

THE BATTLE BETWEEN YOUR HEAD AND YOUR HEART

RC BLAKES

MARK 9:23-24 NIV

If you can'? said Jesus. 'Everything is possible for one who believes.' Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, 'I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!

Consider a highly capable professional whose daily performance projects absolute certainty, yet their silent commute home is filled with suffocating doubt. You might know this reality firsthand. You are accomplished, but internally, you are battling a quiet depression and wondering if God has gone silent.

We often assume doubt equals a lack of faith, but it is actually a crisis of emotional regulation in the face of delayed promises. You cannot simply wait for the doubt to pass. You must learn to stand in the tension between what you know about God and what you feel.

The greatest battleground for an accomplished believer is the eighteen inches between your head and your heart.

In your head, you know God is sovereign, but in your chest, the exhaustion of compounded losses makes you feel invisible.

This violent collision between your doctrine and your present depression is where doubt takes root. But feelings are not a prophecy; they are simply an indicator.

C.S. Lewis captured this struggle, noting: "Faith... is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in

spite of your changing moods."

Your shifting moods will lie to you. Subject the rawness of what you feel to the authority of what you know. When your bruised self-esteem tries to convince you that you are abandoned, lean into the reassurance of the Word:

1 JOHN 3:20 NIV

If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

#1 ADMIT THE TENSION OF YOUR PRESENT REALITY

You cannot heal what you refuse to acknowledge. The man in our base text did not try to impress Jesus with his religious performance. He looked the Savior in the eye and confessed his exact location. He admitted his faith was mixed with profound uncertainty.

Accomplished people struggle to do this. We are trained to hide our weakness and manage our image. But the Holy Spirit is drawn to authenticity, not performance. If you are angry about a debilitating disappointment, say so. If you feel invisible in your marriage or your ministry, bring that directly to God.

The famous preacher Charles Spurgeon: "Doubt is a disease which comes from a weak faith, but it is a sign of life. A dead man does not doubt."

You do not have to manufacture artificial confidence. Surrender your current emotional life to the Holy Spirit and let Him meet you in the middle of your unbelief. God's power is made perfect in our weakness:

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9 NIV

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 about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

#2 CO-REGULATE YOUR EMOTIONS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

When panic or depression sets in, our natural instinct is to self-soothe through distraction or withdrawal. We isolate. We stop talking to our spouses. We skip church. We try to regulate our own anxiety through control. But true emotional regulation for a Kingdom citizen requires a partner.

You must allow the Holy Spirit to act as your internal therapist. He is the Comforter. When your mind begins to spiral into worst-case scenarios, pause and invite Him into that exact moment. You do this by intentionally shifting your focus from the shifting circumstance to the unchanging nature of God.

Oswald Chambers: "Faith is deliberate confidence in the character of God whose ways you may not understand at the time."

When you cannot trace His hand, you must trust His character. We see this modeled in scripture, where the Spirit helps us in our weakness, interceding for us with wordless groans:

ROMANS 8:26 NIV

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

You co-regulate by letting His presence stabilize your panic.

#3 SEPARATE GOD'S PROMISES FROM YOUR COMPOUNDED LOSSES

Doubt thrives when we confuse the pain of living in a broken world with the character of God. Over time, unanswered prayers, relational betrayals, and deep inner wounds begin to stack up. We look at that pile of disappointment and slowly allow bitterness to redefine who we believe God to be.

You have to actively separate the pain of your past from the promise of your future. God did not author your abuse. He did not design your divorce. He is the redeemer of those broken pieces, not the architect of your trauma.

C.S. Lewis observed: "We are not necessarily doubting that God will do the best for us; we are wondering how painful the best will turn out to be."

This is the root of our hesitation. We are afraid to trust again because we are afraid of more pain. Yet the Word declares that the Lord does not abandon us in our grief:

PSALM 34:18 NIV

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Your capacity to regulate your faith depends on your willingness to let God heal your bruised self-esteem and restore your true value.

#4 MAINTAIN YOUR KINGDOM RHYTHMS IN THE DARK

There will be days when you feel absolutely nothing. The worship music will

sound like noise. The sermon will feel disconnected. Your personal prayers will feel dry. In those moments, your faith is not sustained by your feelings. Your faith is sustained by your rhythms.

This is where obedience takes over when emotion fails. You keep serving. You keep giving. You maintain your attendance in your Christian community. You show up for your family. You do not abandon your foundational roles just because your heart feels heavy.

Elisabeth Elliot "Do the next thing."

When you cannot figure out the next five years, just do the next faithful thing today. Keep walking in obedience even when you cannot see the outcome:

ISAIAH 50:10 NIV

Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of his servant? Let the one who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord and rely on their God.

Keep walking. The light will return.

Conclusion

Doubt does not disqualify you from your divine destiny. It simply reveals that you have reached the edge of your own strength. You are not a failure for feeling overwhelmed, but you must not build a house in that dark valley. The Holy Spirit is reaching out to you today, offering a deeply authentic partnership. He wants to lead you out of stagnation and back into a place of self-assurance and clarity.

