

the altar of
[INCENSE]

A College Church of Seventh-Day Adventist Prayer Ministry
Publication



WORDS TO LIVE BY:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Hebrews 11

FAITH & HEALING

By Jessica Griffin

For many of us, this past winter may have been one of the darkest we've had over the last few years. With a global pandemic, raging wars, political standoffs and an overall increasing in shaking across the earth, it is no doubt that we are living in times foretold by God. But what are we to do when the shaking reaches our front door and barges into our homes?

How can learning who God is, what He is capable of and what His will & promises are, change how we pray to Him and seek His help? How does knowing this, change our relationship and daily walk with Jesus? And especially, how do illness, faith, and miracle healings teach us these things of God?

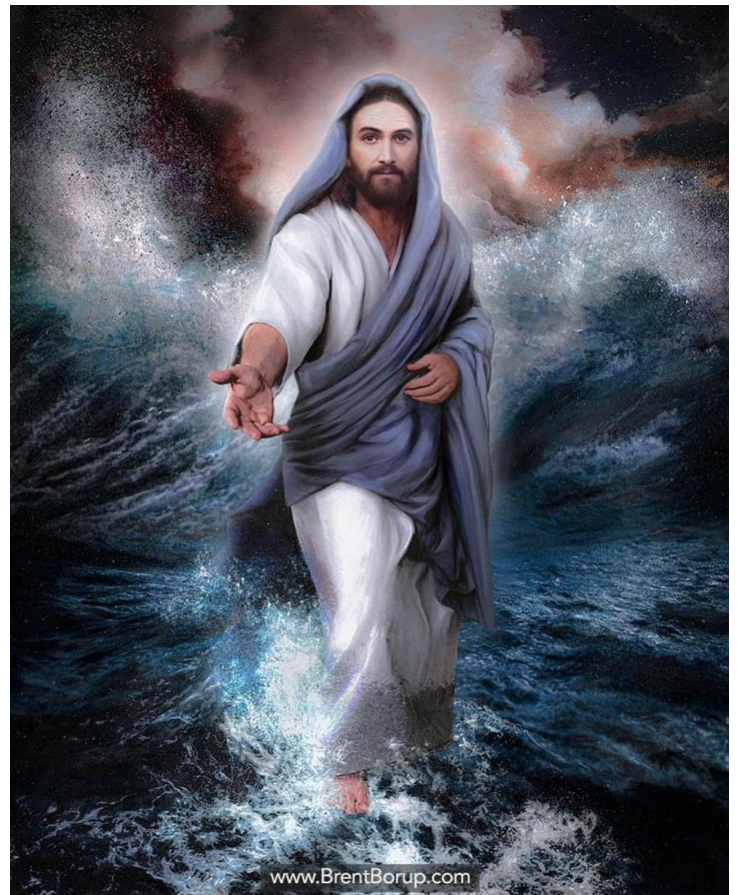
DON'T FORGET TO REMEMBER WHAT'S TRUE

Life is precious and God is good. He is always good. Even in the storm we can hold fast to this truth, it truly is an anchor for our souls. While the winds whip and the waves crash all around, Jesus is right in front of us, gently beckoning that we keep our eyes upon Him. He reaches out His hand, waiting for us to grab hold of Him and rest in His presence. Jesus is our anchor and our stability and sometimes we only learn this when all else fails.

God is always with us, Jesus promises before ascending to heaven; **"I will be with you always, even unto the ends of the earth"**. He walks with us in and out of troubles and joy, and this past winter He walked with my family through the valley of darkness. It began for us in November when my daughter had a febrile seizure due to a spiked fever from a common illness. It was a terrifying experience but the Lord's presence remained with us through it all. One particular moment proving this was when the Holy Spirit gently reminded me to pray and call on His name while she was seizing and my head was spiraling because we were unsure if she was breathing. As I cried out His name her seizure immediately stopped and she began breathing normally. The rest of the night at the hospital she was restored to her normal, joyful self.

After that, my husband and I had been strongly convicted on sins we were living that had left the door open to the enemy and we repented. We were finally baptized in December and while the angels were rejoicing, the devil was plotting. But where the Devil has a plot, God has a plan! Right after our baptism we experienced attacks against our health ranging from severe panic attacks, palpitations & breathing struggles to a severe flu, covid hospitalization and a concussion.

On a particularly challenging night at home when my breathing was failing and I couldn't sleep, I prayed for His help and suddenly I had a vision of His hand come down to touch my chest. I felt His gentle touch and was filled with peace, my lungs opened up and I was able to sleep safely through the night. The next day I was admitted to the hospital with Covid induced tachycardia, hypotension, dehydration and low o2 levels.



While I lay in the hospital bed, barely able to stand without nearly fainting, struggling to breathe, heart racing and skin clinging to my bones; the enemy fought to convince me I wouldn't make it home to my family. However, every day the Lord's presence filled my room; it was a peace unlike anything I had experienced and it gave me deep rest. I felt Him by my side as he held my hand. I heard His voice as He spoke life, promises and Truth over me. I was going to get better and better every day, no matter what my body said. No matter what the world said. **I could do all things in Christ who strengthened me.** I prayed and confessed these promises daily for the next four months until my strength was restored and his promises fulfilled!

During those long winter months struggling with what seemed like one illness after another, the Lord took what the enemy meant for harm and used it for good. He walked before us and prepared us for the battle. He led us through the storm and refined us in the waves. He saw us through it, just as He had promised. And His promise that we will never again go back to our Egypt still stands today!

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Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28

Everything that was not of God in our home and family was shaken down to the bones, and we are still uprooting and replanting ourselves into His foundation. These experiences have greatly humbled us and we consider that to be a blessing because we have finally put God in His rightful place over our hearts and home.

I learned what it truly means to feast upon His word and let that be my source of life; "**for man shall not live by bread alone...**". He stretched my faith and showed me that I can believe in Him for more than I think is possible. He taught me what it means to have an enduring faith and to persevere.

Faith doesn't last for a season, it is an every day confession. Each day we must hold fast to His word and promises, even if we don't see or feel it for months, years or a lifetime. What He has spoken is true and will come to pass, but it is up to us to believe it. Will we stand in faithful agreement and allow Him to move in our lives?

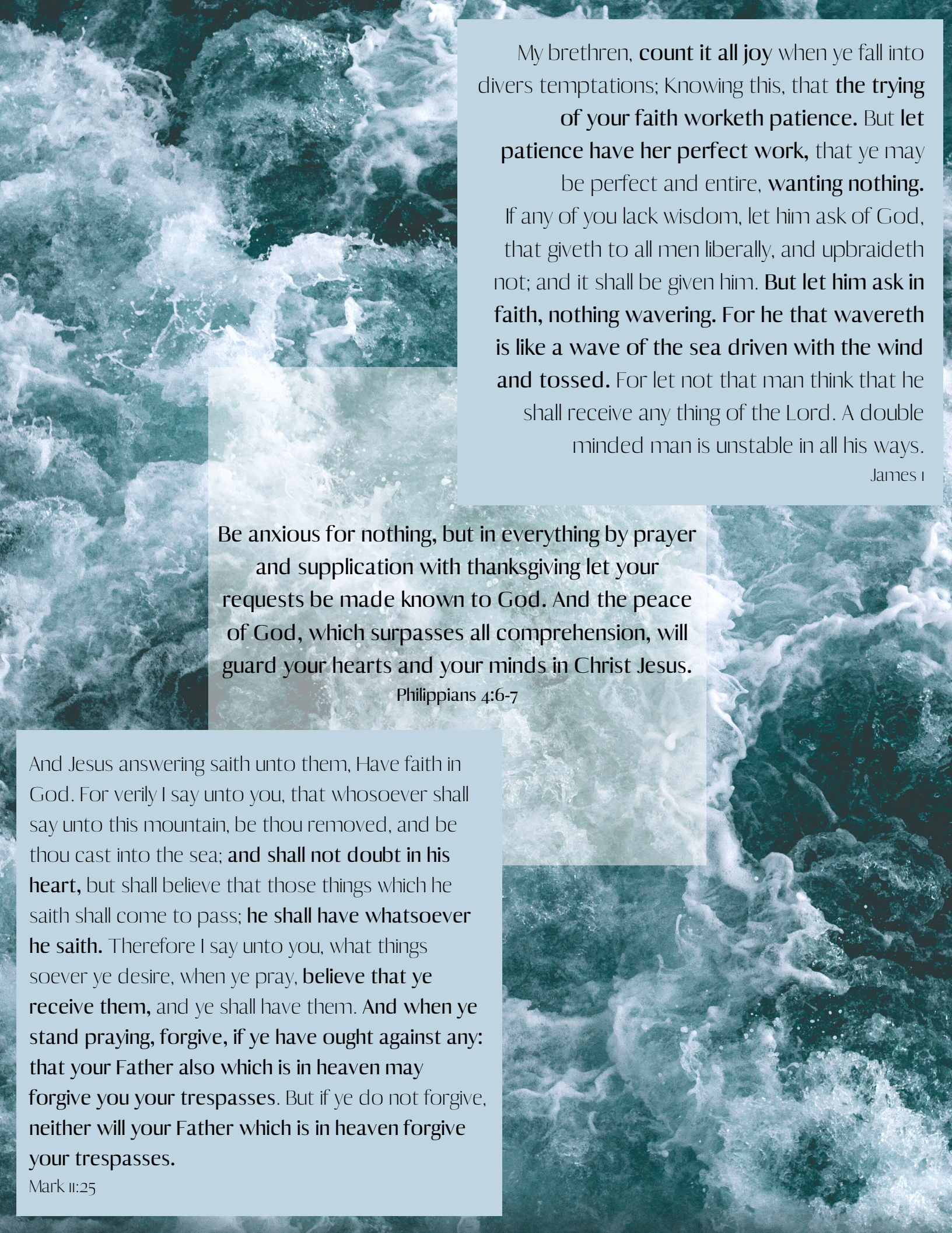
What I have come to find is that, through knowing who the Lord is and what He is capable of, as well as what His promises are, my prayers are different, they are stronger. I make sure to pray every day, in any moment I can. I confess daily to surrender my will unto His, trusting that He will provide greater for me than I could accomplish alone. I ask Him to help, lead and strengthen me where I am unable and praise the Lord, He does! I don't know how, but suddenly my day has been turned around.

Our Father is our creator. He is the only God who knows every hair on our head and is aware of when just one falls off! God loves us with an everlasting love and is always with us. His thoughts are many towards us and He longs for our hearts to remember Him. After all, He is our first love.

The same God that made you and created the world is still seated on the throne; the one who can calm storms and rebuke the wind... that same great and mighty God is still able to bring us through our toughest storm today. He is a deliverer and a miracle worker! But this is not all He is. He desires a real relationship with us, not to only be some distant God we call upon for our problems. He wants us to abide in Him even when things go well. He wants us to remember that we need Him, every hour, in joy and in pain. He is always with us, we need only seek Him. And even if we think we don't have the time to do that, we need only ask. He is always available.



Photo by Nathan Greene



My brethren, **count it all joy** when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that **the trying of your faith worketh patience**. But let **patience have her perfect work**, that ye may be perfect and entire, **wanting nothing**. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. **But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering**. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

James 1

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; **and shall not doubt in his heart**, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; **he shall have whatsoever he saith**. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, **believe that ye receive them**, and ye shall have them. **And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses**. But if ye do not forgive, **neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses**.

Mark 11:25

SEASONS CHANGE, GOD REMAINS

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Throughout the bible, God offers us a promise of peace. Peace is a gift of the Spirit given to us from the Lord before He ascended. His peace is different from the peace we experience in the world. This sentiment of peace is mentioned time and time again, whether through contentment in whatever we are facing or the eternal peace we experience in God's presence. The Lord is also known as the "prince of peace". So, we can trust in this truth that our God wills for us to have peace in our lives, no matter the circumstance.

We can rest in His presence, which is peaceful and steadfast, unchanged and unmoved by the world. He is always in control, even when our lives feel out of control.

This means that peace is available to us even when we're laying in a hospital bed and the enemy's voice is strong; we can rest in the truth that we are promised peace, victory and healing and confidently rebuke the lies of the devil. We can have peace in whatever circumstance we're in because God said so. God doesn't lie to us, He is straightforward, He acknowledges that in the world we will experience trouble, but we can have peace in Him and take heart for He has overcome the world!

Now, of course, this is easier said than done. Renewing our minds and applying the word to our lives when our flesh is screaming opposite to His truth is a battle in and of itself. But, we truly can do all things in Christ who strengthens us. For it is not by our might, our power or our strength but through His spirit in which these things are accomplished.

Nancy Dufresne, a pastor and modern leader in faith healing spoke it like this, "facts change, but Truth does not". It might be a fact that we are ill, that we received a negative doctors report, that we have been chronically ill for years or dealing with consistent pain in our bodies with no remedy, but the Truth is that in Christ we can have peace right here & right now. In Christ, we are already healed and whole, **for by his stripes we are healed.**

Have we forgotten who God truly is and what He is capable of? He created our bodies, He knows us inside and out and when something is out of place. He came to Earth and miraculously healed as many people as He could. Can He not still accomplish these things? He saved our lives so that we may live more abundantly, because the enemy came to steal, kill and destroy. The devil also comes to ruin our faith and understanding of God so that we are not engaging in the fullness of our authority and relationship with Him. Could it be said that an abundant life includes a healthy life too?

How much more are we going to give away to the enemy? It may be a fact that things are out of our control right now and it is true that God gives a time for every season. However, He himself does not change. And neither do His promises or will for our lives. If He has spoken something over you, if He has spoken something in the Bible that belongs to all who choose to believe in Him, then that Truth stands forever. Do not let anything or anyone convince you otherwise.

FINISHING OUR FAITH

The Lord calls us to greater places of faith in our lives because His love for us is great and He wants to bless us with more than we could have ever imagined. But how could we ask for more, if we don't truly believe or know that it is possible? Jesus said, **"with man it is impossible, but all things are possible with God". So even when our faith is as small as a mustard seed, if we ask without wavering, forgiving if we have ought against any and fully believing that if it is God's will, we will have it... It certainly will be done. (Mark 11:25, Matthew 18:20).** God laid it all out for us! But for us to know this, we must be invested in His word daily, doing the work of renewing our minds and speaking the truth over every circumstance that comes into our lives. God does not promise us that our lives will not be difficult. He tells us this out of love because the enemy is still moving through the world and he especially hates us believers. But God tells us to endure and after we persevere a little, He promises victory. These seasons, sometimes long, sometimes short, are in God's hands and there is nothing in the world we can rely on but Him, He is the only place we will find everlasting peace. If we seek Him daily, moment by moment, asking for peace and the way to peace, He will reveal it.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

Now, faith healing does not exclude medicine or physical health changes we might need to make. It most certainly will be a part of the healing journey for most people. I know that it has been for me. Throughout our journey dealing with these attacks within my family, we've experienced both immediate supernatural healing as well as more physical and strenuous recoveries that took days, weeks and months... Requiring medicine and lifestyle changes. Both things were directed to us from the Lord.

Sometimes our faith in what God can do takes time to stretch and grow and He will gently and patiently lead us. Sometimes there may be certain paths we must take for reasons pertaining to our growth and walk with the Lord... perhaps there's someone we are to meet and minister to or something we are to endure and experience that will mature us. Only God knows what's best for where we're at and by developing a strong prayer life, we can learn how to hear and understand Him more clearly so that we be led into the path of His will.

The circumstances in our lives can be used to refine our souls, purify our hearts, renew our minds, humble our flesh or deepen our relationship with Him. He will use them exactly as we need and that should be our focus in our prayer life. Instead of focusing and building upon the torment in our lives and begging for relief, we can choose to anchor into the word of God and take refuge in his calming presence. We can trust in Him as we walk, or crawl, through the darkest storms.

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 4:11-13

So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10



Photo by Nathan Greene

7 INGREDIENTS OF FAITH CHECKLIST

1. Calls things that are not, as if they were
2. Belief
3. Consider not the natural
4. Consider not others circumstances and outcomes
5. No wavering
6. Give full glory to God
7. Be fully persuaded it will come to pass

In her podcast series, *Jesus the Healer*, Pastor Nancy Dufresne addresses several ingredients of faith as seen in the bible. She highlights the story of Abraham and Sara, when the Lord promised them a child despite their age. This act of faith in promise of the Lord is one of many examples seen in the bible that do not consider the current nor natural circumstances. Abraham, although knowing that his wife's womb was considered dead in the natural, knew that God would provide because He is greater than the natural. These seven steps or ingredients of faith are the explicit ways Abraham and Sara maintained their thoughts, words, prayers and actions when believing for what God had promised.

When we act in faith, the Word says we must not waver or we will be tossed to and fro and unable to receive from God. This means we mustn't look to our current circumstances and confess that as our reality, we mustn't go searching for other's experiences in what we are enduring to solidify the outcome we might have. In other words, we mustn't look to the world for our answers. We must stay strong and steadfast in whatsoever God has spoken, even if it is in complete contradiction with what we are currently facing.

When God created the world, He had nothing to compare it to, it was in His great wondrous power that things were brought to fruition... so too can He bring to fruition the seemingly impossible in our own lives, no matter how big or small!

"God's part is power... but your part is faith"

Nancy Dufresne

Although God is capable of any and all things, He waits for our trust and faith to bring His promises. If we do not establish a foundation of strongly rooted faith in God, there is only so much He will do in our lives; the act of faith is something that builds our love, trust and knowledge in Him.

Trust, something Adam and Eve chose to give away when tempted by Satan in the Garden... perhaps God is utilizing the tool of faith to help humanity remember and re-establish His love and true character over our hearts? Faith is a muscle that must be strengthened and if we look through scripture, faith is an integral part of a strong relationship with the Lord and what He will do for us on Earth.

As read in Hebrews, Chapter 11, Paul identifies throughout the ages the journey of faith lived by our Elders. They endured and established the stories that would lay the foundation for God's greatest gift to humanity. Each story of faith in the bible weaves together one of the most beautiful love stories ever told; the story of God chasing after and winning back the hearts of His long lost love. And out of His love He gives us a choice; we can either accept this love through faith in Christ Jesus or we may reject it and continue to seek love from other sources that will only crumble and waste away someday.

Faith on our part is our agreement with the Lord to trust in Him and put Him in His rightful place over our lives thus experiencing His love and reviving what was once lost so long ago.

DO YOU HAVE A TESTIMONY?

Thank you so much for reading!

We hope and pray that you were strongly encouraged to grow in your relationship with Christ and that your prayers are richly blessed. Every other month we will be writing on a new topic and we need **your help!** We want you to be involved in creating these articles, so we are seeking **your unique and powerful testimonies** to be shared!

God is always at work in our lives, He is always listening to our prayers and however He chooses to answer them are modern day miracles at work!

We would love for you to email a story of a time in your life when your prayers were answered and how that affected your relationship with God.

What did you pray for? How did He respond (or not respond) to your prayers and how did it impact your life? Did you learn something from this experience? Was your relationship and understanding of God changed?

There is something for everyone in the ways God has touched our lives. Prayer was one of the most crucial parts of Jesus' walk on Earth and there is much we can learn from His prayer life and our own. **No prayer answered is too small.** There may be someone who will be deeply impacted by your experience so please don't hesitate to share your story with us!

We are looking for vulnerability and transparency. Christ didn't start loving us and chasing after our hearts because we were at our best... For many of us, He met us at our worst and brought us into better. So please let us know if you'd like your story to be anonymous. Otherwise, please include your name in the email so we can reference you.

Emails can be sent to the prayer ministry team at: prayer@wearecc.net

May God bless you and keep you all the days of your life.