



EXPERIENCES

PETER
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Experiences

by
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Chapter One **Lost Faith**

I read an article once about two pastors who had lost their faith. They were calling themselves atheists, and they were trying to find a way to leave the pulpit without losing their credibility, their friends, and their families.

I was intrigued by this story, and I tried to understand how a man could begin with faith planted in his human spirit and later decide he was an atheist. I wondered how a man could end up so hopeless, when he had spent his days walking in the pages of hope called the Word of God. I realized these men were casualties in the fight of faith.

Lack of faith is really a symptom of hopelessness because faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). When men let go of faith, it is because they have somehow managed to lose their hope.

I have an eternal hope on the other side of this life. I have no physical evidence of it, but I have been seeded with a persuasion that cannot be easily shaken. I could not relate to these men, but I was hooked on their story.

As I thought about what I had read in the article, I contemplated what I would need to do to make sure I never became hopeless. What could I do to protect my faith? What could I do to guarantee that I would

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never become an atheist in the midst of those who believe?

I thought about the things I have done in my Christian walk in the past, and I asked myself what I could continue to do to keep me on track. I considered the things that I needed to pursue to make sure my faith would not die. The following pages reveal my conclusions.

Shall He Find Faith?

I've read there are thousands of pastors who leave the ministry every month, 1,500 of which are due to moral failure. It is estimated that there are almost 4,000 churches that close their doors permanently in America every year.

Our nation has always been the seed-producing land for the work of the gospel around the world, but something is happening which should alarm every believer. The enemy knows that if he can damage the seed source, ultimately the harvest will dry up, and so, he has launched a devastating attack in the very heart of our congregations.

We all have a stake in this fight, and we must understand what is happening and why so that we can not only protect ourselves, but also combat this trend in our churches and communities.

I believe the pastors in the article are a byproduct of the prophetic question that Jesus asked His disciples: "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8)

I believe the return of Jesus is imminent, so

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the question is relevant for today. Will there be an expectant anticipation of His return? Will anyone be doing the things Jesus commanded them to do upon His arrival? Will there be anyone left with faith in their hearts when Jesus comes?

Many of us think we can hang onto our faith by attending church. This is partially true, but it is not enough in and of itself. You can't just attend church and think you will automatically remain a Christian.

There are many who attend church, but they are filled with dead faith, the kind that lies in wait to fulfill its corruptive nature while silently escaping from a life. They are going through the motions every week, believing they are doing enough to sustain their faith, but it is a false belief, and there is no evidence of fruit springing from their dying faith.

It's not even enough to have living faith. If you have living faith, and you are praying and reading the Bible, but you're not using your faith, you are destined to see it leave your life. If you're not careful, you will become like the pastors in the story.

This may not worry you, but I know the men I read about did not wake up one day and say, "Oh, I think I'll let my faith slip." No, their faith slipped away quietly. It was a long process, and it probably crept upon them one thought at a time, here a little and there a little.

When we assemble together, which Jesus called for even more as we approach the day of His return, it must be about more than just attending church. We cannot get away with being "ghost Christians" who float into a service, and then float back out into the

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world without making an impact anywhere.

We need to be "iron Christians", because the Bible tells us that iron sharpens iron (see Proverbs 27:17). The only way iron can sharpen iron is if there is continued, deliberate contact. If you are not being sparked by someone else in the church, then I dare say you are far duller than you perceive yourself to be. This is dangerous.

Today's Christian does not want to hear this because he wants to hear things that will increase his self-value. He wants to be encouraged in his personal worth, and he wants to climb the ladder of materialistic success. He wants to have good thoughts about his life and his future. The trouble is, this mentality will not produce the expected end, but it will produce false expectations which will lead to disappointment.

Real Faith

What makes a sound Christian? What can we do to protect our faith? It's not just a matter of "believism", where our preaching heroes give us seven steps to everything we could ever dream of. This rarely leads to real faith, but only produces a mere shadow of their faith.

Real faith produces an active lifestyle that incorporates not just you apprehending every promise of God for yourself, but it also includes you preaching the gospel to every creature in your sphere of influence. Real faith requires that you do all that you know to do for others, preferring them above

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yourself. True Christianity is all about Christ, and it's all about others; it is not all about you.

Any time we fall short of these things, our faith is destined to become inward, and though it promises us freedom, it will imprison us and ultimately kill us.

The Bible warns us that when men become lovers of themselves more than lovers of God, they are ripe to be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine (see 2 Timothy 3:1-7; Ephesians 4:14).

Sound doctrine is what keeps people on the right track, though it is often unpalatable compared to that which tickles itching ears (see 2 Timothy 4:3-4). The tickling of the ears brings about corruption and allows faith to seep out of the human spirit, while sound doctrine is the only thing that will lead to true faith, the kind that can withstand what we face today.

We are living in perilous times, in fulfillment of prophetic proclamations of the end-time characteristics of those whose faith is dead or fading away. Many people are entering into a state of corrupted faith, and they are not even aware of it.

It is time for the body of Christ to return to the things that stabilize us so that we can stop being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. It's time for us to return to the first principles and foundational teachings long avoided in many churches.

The truth is, we decide if our faith will live or if it will die. We decide if we will be active believers or inactive pew-dwellers. If we are inactive in the church, "ghost Christians" if you will, we will float in, and we will float out. We won't know anybody, and no one will know us. We will sit beside others

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blindly, and never engage in the iron sharpening benefit of fellowship.

We won't see it, but corruption will set in on our faith, and it will begin its destructive work. Before we know it, everything we have built our faith around, the skeletal structure of what we believe, will simply fade away.

We cannot afford to lose our faith, for if we do we will lose generations. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, showing us the strength of a faith lineage, but also revealing that those who lose faith lose it not only unto themselves, but for their children and their children's children. We must stop the process and reverse our course.

Chapter Two

The Foundation of Faith

Christianity is the beginning of a lifelong commitment of service, first to God, next to your family and your church, and then to the world. To be blunt, if you stop serving, you will die. As long as you are in motion, no one will try to put you in a coffin, but when you stop moving they'll build a box around you whether you like it or not.

I know this is a strong analogy, but I am delivering a great truth. Most Christians have never experienced the power of a living faith in God. They've never seen it, and they don't know it is available to them. Far too many are nearly like the atheist pastors in the story I read.

When Christians fail to keep their faith alive, it's because they don't realize that life is what produces life, while death produces death. You cannot be idle and stay in faith, which means you cannot stay in faith and do nothing, because nothing will produce more nothing. Death is death, and life is life; there is no intermingling.

I spoke with a group of young men about this, and I gave them some sound advice. I told them that before I launch out to do anything for God, I first pursue the greatest faith foundation of all. Then I asked them if they knew what that foundation was. They had no idea.

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I believe wholeheartedly that the foundation of a living faith is not mere words, and it's not a simple changing of the mind. The true foundation of faith may surprise you, because I believe it is an experience.

You may say, "We don't live by experiences." I did not say we live by them, but faith always produces them.

When you give, for instance, it is given back to you. This is an experience that will strengthen your faith. But if you give, and you fail to stand long enough to bring a harvest into manifestation, you will never have an experience, and a little bit of your faith will erode without your knowledge.

Unfortunately, most Christians do not use their faith to its rightful end. They set faith in motion, but they fail to fight the fight of faith until they reach an experience. Because they give up too soon, they miss an encounter with God that would sustain them in the future. As a result, they have an even higher hurdle to cross the next time they try to put faith to work.

The law of faith will not bend just because a man lacks knowledge. It will not relinquish a manifested promise just because someone desperately needs it. Only one thing will bring you to the end of a promise and to a life-changing experience, and that is an unmovable faith in God and His Word.

Why Experience?

What makes the difference? What causes some men to hang on when there seems to be nothing to

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hang onto, while others let go at the first blow in a battle? Why do some men stay saved for a lifetime, while others backslide and give up their faith entirely?

The answer is found in Romans 5:3-4 which says: "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope."

Christians become hopeless when experience evades them and faith diminishes. Remember, faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. The only reason that faith exists is because of hope.

What produces hope? You could say the scriptures, but they are only the seedbed of hope. Hope, according to this verse, comes from experience, and experience comes from the constant planting, protection, and exercise of our faith until we see the fulfillment of the promise.

So many Christians today have no hope. They have resigned themselves to a life of boredom, weariness, lukewarm faith, inactivity, a lack of confession, broken families, sickened bodies, distraught minds, tormented lives, and lost children. Why have they abandoned themselves to such when they declare they know their God? It's because of a lack of experience.

Every promise includes an experience that God wants you to have, but it's up to you whether you will reach for it or be left behind. Let me prove my point.

We all believe in one very important promise: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13) Okay. Who decided

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whether you got saved or not? According to this verse, you did. You had to decide to be a "whosoever" and call upon the name of the Lord. When you did, you got saved.

So, what did you have? You had an experience. You could not stop telling everyone you knew about your salvation. It did not matter if you were rejected and hated by your friends; you had to tell them what happened to you over and over again.

You were not deterred because you had hope born of an experience that could not be denied. Why doesn't this kind of experience translate to every promise of God? It could, and it should.

Patience Working

Your salvation experience produced hope in you, and that hope produced a strong faith. Unfortunately, you can't live off of just one experience. You need ongoing experiences to keep you connected, grounded, and full of faith.

If you had only one experience in life to cling to, your faith would only be as strong as you saw God be in that experience. But if you have multiple experiences, you have ever-increasing faith that gives birth to more and more hope, which results in more and more experiences. It's a never-ending cycle.

Even in the midst of tribulation, according to Romans 5:3-4, trouble is supposed to work patience in you. Patience gives birth to experience, and experience reignites hope. Again, around and around the circle you go.

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Now, what are our experiences subject to? Just as salvation is subject to "whosoever will", our experiences with the manifested promises of God are up to us. They're not up to God, but they are up to us.

What does the Bible say? "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." (Psalm 50:15) You can call on and experience God anytime you want to, but the problem is, in between tribulation and experience is that thing called patience.

Patience is an unchangeable stance in the battle of faith. It is a firm grip on the reality of God's faithfulness and His steadfast love for you. Patience empowers the mind to be still and know that He is God. It enables the heart to remain settled and sure. Above all, patience strengthens the resolve to stand forever if that is what it takes.

Too often we abort the process before we reach God's desired end. When we do, we not only miss a fulfilled promise, but we miss the experience that would have invigorated our hope and produced more faith for future experiences.

Here's an example. A man gives, and he stands in faith for the moment, but two weeks later he caves in and lets go of his faith. Experience never comes, and because of it, it's a little bit harder the next time he decides to give, because he will have his failure looming in the back of his mind. It's not a failure of faith itself, but a failure to stand steadfast and patient until the expected end.

If a man does this repeatedly, he will begin to accept that he will lose, or worse yet a stronghold

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will be built in this area, imprisoning his faith and thus imprisoning him. He will immunize himself against expectancy by coming up with reasons why he doesn't succeed. He'll say things like, "Well, it must not be God's will." Or "It must not be God's time for me."

Faith abides in death mode when people live this way. Whether we like it or not, if we do not resurrect our faith by standing until experience comes, faith will be corrupted, and it will eventually find its way out of our lives.

I say all the time, "Don't put your hand to the plow unless you are ready and willing to finish the furrow." The man who puts his hand to the plow, igniting faith, and then turns and looks back, losing his focus and his priority, will lose his fitness to receive anything from the kingdom of God. This is a paraphrased extraction of meaning from what Jesus said in Luke 9:62, but it is no less true.

The Reward

As I thought on all of these things, I wondered how I had lasted so long after my initial salvation experience. I thought about how I went for months when I first got saved, spending every evening from 9:00 p.m. - 4:00 a.m. walking the floor and saying, "Here I am God. Speak to me."

One evening, God came into the room, and He spoke to me. This was another experience, way beyond the salvation experience. God spoke clearly, and He called me to preach.

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Did I know everything there was to know at that moment? Absolutely not, but I had enough to move forward into what God had called me to do. Since then, I have had encounter after encounter with God over the years, communing with the Author of all knowledge, and those experiences are what sustain me and keep my faith strong today.

Now when I go overseas for Miracle Crusades, they are not based on nor empowered by my knowledge, but they are born of my experiences with the One who works miracles. I know Jesus; therefore, I see Him do what He has always done: which is heal the sick, open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, restore cripples, and raise the dead. I know Him by experience, and I experience Him in amazing ways.

My first encounter with God was far more than just a call to preach. I am honored for what God has chosen me to do, but I am much more grateful for what the experience did for me personally, which was seal my eternity.

If you want to have this kind of unwavering hope, which is the basis for active, living faith, you must first have an experience.

Remember, experiences are subject to you. You can go after them any time you want, but you must know that once you set your mind to go after one, everything that can go wrong will go wrong to try to get you to back down. It's called the fight of faith, and you will have to fight hard. You will have to be patient, and you will have to let patience have her perfect work in you until you reach the threshold of

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experience.

Often, on the way to an experience you will feel as dry as a raisin in the California sun. You'll think the substance of life has gone out of you and your faith is no more than a shriveled mess.

You must be patient. You must stand. You must endure, and you must stay the course. Hold fast your confession! Lift up those weary hands! Keep your focus, and never back down!

Isaiah 40:31 says: "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

This is the reward. It is a renewing of strength that is much more than physical in nature. This renewing of your strength is an encounter with God that will transform your human spirit from being weary, broken, forlorn, and forsaken into a new and empowered you.

When you experience God, whether in a word from His Spirit, an answer to prayer, a seed sown that produces a harvest, or in the fulfillment of any promise, you will run as a transformed man, and you will walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. Your faith life will change because of an encounter with your Heavenly Father.

The word "wait" in Isaiah 40:31 means to "interweave and bind yourself together with", not lightly, but as if it was your life that depended on it. Think of little children who grab mom's leg while she's trying to work, and they won't let go. I've had my grandson hold on so tight, I couldn't shake him

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off no matter how hard I tried. That's how we hold on to God while we wait for the experience.

Chapter Three

Bound to Purpose

In Acts 20, Paul said goodbye to some tearful friends who feared they might never see him again. They tried to talk him out of going to Jerusalem because of the danger there, but he said this in verses 22-24:

"And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

What type of encounter could make a man so bound in spirit, to the point that his life no longer mattered to him? What kind of time on the potter's wheel did this take? What kind of saturation was required for his wineskin to be so transformed that it could be wadded up for a purpose that only God could define? These are the secret things that we as believers must seek after and find.

The Experience Effect

We can only do what we are called to do in the Kingdom through our encounters with God. We

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cannot do them on our own, and we cannot count on yesterday's strength for today's challenges. We must seek after and find new experiences for what lies ahead for our tomorrows.

I was called to preach very early in my Christian life, but later God revealed more about the call and told me I was to be a teacher and a pastor, not an evangelist as so many had prophesied to me. This was all well and good, but I had to follow the experience with obedience.

When the time comes and I reach an appointed day in the future where God tells me to stop teaching, preaching, and pastoring my church, I will simply stop. I know better than to try to hang on once the effect of an encounter with God is over.

My experience with God when He called me to preach has kept me stable and steadfast for 30 years, but when He comes to tell me it's time to step back and let another take my place, that new experience will dictate my life from that moment forward. Again, I will have to be obedient to the call.

This is how the Christian life is supposed to work. Rather than try to find our own way, we are supposed to follow God and His way. If we will allow Him to lead us from experience to experience, rather than trying to camp out in one experience for life, we will fulfill our calls, and we will hear, "Well done!" when we see Jesus face to face.

Our lives are to be spent serving Him, and as we do, we must make serious choices. This might surprise you, but if I could only choose one thing to keep me steadfast until eternity, I would choose a

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fight. I would fight that fight until I came to the end and reached the experience that God intended for me to have. I would fight the fight of faith as long, as hard, and as viciously as I had to until I had reached my intended encounter.

The reason is because I know the benefit of such a fight. I know the perfect work of patience, and I am willing to go after it again and again.

One encounter with God has kept me for 30 years. I've never been weary, never been backslidden, never been unfaithful to the call, never walked away from my church, and never let offense produce bitterness, all because of the experience. This type of steadfastness should be ordinary for the Christian faith, not the exception.

Men of Old

The Word of God is precious, and it should be our all-sustaining life provider, but sometimes Christians read the words in ink, and they fail to incorporate faith into the journey to meet with God as the men of old once did.

What transformed Peter from a shivering coward to a man of boldness? An experience. Acts 4:13 says: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

What encouraged Paul to stand in the midst of Mars' hill to refute an intellectual crowd? What emboldened him to testify and tell his personal

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salvation story to King Agrippa?

What made Elijah get up again when his strength had failed him and he despaired of his life? What made Elisha follow Elijah like a shadow in the bright sun until the double portion was his? Their experiences made the difference.

Moses is another perfect example. He ran from Egypt, but after an encounter with God he came back to conquer it. Just one moment with a burning bush, and he was changed. Moses had many encounters with God after that, and each had its own appointed purpose, but none was as transforming as this one, because it set the course for the rest of his life.

The men and women of the Bible should be more than faith heroes. They should be our examples for daily living. If we will do what they did, seeking God with all of our heart, we will find Him.

We will discover places of meeting with His Spirit that will provide times of refreshing in the presence of the Lord. We will exchange our sorrows for gladness and our mourning for rejoicing as we enter into the secret place of the Most High and discover the wonder of the shadow of His wings.

We will become men and women of ever-increasing faith, and we will write our own epistles upon our hearts, knowing God and being known of Him. We will find our place in the body of Christ, and we will answer when He cries, "Come up hither!"

A life of active, living faith is possible, but you must desire and pursue the Author and Finisher of your faith more than you desire and pursue the material benefits of every promise. The end of the

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promise is great, but the pursuit of it provides the experience that will sustain you.

Draw the Line

The most important thing you can ever do in your Christian walk is draw a line of intention that defines where you will meet God. Will you meet Him in the prayer closet? Will you meet Him in the praise room? Will you discover Him in the quiet of the night, or will you find Him waiting for you in the lifting shadows of the dawn?

I don't know where your meeting will be, or how it will come about. It might be as simple as you deciding to worship God until He comes to meet you. From that moment of decision, you will spend every waking moment you possibly can worshipping. You will sacrifice everything that has to be sacrificed for that one moment in time where God inhabits the praises of His people, and you and He meet.

Maybe your line will be drawn in giving. You might make a decision to give, even if it costs you all you own. You will give, and you will stand until you receive a harvest, breaking a stronghold that has held you back for decades. Once you break it, the infusion of strength, transformation, and mounting up with supernatural abilities that come from God will sustain you. You will own Canaan once you cross over, and you will no longer be a slave to unbelief.

Above all, after the line is drawn, you must stay put. Stay where your decision has taken you. Do not move, and do not allow circumstances to draw you

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away. Having done all to stand, stand.

You have to realize that the most important thing is not the black ink of the Word - and don't get me wrong, I am not diminishing the importance of scripture - but if you want what is behind every written promise, you must press in until you have an encounter with the Author of all scripture. You must reach a living experience produced by the reality of God's Word.

Your faith is for far more than just getting things. Faith should apprehend an experience, and out of that apprehension will come hope. What's behind hope? Faith: the kind that will believe in the impossible. Again, we have the never-ending circle that God designed to sustain you for life.

No Faith, No God

It is possible to sit in a church for years, thinking that you are secure in what you believe, but because you've never used your faith to apprehend an experience with God, corruption can still lay hold of you, work its diabolical ways in your life, and draw you away from the foundation of faith.

We must take our faith and apply it to a specific intention in order for it to endure. If not, one day we will awaken and say, "There is no God." We will create philosophical insight to cover our lack of faith, and we will grasp onto the wisdom of men to explain our failures and our hopelessness.

Hopelessness is often the result of offense, and people are many times offended in church. They

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leave their church home because they think their gifts are not recognized, or because someone did not give them what they wanted, or because they misunderstand the season they are in. They simply walk out one day, never to return.

When dry seasons come, our brains do not always function as they do when the waters are flowing. Suddenly, every word we hear can be misconstrued. We might think the pastor is only preaching on one thing over and over, when truthfully he is doing what he has always done, preaching straight from the Word as God leads him.

But because we are in a fight, and we are dry inside, our perception will mislead us. Dry seasons invite such errors, and they make mountains out of molehills until faith is totally lost and hope is gone forever.

There are people who have locked onto one phrase from the pulpit, and with confusion in their hearts they have walked away from the faith because of that one word. This is why we as believers must lock onto the living Word and be transformed by it.

We must always check ourselves when we are tempted to do something drastic in the midst of a dry time. Ask yourself these questions: Am I in a battle? Am I in a season of hunger and thirst? Is God trying to get me to go somewhere new by drawing me to pursue Him in a deeper way?

Don't ever pursue the knowledge of God and forget to seek Him. Don't convince yourself that you are following His words if you fail to follow Him and His ways. Watch for signs of distress in your walk,

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and do whatever it takes to protect your faith.

It's time for us to wake up, take hold of ourselves, and apply our faith to a specific intention which will lead to a meeting with God. Then, we must do our utmost to apprehend that which we have been apprehended for.

We cannot allow ourselves to be taken out of the fight because we failed to reach an experience. If you have to ask your spouse to push you out of bed at 5:00 a.m. because this is the time you have decided to get up and pray, then set the alarm and get ready for the shove! Don't let your weak and weary flesh stop you from your experience. Don't let the snares of this life keep you from encountering the abundant life of God!

The Higher Calling

I am living proof that experiences with God can change everything. I have stood before state officials in other nations who have called me in to pray, and they have fallen to their knees begging for God's mercy.

I've had government officials call me and ask me to come help the people of their nation because they have done all they know to do, and still their people are hurting, destitute, and languishing in hopelessness.

This kind of favor does not come because of my humanity. I have nothing to give from my natural man. It comes because something has happened to me that changed me from a mere mortal man to a

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man who is infused by God with purpose.

In every dimension of my life where I have recognized there had to be a change, the change came; not by might, nor by power, but by the impartion of the Spirit of the living God. I am nothing in and of myself, but in Him I have been empowered to apprehend a living faith to fulfill my call.

The Holy Ghost is calling you to fulfill your call today. He is drawing you to apprehend what you have been apprehended for. He's drawing you to come up higher, or to dig a little deeper.

The words of Jesus hang heavy in the air: "When I return, will I find faith?" I want Jesus to find faith in my life, and I'm sure you do, too. I want to be living for Him when He comes. I want more of God tomorrow than I have today which is why I am on a quest for another experience.

I don't understand everything that has happened to me in every encounter over the years, just as I am sure Moses did not fully understand his encounter at the burning bush, but what I do recognize is the change in my life after each one.

God awaits each and every one of us in every promise in His Word. You can take one promise from the thousands, and you can reach for a life-changing experience. But know that when you take the promise, the devil will fight to get you to release it.

Just say "No!" Declare to the devil that this place you have chosen is a meeting place with God, and you will not leave until all He has for you is fulfilled.

If you will stand firm until you reach the experience, you will discover faith that will see

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you through every valley, every trouble, every disappointment, every heart-break, and every need. When Jesus comes, He will find an active, living faith in you.

The Choice is Yours

You can use your faith for silver and gold, or you can let it lie dormant, doing nothing. I don't recommend either option, but you have the right to make the choice.

I encourage you to make a decision today to use your faith for its intended purpose. I urge you to invest in an encounter where you will find something much more precious than silver or gold, and where you can drink from wells and rivers that money cannot touch. Just a sip, just a moment, just a thought from Heaven will be enough.

This is why the Bible says: "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." (Revelation 3:1)

Do you want this gold, tried by fire? It's hot, and it's difficult to obtain, but on the other side you will bend a knee, and you will drink of living waters. You will never be thirsty for long again because you will know the faith that brought you to this experience is a faith that can reproduce another encounter so that you may go from faith to faith, and from glory to glory (see 2 Corinthians 3:18).

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You can move from manifestation to deposit, and from deposit to manifestation, but there is a change you must seek, and that change will only come by the Holy Ghost. You must pursue Him by pursuing the end of the promise.

It doesn't mean you will suddenly glow, or that you will suddenly have riches beyond your wildest dreams. It simply means there will be deposits and transformations that will flow one to another to make you like Him.

You can be like Him. You can have His faith because He is the Author and Finisher of your faith. You can have His nature - the life, demonstration, and fellowship that He had with the Father.

You can be a follower of your Heavenly Father and an imitator of Him. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you, but you have to decide where and when you will invest your faith.

I don't know about you, but I am investing mine again right now. I will not live as I have lived before. I refuse to be the same. It's as if God has put a refusal button in me, and I refuse to stay where I am. God has called me to "come up hither." And He has called you, too. We can all "taste and see that the Lord is good" (see Psalm 34:8).

God will give you a taste, and then He will call you higher for another. He stands at the door, knocking, desiring your secret company. He wants you to come up, but you must decide to invest your time, your energy, and your faith before you can go.

Tomorrow may be too late. Don't wait, allowing the enemy a foothold in your life. Use your faith

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today, and allow patience to have her perfect work in you. Expect experiences to come, and watch hope be reborn in ways you never dreamed possible.

You can keep faith alive, and you can become all that God has called you to be!