

EXPERIENCING GOD THROUGH FAITH

By Beatrice Ofwona

Faith is the only means of experiencing God, the only way of coming back to Him; it means being exclusively dependent on Him. In Mark 10:46-52, the blind man Bartimaeus received his sight by faith; it took a willing and faithful woman in Mark 5:25-35 to touch the cloak of the Lord, for healing to be received; it took the reply of faith by a Syrophenician woman for a child to be dispossessed of a demon.

Faith is action in response to what God has said. It is expressed in obedience, action and in response to hearing the voice of God. Obedience is about being ready to let go of those toxic relationships or habits that you know you have but refuse to let go of. These may be the very ones that are curtailing your blessings. Taking action is about movement; that apart from believing in Him, we must also take a step of faith, this entails letting go and letting God. The movement however should be in the direction God wants us to move and for this we can ask for guidance in prayer. This is where the issue of hearing comes in-what is the Lord saying to you as an individual?

Experiencing God is about having trust, assurance and confidence in Him. It is about exchanging self-trust with God-trust and abandoning your own knowledge. Knowledge is man's wisdom but to our God we come in revelation knowledge. In 1 Corinthians 2:4 Paul says, "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power". Thus revelation knowledge is by God's wisdom because as 2 Corinthians 5:7 sums up, we live by faith and not by sight. God is all knowing and He will bless you with this knowledge. You should therefore rely on revelatory knowledge.

Faith is based on certain realities. The number one reality is based on the very nature of God; firstly that He cannot change. Malachi 3:6 tells us that He does not change. He is not dependent on things. Secondly, He cannot fail you, what He has promised to do He will do. If He has promised you children, a job, a spouse or anything you trust Him for, then He will surely deliver it. Thirdly God cannot, and does not, lie. Numbers 23:19 says, 'God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind'.

The number two reality is the Word of God which will never pass away. In Mathew 24:35 He tells us that "heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away". Everything else may pass away or fail you, but not His words. He broods over every word that He has

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Written by admin
Saturday, 16 July 2011 22:05 -

uttered concerning your life. In Jeremiah 1:12 the Lord said to the prophet, " You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled".

Faith therefore works in certain ways and these you should know if you are to get results for your trust in Him. This is because if you fully rest your feet on Him, God will make sure that you wade through all the storms of life.

Firstly, He is the giver of this faith. Habakkuk 2:4 says that the righteous will live by His faith. Ephesians 2:8-9 also informs us that you have been saved by grace through faith and this too is a gift from God. This same faith has sustained you in many instances, it has opened doors for you and given you favor in the eyes of many. In every one of us is this faith which God has apportioned us in certain measure.

Secondly, faith comes by a word from God. In Romans 10:17 is written that 'faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard through the word of Christ'.

Thirdly, if faith is to operate, then there must be obedience to the Word. God will do His part, but you too must do your part. Until Peter got out of the boat to walk on water in answer to Christ's call, his faith would not have been strengthened.

Fourthly, certain realities may come your way and make you realize that God deals with people differently. In the period of testing everything may look like it is crumbling but your faith will see you through. Naaman had to realize that for God to work in him he had to follow the specific instructions and dip himself in the specific river that he had been asked to. 1Peter 1:6-7 acknowledges the grief you have suffered but encourages you that all this was to prove how genuine your faith was. Always remember therefore that God will be with you through it all; He will never leave nor forsake you as told in Hebrews 13:5. He is the God of second-chance in times of doubt. 2Timothy 2:12-13 asks us to endure so that we may reign with Him and even though we become faithless, He will always be faithful for He cannot disown Himself.

Lastly, remember that you already have victory as a believer. 1John 5:5 gives you an assurance of this, "Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God". As a believer, you should therefore experience God in your life and glorify Him only.

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