted to move in faith, but I didn't want to be doing something unless God was in it. After all, the prayer is: "May your Kingdom come ... may your will be done …" (Matt 6:10). It is not "My Kingdom come... My will be done."

I think I'll always remember the particular section of road at which I was thinking and praying about what I was doing when I decided to switch on the local Christian radio station. Immediately I found myself hearing Ravi Zacharias voice saying something like: "You can't just pray about everything, you have to do something." It was as if God Himself was speaking in response to the questions that had been in my mind a few minutes before. I switched the radio off and kept driving. I could not just be praying about starting a Christian University, I had to do something... and this is what I could do.

I arrived at the meeting with a brother in the Lord. Actually, Dave had graduated from one of the largest Christian Universities in the USA about 20 years ago. Dave knew what it was to be stepping out in faith. He and his wife had gone to the US to study without really knowing how it was going to be possible. They just felt to go. And now Dave was there with me knowing what a blessing it would be to have a Christian University for Australia, to have a Christian University right here in our region. Dave also knew it would take a miracle.

The meeting started with me listing the parcels of land we thought might be a possibility. But, at the end of the day, our main purpose in being there was to find out where Council might look favourably on us establishing a private (Christian) University.

About halfway through my list of potential properties, I could see it was time to let the local Government representatives at the meeting speak. It was obvious that there was something on their mind. "Have you ever thought of being located in the new Central Business District (CBD) development that is currently being proposed. You know, on the site that is currently the inner city Golf Course about to be purchased by the Government."

I was stunned. I knew where that Golf Course was and it was perfectly located for what we had in mind. We would not have thought of suggesting that we could be there because we did not know it was possible. In a sense, it was beyond the scope of our consideration simply because we would never have thought it was possible.

The Government reps continued, "We have already spoken to the head town planning Engineer responsible for the development of that site, and he would like to meet with you." This was stunningly good new, but it got better as they asked: "Would you be willing to meet with him?"

Within a couple of weeks, the meeting had taken place. The door was opened to the possibility of us having an inner city campus of our Christian University located right in the centre of our region, close to the biggest and best shopping centre, walking distance to the largest public transport depot servicing travel in every direction, and a few minutes from pristine beaches and waterways for which our region is famous.

Making that first appointment with the Council about where we could build a Christian University was something I believed I had to do. I felt that I could do it, and that I should do it. I felt that it was something God was leading me to do. And God had gone before me. I found out that the timing of my visit to the Council was perfect. It meant that we were positioned right at the start of the Council's planning and development process to be part of the considerations. And it gave us a focus and impetus in our ongoing efforts to find God's way forward with the initiative.

My point is that "You can't just pray about everything, you have to do something".

In the case of this woman with the issue of blood for 12 years, the "something" she had to do was "touch his robe" (Matt 9:21). We read that "Immediately the bleeding stopped, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed of her terrible condition."

Notice that Jesus did not feel her touch Him and then turn and heal her.

She was healed before Jesus even knew who had touched Him. (Mk 6:30, Lk 9:45)
In fact, He had to find out who it was. It was apparent immediately.
When Jesus asked others if they knew who it was that had touched Him and been healed, He not only found out that that they didn't know, He found out that they thought He was asking a question that wasn't even a reasonable question. (See Lk 9:45-47)

Jesus insisted that "Someone deliberately touched me, for I felt healing power go out from me."

So this woman was healed because of what she did as much as because of anything else.

If she had not pressed through and touched Jesus, she would not have been healed.

And, we could also say it was not because of Jesus conscious desire or "will" to heal her that she got healed that day. Jesus had to work hard himself to find out "who" had been healed.

Jesus was able to say: "Daughter, your faith has made you well."

Listen, you might need to do something to see the miracle you need.

And in doing what you know you need to do, your miracle may come because you believe that it will come if you do what you believe you need to do.

Reinhard Bonnke says: "God uses manpower. We need God's power. God works when we work." This statement is on the back cover of the edition of his book "Taking Action" (Charisma House, 2012). Even on the cover of this book is enough to make the purchase worthwhile – the title on the front and that statement on the back.

When Peter is near the “Beautiful Gate” (Acts 3:2) he looked at the lame man and says those famous words: “I don’t have any silver or gold for you. But I’ll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazarene, get up and walk!” (Acts 3:6)

Notice that Peter says he will give what he has.
He gives. He gives what he has.

And this is what we read: “Then Peter took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up. And as he did, the man’s feet and ankles were instantly healed and strengthened.” (Acts 3:7)

Notice that Peter does something. He does it in faith. He “took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up”. When Peter is later explaining what has happened he simply states that: “Through faith in the name of Jesus, this man was healed ... Faith in Jesus’ name has healed him before your very eyes.”

This is like Jesus saying that the woman with the issue of blood was healed by her faith.

Her faith lead to her taking action, the action of pressing through the crowd and touching Jesus robe.

Peter’s faith led to him reaching out to the lame man and lifting him to his feet.

My faith has led to me driving in to meet with our Council representatives about where we can build a Christian University that we do not yet have the finance to build. We cannot just pray about everything, sometimes we have to do something. It’s part of having faith – the kind of faith that brings results. The kind of faith that Jesus looks at and says: “Daughter, be encouraged! Your faith has made you well.” (Matt 9:22).

Chapter 10: Measure 6 - Emphatic faith

Two Blind Men: Matt 9:27 – 31
Vs 27 After Jesus left the girl's home (who had been raised from the dead)
Two blind men following along behind him shouting, "Son of David have mercy on us!"
Vs28 They went right into the house where he was staying, and Jesus asked them, "Do you believe that I can make you see?"
"Yes Lord, we do."
Matt 9:29 Then he touched their eyes and said: "Because of your faith it will happen."
Vs 30 Then their eyes were opened, and they could see!
Jesus sternly warned them, "Don't tell anyone about this."
Vs 31 But instead they went out and spread his fame all over the region.

This is between you and God. No one is going to see it.
People see your problem.
You are blind.
You don't have enough money.
You can't find a wife.
You are not succeeding at business.
Your son is very sick.
You are too old, or too young.
Everyone can see those things.

But when the crowd isn't there, you are going to meet with Jesus, and he is going to change everything.

Jesus may actually tell you not to go out telling everyone because not everyone will have the faith you have.
They may "hope" for change.
They will certainly "want" change.
They might just be interested to see if God can make a difference.

But, will they have faith?

Jesus knew that if the "no-longer-blind" men went out and told everyone what had happened, Jesus would get a whole lot of people coming to Him – but many would not have faith.

These blind guys had heard that Jesus was healing others... And probably the "raise the dead" miracle that preceded theirs only added to all they had previously heard. That put a determination in them that they would not "give up the chase". They would shout. They would follow – even inside someone else's home without an invitation.
Jesus gets straight to the point: "Do you believe I can make you see?" (vs 28)

Their answer was emphatic: "Yes, Lord. We do." (vs 28)

Jesus confirms that they do have faith. He says: "Because of your faith it will happen."

Because of your faith.
Not because I feel sorry for you.
Not because you have prayed and fasted.
Not because you have been chosen.
Certainly not because it happened for others.

But because of your faith.

Faith is the currency.
Faith brought the results.
Faith was what Jesus was looking to see.
Jesus said, “Because of your faith it will happen.”

What about you?
As you follow after Jesus.
As you cry out to Him within yourself.
Do you have faith.
Do you believe.
It’s the one thing the Lord is looking for.

Jesus only question is: “Do you believe I can make you see?”

Apply that to you:

“Do you believe I can restore your marriage?”
“Do you believe I can provide for your Church building project?”
“Do you believe I can enable you to do that study?”

“Do you believe....?”

That’s the big question. Why would Jesus have asked that question if it wasn’t the BIG question, and the most important question. It was the only question.

Let’s not take away the “encounter with Jesus” aspect of this miracle.
They weren’t healed until Jesus “engaged” with them.
It didn’t happen as they cried out and followed.
It happened after Jesus spoke to them, and laid his hands on them.
But there is NO focus in the gospel account on Jesus actions.
The focus Jesus brings is on their faith.
He sets it in cement when He says: “Because of your faith it will happen.”

Theologically we might have wanted there to be a bit of balance in the “scriptural story” to bring a focus on the power of Jesus to heal.
For example: “Such was the power of Jesus.”
Or: “Jesus was so empowered by the Spirit that day.”
I guess you could brainstorm your own theologically correct statement to “bring the balance” into this story.

But Jesus wanted it to be clear. So, He simply said:
“Do you believe”, and, “Because of your faith”.

That’s the question. And there’s the answer.

In the end, when God finally comes through for you, it will be because of your faith. All the other things are important. These blind guys had to keep pursuing Jesus, they had to enter a stranger's house, presumably without invitation. They did get Jesus attention, but what Jesus saw was their faith.

As you continue to cry out to God, to shout out what you need, to follow wherever God seems to lead, remember that in the end it will be your faith that brings the miracle.
If God asks: "Do you believe?"
Be ready to answer, "Yes Lord, we do."

Chapter 11: Measure 7 - Walking on water faith

Matt 14:22-32 Peter walks on water.
Vs 28 “Lord, if it is really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.”
Vs 29 “Yes come,” Jesus said.
Vs 30 ...he was terrified and began to sink.
Vs 31 “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?”

Here we have it. The enemy of faith is fear.
Peter was “terrified”. (vs 30)
This is not just a story about faith, but also about fear. It shows the power of fear.
Fear overcame faith and Peter sank.

Faith can move mountains, but fear can destroy faith.
I guess many of us have played “Scissors, paper, rock.”
Paper can wrap rock and win.... but scissors can cut paper.

Your faith can be wrapping up your problem.
But fear can come along and cut up your faith.

Just as well Jesus the rock can help you smash the scissors of fear.

So here’s the key: look to Jesus and not the wind and waves.
Looking to Jesus will smash fear and paper won’t be cut by scissors.

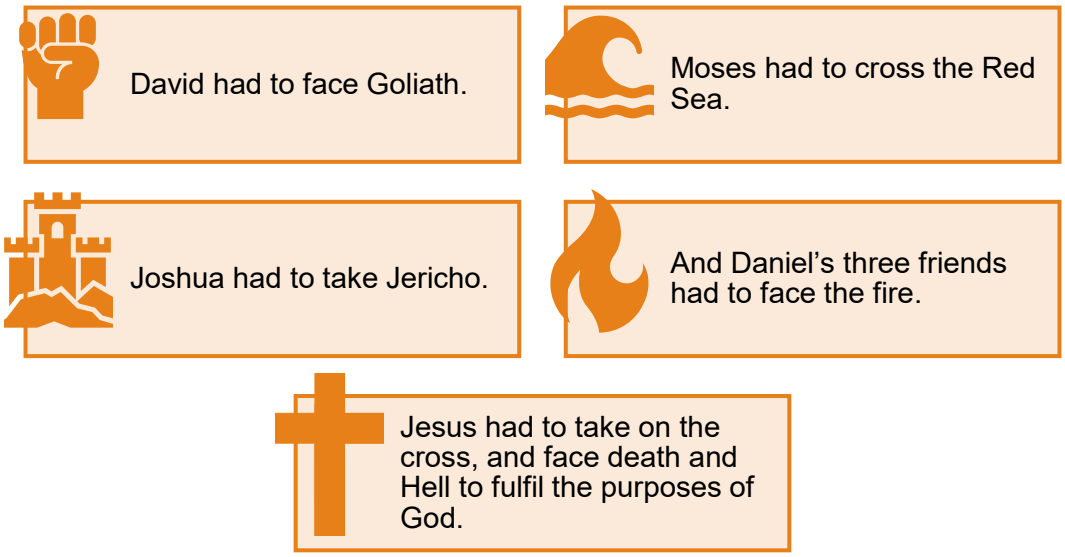
Scissors, paper, rock: what will it be?
The winning combination is always going to be paper and rock: your faith and Jesus with you.

The formula for failure always involves fear. Peter was “terrified” (Matthew 14:30).
Fear “chokes” out faith.
Peter sank when fear took out faith.
I haven’t counted, but I’ve heard that the expression “Fear not” (or a similar thing) occurs about 365 times in the Bible. That’s once for every day of the year. Regardless of the exact number of times it is, we can certainly say that it’s clear: FEAR NOT, have faith.

And, if you are going to walk on water, you’d better not fear once you get going.
You’ll sink... And Jesus will lovingly remind you that it was your “little faith” that let you down. He’ll reach out to save you from drowning ... but if you want to do far more than just “not drown”, if you want to walk on water, you’ll need faith, not fear.

Our third measure of faith (a few chapters ago) involved a sinking boat situation. It was a story about surviving. It was defensive. The storm came to their door. They didn’t attack the storm, the storm attacked them, and Jesus taught them to calm the storm by having faith.

In this new situation, Peter makes the move OUT of the comparative safety of the boat and onto the water. Peter is going to take on the laws of nature. He's going to get OUT of the safety of boat. He's making the move into the impossible.



What about you?
What is it that seems too big?
Is it too complicated?
Maybe it's far too expensive.
It might seem to require more time or energy than you have.
Some task might require skills that you don't seem to possess.

What is it that stands between you and your promised land?
Is it lack of finance?
Is it lack of ability?
Is it lack of people who will help you get the job done?
Is it something much bigger than you?

Does it seem impossible?

Jesus told Peter to come. He encouraged him to step out of the boat.
That meant danger.
It meant taking on all the standard laws of nature.
It meant having faith, and not fear.
Jesus encouraged Peter to do something that would normally be considered dangerous.

God not only allows the giants to exist, he brings us across their paths. He takes us to them.
And, He says: "Take them on."

God's deliverance from Egypt bought God's people straight to an un-crossable sea.
It was going to be a place of death, or a place of deliverance.
With Pharaoh behind and the likelihood of drowning ahead, it was to be either a place of fear, or a place of faith.
In the end, it would be a place of defeat, or a place of victory.

God says, “Go”. And that means run into whatever lies ahead. Go to it. Trust Him. Take it on.

How you respond to the giants in your promised land will make all the difference to God’s ability to take you in. As God leads you on, you will be taken TO the giants.

There were 12 spies that went in but only two survived.
That’s because all 12 spies saw giants – and only two had faith, while the rest had fear.
Their fear of giants cut through their faith for the fulfillment of God’s promise,

12 spies saw fruit – but in the end two took and ate, but for 10 if was too late.
12 spies saw milk and honey – two tasted and drank but 10 just sank.
This was because 10 had fear and two had faith.

What about you?
What are your giants?
Attacking the giants may be the key to your future.
They stand in the way of our promised land.
They won’t come to you, but you need to take the fight to them.
You will have to get out of the boat, if Jesus says come.

Is there a confession of sin that you know you just have to make? Do it in faith.

Is there a financial gift that God is calling you give, bigger than ever, bigger than big?
Get up, go, and do it.

What is God calling you to do?
What does stepping out of the boat mean for you?
Is it really big and really difficult?
Will it risk your reputation?
Will it take your time?
Does it involve GOING to serve others that you really don’t like?
If Jesus says “Come” then go, and when you step out, don’t fear, just look to Jesus and keep having faith.

A giant stood in David’s way to his calling...
Like pharaoh stood in the way of Moses…
Like Jericho stood in the way of Joshua…

We must face our giants, we must believe.
And we must act.

David took his sling and some stones.
Caleb said to Joshua, “So give me the hill country!” It was a place full of giants, and “great, walled towns” – the very things that had struck fear destroying faith into the hearts of the other spies. (Joshua 14:12). Caleb took on the enemy. He took the fight to whatever stood in the way of receiving God’s promise to him and his family.

Moses went back to Pharaoh and declared the word of the Lord, not just once, or twice, or three times, or four, not five or six, or even just seven, he didn’t stop at eight, and nine attempts was not enough, it had to be ten, it had to be, because only then were God’s

people free. Moses had to go. He couldn't wait for Pharaoh to come. Would you go? Would you go back? Would you KEEP GOING?

The four lepers at the gate had to go, they couldn't just sit and wait.

Samson took the jaw of an ox to fight the Philistines, and in the final hour he asked to be taken to the place in the auditorium surrounded by his enemies where he could pray for one more chance to strain with all his might to win the fight.

He had to bring down the temple, even though it cost him his life. He had to do it. It wasn't going to happen unless he stepped out of the boat and took the initiative.

And Elijah gathered a crowd, he took wood and water, mocked the prophets of Baal and called down the fire. NONE of this happened on its own. It happened because faith was greater than fear.

So, what are YOU going to do when Jesus says "COME"?
Which boat do you need to leave?
What water do you need to walk on?

You might ask him about doing overseas missions' work. Then He might tell you to go.
Or maybe you think He is calling you to give a couple of years at Bible College... and what if he says "Yes"?

There will be things that we can do.
There will be changes that we have to make.
They might involve risk.
Maybe there will be some discomfort for a period of time
But whatever they involve as you get going, they certainly will involve faith.

We might have to face the giant.
We might have to cross the Red Sea.
We might have to take a walled city.
You CERTAINLY will have to do something that seems just like getting out of the boat.

But as we "do" we MUST keep our faith. We cannot allow fear to destroy our faith.

You can feel the water with your hands, study the properties of water, say things about walking on water, and even watch other people walk on water, but in the end you have to walk on water yourself, and when you do, it HAS to be without fear.

When Jesus says come, walk without fear, and keep your faith strong.

Chapter 12: Measure 8 - Persistent faith

Matt 15:21-28 Gentile woman – coming on behalf of her daughter
Vs 23 Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word...disciples urged him to send her away.
Vs 24 I was sent only to help God's lost sheep
Vs 26 Not right to give the children's food to dogs.....
Vs 27 Even the dogs are allowed to eat the scraps.
Vs 28 Your faith is great. Your request is granted.

Whatever else we see in this story, we see persistence.

Sometimes we see God answer instantly. In the "fifth measure" of faith (Matt 19:19-22) we see Jesus healing power instantly flowing out of Jesus the moment the needy woman touches Him (Lk 8:46) and she is "immediately healed" (Lk 8:47). Immediately. Straight away. At that very moment.

But not in this story.

The woman comes to Jesus "pleading" (Matt 15:22).

"Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word" (Matt 15:23).

She must have kept going because "his disciples urged him to send her away" (Matt 15:23) They said: "She is bothering us with all her begging."

Right here, right now, this story is starting to have some similarities with the theme of some other stories found in the book of Luke.

Jesus gives three lessons on prayer in Luke's Gospel.

Lesson one is what we often call "The Lord's Prayer". It starts with something like: "Our Father who art in heaven, hollowed is your name." (Luke 11:1-4).

Lesson two is when Luke records that then, when Jesus was "teaching them more about prayer, he used this story". And the story is about a friend who comes at midnight banging on a mate's door and yelling out because he needs something.

Jesus makes it clear that the point of the story is that "if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence" (Lk 11:8 New Living Translation).

Jesus says: "And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking and the door will be opened to you."
This is what Jesus tells us to do.

He does not tell us to "Ask once and leave it with God."

He does not tell us that repeated asking is a sign of lack of faith. He tells us that this is EXACTLY what we should do.

It's no surprise that in Jesus' next lesson on prayer, He teaches EXACTLY THE SAME PRINCIPLE. Although on the other hand, that is a surprise. If Jesus only gives three lessons on prayer, don't you think he'd give three different main points – one in each lesson. I mean, if He didn't, that would be like saying: "I've got a message to preach with three main points, but the second and third point are actually the same point".

In Luke 18:1 we read:

Luke 18:1 (NLT)

"One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up"

In this story, just like our persistent Gentile woman in Matthew 15:21-28, this woman (in Luke 18:3) comes to a judge "repeatedly" and like Jesus in Matthew 15, the judge "ignored her for a while" (verse 4). He went as far to say that "this woman is driving me crazy" (verse 5, New Living Translation).

Get this, he said that he'd make sure she got what she wanted "because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!"

And, GET THIS EVEN MORE… Jesus says: "Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think GOD WILL SURELY GIVE JUSTICE TO HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE WHO KEEP CALLING OUT TO HIM DAY AND NIGHT?" (Luke 18:7).

The pattern that is emerging in two of Jesus three lessons on prayer is that we need to pray and keep praying.

Now, the "clinching" statement at the end of lesson three is made by Jesus where he drives the underlying point home with a question (Luke 18:8):

"But when the Son of Man returns how many will He find on the earth who have FAITH."

He is ramming home the point that it is FAITH that will cause someone to pray and keep on praying. To not stop. To not give up. To not think that it's not God's will just because it's not answered the first time you pray. Or in the first year you pray or in the 20th year that you pray. Because you might be Abraham and Sarah who for 25 years who continued to believe that God would give them the son of promise.

What about Elijah?

James 5:18 tells us that when Elijah prayed for rain "the sky sent down rain". But have you read the story? In I kings 18:41-46 we get the details. In short, Elijah prays, and nothing happens. So, he prays again. And nothing happens. So, he prays again. And nothing happens. So, he prays again, and nothing happens.

Now this is no ordinary prophet. He had just called down fire from heaven to burn the altar and the sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust and the water around the whole lot of it (I Kings 18:38). In this case we see Elijah pray (vs 37) and then "immediately" (vs 38) it happens. Immediately. Straight away. Immediately.

Now he's praying for rain.
In case you think he's not serious, you need to note that "Elijah climbed to the top of Mount Carmel and bowed low to the ground and prayed with his face between his knees." That tells me he is serious.

So, what do you do when you pray, and pray again, and pray again, and nothing happens?

Do you start to think that maybe God's not "approving" of what you are praying for?

Does your theology tell you that you must have it wrong?

I mean, last time you prayed for the fire to fall and dramatically consume everything, it did.

This time, nothing. Nothing happens six times.

Nothing. Not even a small cloud.

What Jesus saw in that Gentile woman was this same kind of faith that Jesus knew would need to exist and continue as we pray and keep on praying. As we ask and keep on asking. As we knock and keep on knocking.

Jesus sees "shameless persistence" (Luke 11:8).

He sees people that "pray and never give up" (Lk 18:1) "who cry out to him day and night" (Lk 18:7).

He sees one of the greatest prophets of all time, the prophet who met with Him on the mount of transfiguration (Matt 17:3) praying without success. Again, and again. But without giving up, he prays a seventh time and finally a small cloud appears on the horizon (I Kns 18: 44). Yes, the scripture actually uses the word "finally" (vs 44). Actually "Finally, the seventh time" (vs 44).

The Gentile woman not only had to persist, but she had to battle through what appeared to be a resistance from Jesus to heal. He says those famous words that seem to provide (on the surface) the conundrum of all "interpretation" conundrums: "It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

You may have a complete explanation for why Jesus says this AFTER already having said to her that he "was sent only to help God's lost sheep – the people of Israel."

But what I see is that in the middle of those two seemingly discouraging statements by Jesus, is that this woman continues to come (vs 25) she worships (vs 25) she "PLEADS AGAIN" with what can only be classified as the most simple but most profoundly genuine of all prayers: "Lord help me!"

Whatever Jesus seems to be saying throughout the process of "engagement" this woman exhibits "shameless persistence".

In the end Jesus says:

Matthew 15:28 (NLT)

"Dear woman, your FAITH IS GREAT. Your request is granted."

At the end of the day, she nailed it. She did it. She got her miracle because her FAITH WAS GREAT. It didn't fail. It wasn't weak. It wasn't small. It wasn't "non-existent". It certainly wasn't quenched because the answer did not come immediately.

Despite what seemed a brutal "rebuttal" from the very one she was seeking for the miracle, her faith remained strong.

Matthew 15:28 (NLT)

"…And her daughter was instantly healed."

George Mueller said: "*A little more prayer a little more faith a little more patience and the answer is sure to come*." That's coming from someone who saw the equivalent of about half a billion dollars in today's money come in for the ministry work that God gave him including establishing orphanages and schools, supporting overseas missionaries, paying for the printing or distribution of Bibles and other Christian literature around the world. He lived during the exact time that the writings of Charles Dickens were stirring a nation and Dickens himself visited Muller's Orphanages. At age 75 Mueller felt God call him to a world-wide ministry and over the last 17 years of his life (1881 to 1898) he travelled 320,000 kilometres and preached in 42 different countries. By the time he died in 1898 at age 92, Muller:

- had provided care for over 10 000 orphans
- given over 120,000 pupils a Christian Education
- distributed a quarter of a million Bibles and almost half a million New Testaments
- supported hundreds of missionaries around the world including people like Hudson Taylor

Why am I telling you this? Because Mueller had learnt Jesus's lesson two and lesson three (which is actually lesson two twice – persistence in prayer), he'd learnt to pray like Elijah who kept praying until the answer came, he'd learnt that even when it seemed like God himself was against what he was doing, that sometimes it was just a matter of continuing to "come" to "worship" to "plead again, 'Lord help me'" (Matt 15:25).

No doubt, the real key was that Mueller's faith was GREAT.

When Jesus "came to the earth" in Mueller's day… Jesus found FAITH (Lk 18:8).

In my own life, I have found this to be one of the most liberating and encouraging truths. God wants me to pray and keep praying. He not only gives me permission to pray more than once, He tells me to pray and pray again and again and again and again … I have permission to keep on praying.

I think it's all wrapped up in that three-word verse:
"Never stop praying" (I Thess 5:17).
Never.
Never stop.
Never stop praying.

Chapter 13: Measure 9 - Repeat performance FAITH

Matt 16:8 You have so little faith!
Why are you arguing with each other about having no bread.
Vs 9 Don't you understand even yet? Don't you remember the 5,000 I fed with five loaves, and the baskets of leftovers you picked up?
Vs 10 Or the 4,000 I fed with seven loaves and the large baskets of leftovers you picked up?

Have you ever seen a "magic" trick, and you think to yourself: "I'd like to see that again"? You are so amazed at what you think you have seen that you want to see it again because you can't believe your eyes. Maybe Jesus knew that his disciples throughout the ages would need to see this miracle done twice.

In Matthew 14 (vs 13 to 21) Jesus feeds 5,000 men and who knows how many more women and children (vs 21) from five loaves and two fish. It was a young boy's lunch (Jn 6:6) and Jesus took it to feed and fill thousands of people... with 12 full baskets left over.

According to some reliable estimates, it would take the equivalent of 200 day's wages worth of food. In 2017 in Australia that's about $40,000 This estimate is based on Philip's response to Jesus's astonishing question to Philip which was: "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?" (Jn 6:5). Philip's reply went a bit like this: "Why would you even ask that question, Jesus, because even if there was somewhere that we could buy enough bread from, we would need more than 200 denarii ... and even if we worked for months we wouldn't earn that much between us." (This is my expanded version of Jn 6:7.) Most experts agree that a denarii was about a day's wage.

It was impossible. Why did Jesus even ask such a question? Well, John 6:6 tells us that Jesus already knew what He was going to do and that He asked Philip that question because He was "testing" him.

The question was a test.

Have you ever felt God challenge you to do something that was seemingly "ridiculous"? Not enough time, not enough money, not enough support, not enough man power – altogether too many obstacles – and just plain "impossible".

Jesus is looking for disciples who see the miracle in the question and pass the test.

The miracle in the "where" question comes from the one who asks the question.

If God is saying to your heart something like:

"How can you reach the hardened terrorists?"

"How can you transform a drug addicts life?"

"How can you reach the upper class of Hong Kong?"

"How can you produce material with a message about Christ for TV that is so appealing and entertaining that everyone wants to watch it?"

To pass the test you have to know that the answer is: "Only through you my Lord, my Christ, my Saviour, my redeemer, my provider... Only through you."

Eventually someone is going to speak up and say: "This is all we have." That's what Andrew did (John 6:8-9).

And you are going to watch the creator and maker of this Universe pick up the "all you have" and with "all He's got" he is going to supply so abundantly that you will hardly believe your eyes.

Oh… and just to prove a point, there will be a basket full (of whatever you need) left over for you and everyone the Lord uses in miracle process. Yes, 12 disciples, 12 basket's full left over (Matt 14:20).

I believe that the Lord God almighty knew that this miracle of the loaves and fishes would be called into such question throughout the ages that He needed to respond to the mixture of "astonishment" and "excitement" and "I just don't believe what I'm seeing or hearing" that shouts: "DO IT AGAIN! Do it again!".

And that's what He did. He did it again.

But before we look at the "repeat performance" for Jesus's disciples, let's not overlook the fact that this miracle of "multiplication" was itself a "repeat performance".

We read the following story in 2 Kings 4:42-44 (New Living Translation):

2 Kings 4:42-44 (NLT)

42 One day a man from Baal-shalishah brought the man of God a sack of fresh
grain and twenty loaves of barley bread made from the first grain of his harvest.
Elisha said, "Give it to the people so they can eat."

43 "What?" his servant exclaimed. "Feed a hundred people with only this?"

But Elisha repeated, "Give it to the people so they can eat, for this is what
the Lord says: Everyone will eat, and there will even be some left over!" 44 And
when they gave it to the people, there was plenty for all and some left over, just as
the Lord had promised.

So, not once, not twice, but three times in scripture, we see this creative, multiplication miracle in operation.

In each case God uses something small to create more than what could normally done. Much, much, much more. I believe that God knew that Jesus needed to do the same thing again just 46 bible verses later (from the end of the first "feeding" of 5,000 men in Matt 14:21 to the start of the second feeding of 4,000 men in Matt 15:32).

It really is like God's response to humanity's cries of: "Encore, encore, encore, encore…".

His repeat performance may be because He knew that the power of disbelief could creep in and overcome the initial amazement and appreciation of the magnitude of the "miraculous".

Not only did Jesus do it again, but scripture specifically records Jesus referring to both events: the feeding of the 5,000 as separate and distinct from the feeding of the 4,000 (Matt 16:9-10).

There can be no doubt. These miracles did happen. Not once, but twice. Actually three times if you count what was recorded in the Old Testament.

No wonder Jesus interjected the disciple's discussion on "bread" with: "You have so little faith!" (Matt 16:8)

If God has moved in your life, believe that He can do it again. Let your faith grow. To think that He can't, or won't, lacks faith.

If Jesus gets you through one performance in front of thousands of people, He'll do it again.

If Jesus heals a sick friend when you pray for them, believe that He can do it again. Let your faith be strong – not weak. Let it grow, encourage it to grow.

Whatever it is that Jesus has done for you, believe that He can do it again, and again, and again, and again. As you respond in faith each time, you will please the master and He will rightly say: "Your faith is strong."

Chapter 14: Measures 10 & 11 - Corporate faith to cast out demons & move mountains

Matt 17:14-20 Boy who had seizures and often fell into the fire or water.
Vs 14 At the foot of the mountain…
Vs 16 So I bought him to your disciples, but they couldn't heal him.
Vs 17 You faithless and corrupt people.
Vs 18 Jesus rebuked the demon in the boy, and it left him. From that moment the boy was well.
Vs 20 You don't have enough faith.
Matt 17:20 I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, "Move from here to there" and it would move. Nothing would be impossible."

Of all the "measures" of faith, these two connected evaluations seem most extreme.

One measure is the most severe – in a negative sense. The rebuke is stinging for failure to achieve victory, for the lack of results. The score is zero.

The other measure states the ultimate potential and power of faith where a bit of faith "even as small as a mustard seed" could relocate a mountain. Just in case you missed the point because you were trying to think about the last time you actually thought it would be good thing for 200 million tons of rock and earth to go from New York to Sydney, then perhaps you need it said this way: "Nothing would be impossible"... If you just had faith, even just a tiny bit of the real stuff.

Imagine being one of Jesus disciples who failed to heal the man's son. The words Jesus spoke to you and your team would not be easy to forget. They were:

"You faithless and corrupt people!" (New Living Translation – NLT)
(Exclamation mark included in the NLT and many other translations!!!)

If that wasn't bad enough, try this as an immediate follow up:

"How long must I put up with you?" (New Living Translation)

This is Jesus "measuring" faith at his brutal best. He is being honest. He has to be. It won't be long until He is no longer around. But they will be, and there will be many more "challenges" that they must confront. And then what will they do? He wants to help them know FOR SURE the answer to that now "all too familiar" WWJD ("what would Jesus do") one-liner we all like to quote. That's what we might ask today when we don't really know what to do. Jesus wanted them to KNOW WHAT HE WOULD DO … and more to the point, WHAT HE EXPECTS US TO DO.

That is: he wants us to do the difficult, the challenging … and even the impossible.

By faith. **Through faith.** **With faith.** **In faith.**

Hence the Disciple Coaching Session 101 that followed focussed on ONE main thing: faith.
Not knowledge.
Not wisdom.
Not compassion.
Not even love.

It focussed mainly on **faith**.

I say mainly because the word "corrupt" (New Living Translation) was also used in the rebuke. In some translations that word (corrupt) is rendered, for example:
"perverse" (New International Version, King James and others)
"perverted" (New American Standard)
"twisted" (English Standard Version)

When the disciples actually ask Jesus why they couldn't cast out the demon, Jesus makes it clear in his answer: "You don't have enough faith" (Matthew 17:20).

In the Mark 9:14 to 29 account where the disciples ask Jesus why they couldn't get the job done, Jesus refers to prayer (and possibly fasting... according to some translations). But the initial rebuke in that account still focusses on faith.

In the Luke 9:37 to 43 account of this story, we see the same initial rebuke focussing on "believing" (or more exactly, the lack of believing, that is: "unbelief"). Let's agree that "believing" means having faith.

So put all three gospel accounts together and we see that whatever the disciples should do in the future (including prayer and possibly fasting) it HAD to involve faith, it had to involve believing. The one key ingredient required for this miracle was faith.

The thing that is different about this measure is that it applies to "the disciples". Plural.

It is the only story recorded in the new testament where a desperate person comes with a huge problem directly to the disciples.
Jesus is not there.
The disciples are there.
Jesus in not initially approached, but the disciples are.

These guys (plural) failed.
These guys were to be Jesus representatives and yet their corporate, combined response lacked faith.
They were "faithless".
The total sum of their individual bits of faith was zero.

He wants to help us with our faith ... and sometimes it is the "corporate us" that He is talking to.

The father said to Jesus that he had bought his son to "YOUR disciples".
The guys who follow you.
The ones you have trained.
Those who hang around with you – all the time.
Your representatives.
The "A" team... the future Navy Seals of God's Kingdom.

The disciples. Apostles in the making.
They were those Jesus was leaving behind to get the job done.

What about the corporate "you"?
Your church.
The home group you attend.
Next Thursday men's group.
Your daughter's youth group.
The leadership team you belong to.

What is being brought to the "disciples" in your world?
Is there someone with some horrible situation coming to you and the rest of your group?

- How bad is the problem?
- How big is it?
- How long has it been there for?
- How impossible does it seem?
- How many "mountain size" problems associated with it are there?

Unfortunately, one of the greatest disaster stories in the Bible is about a group of 12 spies that mostly did not agree that God could do it. Their "mountains" in the way of their promised land were things like giants and walled cities.

A situation presented itself to them.
On the whole, the "group" of undercover commandoes lacked faith.
Instead, their negative report of the situation was full of fear.
As a result, a generation ended up dead in the desert instead of living the dream in their promised land.
Their children endured a 40 year delay.
The group dynamic created by the corporate lack of faith was historic.
It was monumental.
It changed the course of history.
Time stopped still until another time.
What a waste.

The group dynamic of "faith" is so powerful.
It can be powerfully bad or powerfully good.

In Jesus' hometown of Nazareth, Jesus was stopped by the crowd.
We read that "he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith"
(Matt 13:58). This group of people only knew the guy that did "normal stuff". They were convinced he was just the local carpenter's son. Mary was his mum, and he had four brothers and some sisters. (Matt 13:55, 56)

Generally, there was a lack of faith that day.
The power of corporate unbelief that day was so staggeringly real, it could even stop Jesus himself.

Such faithlessness stopped the disciples casting out the demon and bringing healing to the father's son. So Jesus saw it and called it out for what it was.

I've been left standing alone at the foot of my mountain.
Other times, I know there are others there with me.

In my mind, God will take us through.
He will give us the land. Literally.
As I write these lines we are trusting God for tens of millions of dollars to buy what could well be the most expensive, most valuable, most useable flat land in our region – 75 acres of it, and exactly the size and shape we need for a Christian University campus. This pristine property is about a mile from the ocean and perfectly positioned near all other forms of infrastructure essential to the development of our proposed campus for 10,000 students. Everyone wants it.

What I need, like the father with a "mountain" of a problem is disciples that do have faith. Corporate faith. Shared faith. United faith. Faith without dissension, without doubt.

Combined faith is powerful.

Jesus said:

Matthew 18:19 (NLT)

"I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you."

Wow. Anything.
Anything you ask.
Agree. Two of you.

I'm guessing we would all agree that if 12 agreed it would tick the box of "two" agreeing, because within the 12 agreeing would be 6 lots of two – all agreeing.
Agree. Agree. Agree. Agree. Agree. Agree.

And surely, if three agree, then all the better.
And four.
Or five.
Or thousands… all agreeing.
Wow. Think of it.

Going back to our story of the father with the demon possessed boy, Jesus says in providing further instruction that "if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible."

The “measure” of faith required is small in size: a mustard seed.
The size of the problem is huge: a mountain.
We see that something even a bit of faith will have huge results.

It’s not a matter of having a huge amount of faith, it’s a matter of having any faith at all.
Let’s face it, we don’t expect a mountain to move at our command – normally.
So, if you actually do have faith that it will then that’s extra-ordinary.
I mean to have any REAL faith at all would be incredible.
It would have to be faith.
Not fear.
Not doubt.
Not “optimism”.
Not desire.
But faith: faith that the mountain will move.
That’s when mustard seed faith is AMAZING.
It’s amazing because to actually have faith that a mountain will move is “extreme”.
It’s amazing.
It’s awesome.
To have faith means that you actually believe it will happen.

Met any people lately that have believed that their local mountain will move?
The thing is that when you believe that something impossible will happen, then that’s truly faith. The more extreme it is to believe, the more your “mustard seed size faith” is understandable – and the more it is recognised by God.

I can imagine the Heavenly Father saying: “Wow” … They actually have faith. It’s visible. It’s tangible. It’s perceptible. And given the size of the miracle that’s required, I am going to honour their faith.

In other words, to have any faith at all for that miracle is astounding.
And that’s all that’s needed.
Just a mustard seed size amount is all that’s needed in that case – such is “achievement” of having any at all.

I’m going to stop there because the next “measure” of faith, the 12th and final also relates to moving a mountain.

Chapter 15: Measure 12 – Fig tree faith – unlimited potential

Matt 21:18-22 Jesus causes a fig tree to die by speaking to it.
Vs 20 Disciples ask how.
Vs 21 Jesus told them: "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and don't doubt, you can do things like this and much more. You can say to this mountain, "May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea," and it will happen.
Vs 21 You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it.

This final measure is interesting because this "Faith Coaching Session 101" refers to the same mountain moving idea as the previous measure did. It's the idea of moving mountains.

What we see here is that "mountain moving" is the focus in both of the last two faith coaching sessions Jesus has with his disciples in Matthew.

In the previous coaching session (Matthew 17) we see that faith is required to bring healing to a tormented child.

Now, three chapters later (in Matthew 21) we have a completely unrelated coaching session that involves a fig tree.

But the connection between these final two "lessons" in which faith is "measured" is the moving of a mountain.

In this new story, Jesus says to a fig tree: "May you never bear fruit again!"
The next statement in scripture is: "And immediately the fig tree withered up"
(Matt 21:19).

The disciples are amazed and ask how this could possibly happen.

Jesus has their attention.
This is something they've never seen before.
It's something they didn't expect.

Now they are asking Jesus "Why?".
And that's what he wants.
He wants to repeat the message of the previous measure of faith:
"... you can do things like this and much more."
YOU can do this.
You may not need to.
You may not want to.
But you CAN .... "If you have faith and don't doubt" (vs Matt 21:21).

Not only can you do THIS but "You can say to this mountain: 'May you even be lifted up and thrown into the seas' and it will happen."

There we go again - mountain moving.

It's not an accident that the last two measure of faith end with "mountain moving faith".
It's deliberate.
It's meant to indicate the absolute power and effectiveness of faith.

A "flying mountain" is the winner of all unexpected and unnatural events.
It's the "knock out" of all "acts of power".
There is a connection between "the most impossible thing you can imagine" and "faith" making it possible.

The story that gets us there in this case is just as surprising.
Who would have guessed that Jesus would kill a fig tree?
He's healing people.
The multitudes are fed.
He's taking children and blessing them on his knee.
He's even RAISING the dead...
But now he causing a fig tree to DIE.

And what's the point of that?
Even walking on water seems to have a purpose – getting out to the boat where the disciples are. But speaking to a fig tree and causing it to die – what's with that?

We might look for some very deep purpose.
We might preach a sermon about how much God hates fruitlessness in our lives.
There might be lots of things we want to say about why Jesus caused a tree to die.

But one thing is for sure, and this is it:
The Bible actually tells us the message behind this surprising event by recording the exchange between Jesus and his disciples.... and the whole conversation was about FAITH. It was about MOUNTAIN MOVING FAITH.

Jesus did something that got their attention, and the ONLY teaching that Jesus gave was about FAITH. Looking at it simply, it was like this: "I'm going to show you that ANYTHING is possible if you have faith, even something as unexpected and seemingly unnecessary as killing a fig tree. Oh, and by the way, this is nothing really because you can SPEAK TO THIS MOUTAIN and it will EVEN be lifted UP and thrown into the sea.

Get it?
I hope so, because it's really what he wanted the disciples to get.
Have FAITH. Just have FAITH.