

# The Struggle Between

My Faith  
And  
My Focus

# Key Passages

## **Hebrews 12:2**

2 Let us *fix our eyes on Jesus*, the author and finisher of our faith..

## **2 Corinthians 4:18**

18 So we *fix our eyes* not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.  
For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

## **Psalms 101:3**

3 I will not *set before my eyes* anything that is worthless.

## **Psalms 119:37**

37 *Turn my eyes* from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.

## **Luke 11:34 (ESV)**

34 *Your eye is the lamp of your body*. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness.

## **Introduction**

Most believers have been told their whole Christian life that **they need more faith**  
*Pray for more faith. Fast for more faith. Confess more faith.*

And while faith is certainly **essential** to the Christian life,  
Many believers don't have **a faith problem**. **THEY HAVE A FOCUS PROBLEM.**

The issue isn't **the size of their faith**. The issue is **the direction of their focus**.

You can be a **person of genuine faith** and **still be living a defeated life** —  
simply because **YOUR FOCUS** is in the wrong place.

The Enemy Understands This Concept  
**WHATEVER GETS YOUR ATTENTION, GETS YOU.**

**YOU CAN HAVE REAL FAITH AND STILL BE RULED BY WHAT YOU CONSTANTLY LOOK AT.**

The enemy desires to **REDIRECT YOUR FOCUS** — slowly, **subtly**, strategically

## Introduction

### **THIS IS NOT A NEW STRATEGY**

**THIS HAS BEEN THE PLAN/PLOT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING**

### **Faith Comes By Hearing and Hearing By The Word Of God**

**Genesis 2:16-17 (ESV)**

16 And **the Lord God commanded** the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,  
17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat,  
for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

**Genesis 3:6-7 (ESV)**

6 So when the woman **SAW** that the tree was good for food, and that it was **A DELIGHT TO THE EYES**,  
and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate,  
and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.  
7 **Then the eyes of both were opened**, and they knew that they were naked.

### **The Focus Shifted From What God Said To What She Saw**

When something looks good enough, **WE FIND WAYS** to justify reaching for it —

**THIS STRATEGY STILL CAUSES BELIEVERS TO STRUGGLE**

## Introduction

### **THE PATTERN HAS NEVER CHANGED**

What happened in the garden has been *repeating* itself ever since:

*God says* "I will supply all your needs" — but *we see* an empty bank account and panic.

*God says* "I will never leave you nor forsake you" — but *we see* loneliness and abandonment and despair.

*God says* "By his wounds you are healed" — but *we see* a diagnosis that contradicts the promise.

*God says* "I know the plans I have for you" — but *we see* a detour that looks nothing like our destiny.

The enemy has not *changed his strategy* in thousands of years — **BECAUSE IT KEEPS WORKING.**

He doesn't need to destroy your faith if he can simply *redirect your focus*.

A believer whose focus has *drifted from the Word of God to the circumstances of life* will make the same mistake Eve made — **because** they've stopped **TRUSTING** what God already said.

#### **Matthew 14:28-30 (NIV)**

28 "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

29 "**COME, HE SAID.** Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

30 **But when he saw the wind, he was afraid** and, *beginning to sink*, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

#### **We See The Battle Of Faith And Focus**

This series is not about *trying harder* or *believing more*. It is about learning to *look in the right direction* — and **TRUSTING THAT WHEN YOUR FOCUS IS RIGHT, YOUR FAITH WILL FOLLOW.**

# *A Firm Foundation Comes From a Fixed Focus*

## *Psalms 73:2-3 (NLT)*

- 1 Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.*
- 2 But as for me, I almost **lost my footing**. My feet **were slipping**, and I was **almost gone**.*
- 3 For I envied the proud when **I SAW THEM PROSPER** despite their wickedness.*

*My Faith Says.... God is good to US ~~~~~ **My Focus Sees** The Wicked Prospering*

*Asaph was a worship leader — a man assigned to lead others **into the presence of God** — yet he nearly **lost his footing** because **HIS EYES DRIFTED TO THE WRONG PLACE**.*

## *James 1:8 (NKJV)*

*8 **A double-minded man**, is unstable in all his ways.*

*He Shifted From **WORSHIP TO WARFARE** ~ Not Because Of Some **Dramatic Sin**  
It Was Not **Sinful Living**... It Was **Steady Looking***

*Instead Of Focusing On **HIM** ~ He Focused on **THEM***

# A Firm Foundation Comes From a Fixed Focus

Psalms 73:3-9

- 3 For I envied the wicked *when I saw them prosper* despite their wickedness.  
4 *They* seem to live such painless lives; their bodies are so healthy and strong.  
5 *They* don't have troubles like other people; *they're* not plagued with problems like everyone else.  
6 *They* wear pride like a jeweled necklace and clothe themselves with cruelty.  
7 These fat cats have everything their hearts could ever wish for!  
8 *They* scoff and speak only evil; in *their* pride they seek to crush others.  
9 *They* boast against the very heavens, and *their* words strut throughout the earth.

## The Danger Of Comparison

He began comparing *his suffering* to the *prosperity of the wicked* [THIS IS NOT FAIR]  
*Comparison* is always a spiritual hazard because it *Confuses Clarity*  
It shifts your focus *from what God is doing for you* **to** *what God seems to be doing for others*.

*If You Keep Looking At What They Have; You'll Start To Question What God Gave You*

## Distraction Leads To Discouragement

When we can't *explain what we see*, we begin to doubt *what we believe*.  
The danger isn't just what you see, *it's how you feel about what you see...*

Vs. 16 ~ "When I tried to understand all this, *it troubled me deeply*" ~ Emotionally Overwhelmed

# *A Firm Foundation Comes From a Fixed Focus*

*Psalms 73:13-14 (NLT)*

13 Did I keep my heart pure *for nothing?* Did I keep myself innocent *for no reason?*

14 *I get nothing* but trouble all day long; *every morning* brings me pain.

## *Comparison Leads To Questioning Your Commitment*

*This is the most dangerous place in the psalm because Asaph begins to question **the value of his own obedience.***

## *Does It Really Pay To Serve God*

*Mark 10:21-22; 27-28 (NLT)*

21 Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him. “There is still one thing you haven’t done,” he told him.

“*Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.*” 22 At this the man’s face fell, and *he went away very sad, for he had many possessions.*

27 Jesus looked at them intently and said, “Humanly speaking, it is impossible.

*But not with God. Everything is possible with God.”*

28 Then Peter began to speak up. “**WE’VE GIVEN UP EVERYTHING TO FOLLOW YOU,**” he said.

# *A Firm Foundation Comes From a Fixed Focus*

*Psalms 73:17 (NLT)*

*17 Then I went into your sanctuary, O God, and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked.*

*The Turning Point ~ The Where and The What*

*The Place*

*The Presence Of God ~ The Place Of Praise*

*Psalms 73:28 (NIV)*

*28 But as for me, it is good to be near God...*

*The Sanctuary changes your perspective ~ Worship sharpens your focus.*

*Your Environment Can Shape Your Eyesight*

*The Perspective*

*His Circumstances Did Not Change ~ His Outlook Did  
He Received A Different Perspective About The Outcome*

**2 Corinthians 4:18**

*18 So we **fix our eyes** not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.*

*For what is seen is **temporary**, but what is unseen is **eternal**.*

# *A Firm Foundation Comes From a Fixed Focus*

*Similar To Habakkuk*

*Habakkuk 1:2-3 (NLT)*

*2 How long, O Lord, must I call for help? But you do not listen! “Violence is everywhere!” I cry, but you do not come to save.*

*3 Must I forever **SEE THESE EVIL DEEDS?** Why **must I WATCH ALL THIS MISERY?**  
**WHEREVER I LOOK, I SEE DESTRUCTION AND VIOLENCE.***

*I am surrounded by people who love to argue and fight.*

**CONFUSION WILL MAKE YOU QUESTION WHAT YOU ONCE TRUSTED**

*Habakkuk 2:1 (NLT)*

*1 I will climb up to my watchtower and stand at my guardpost.*

*There I will wait to **see what the Lord says** and how he will answer my complaint.*

**GOD GAVE HIM A VISION ~ HE DIDN'T GET AN EXPLANATION ~ HE GOT A REVELATION**

*Habakkuk 3:17-18 (NLT)*

*17 Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty,*

*18 **YET I WILL REJOICE IN THE LORD! I WILL BE JOYFUL IN THE GOD OF MY SALVATION!***

# *A Firm Foundation Comes From a Fixed Focus*

## *Consider This:*

*What comparison, what crisis, what confusion, what chaos, what clown...  
has pulled your eyes away from God?*

## *Pray This Prayer*

*Psalms 119:36-37 (NLT)*

*36 Give me an eagerness for your laws rather than a love for money!*

*37 Turn my eyes from worthless things **and** give me life through your word.*

## *Remember This....*

### *Principle #1*

*Whatever Gets Your Attention Gets You*

### *Principle #2*

*If You Keep Looking At What They Have;  
You'll Start To Question What God Gave You*

### *Principle #3*

*When we can't explain what we see, we begin to doubt what we believe.*

### *Principle #4*

*Don't Allow What Is Temporary To Cause You To Stop Trusting*