

## Lesson 6

# Walking by Faith

## Introduction

Previously, we discussed how failure is not a reason to collapse. Failure may be painful and embarrassing, but it never has to be fatal. Times of failure are when God is at His busiest, his work shines brightest, and his delivering power is experienced at its greatest. The question is, *do we have the faith to look for how God is working providentially to lift us out of the problem and use us even more effectively in the kingdom?* God wants to work through our weaknesses and challenges to bring greater attention to His glory. He promises to take what is broken and make it beautiful.<sup>10</sup>

We also discussed how we must resist the urge to allow trials to stop us and hold us in place. Sometimes people never get over their hurts and failures and turn into bitter, cynical people who never trust again. That life only lies to more hurt and disappointment through the loneliness that it ushers in. We also discussed the story of Horatio Spafford, who over a quick span lost five of his children in cruel tragedies. He may not have known it at the time, but the words he penned as his England-bound ship passed over the spot where his four daughters died, have served as a ray of hope for countless people (Christian and non-Christian) over the last 150 years. We never know how God is going to work through our tragedies and suffering to provide help and comfort to others. Are we, even in our darkest moments, willing to be a tool for His cause?

Will we, walk by faith? While the phrase *let go and let God*, may have become worn-out in some places, the truth it is bound up in remains the same. Will we follow through on biblical instruction?

## Three Passages That Teach us to Let Go:

- 1 Peter 5.7: *casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you.*
- 1 Corinthians 10.13: *No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity. But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it.*
- Galatians 6.1-2: *Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so that you also won't be tempted. Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

Have we let go enough to get the real *experience* of God's love and care? Do we see it in action as it is expressed through the kindness of others? Do we trust in it when temptation comes and move in step with the Spirit's leading rather than Satan's pressure? Are we willing to admit that we can't handle every burden and allow brothers and sisters to fulfill their godly duty by helping us where they can?

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<sup>10</sup> Consider the teaching of Ephesians 2.10. We are the workmanship of God. We are each his personal masterpiece of grace, having taken us *dead in our trespasses and sin* and made us into something dashing, beautiful, and amazing to behold.

Can we see the need to walk by faith? This is how we engage and put to use the spiritual power we've been given and become *more than conquerors*, Romans 8.37-38. God is always working, moving the pieces of the puzzle together to put the right people and resources in front of us – just when we need it. Sometimes walking by faith involves waiting on the Lord:

Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD cares for me.

I am certain that I will see the LORD's goodness in the land of the living. Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Wait for the LORD.

– Psalm 27.10, 13-14

## God Will Make a Way

### *Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath*

Many of us may be familiar with the prophet Elijah. The biblical record of his life presents us with his experiences of great highs and lows. It is quite normal to experience great valleys of discouragement just after having bashed in the sunlight of great spiritual victory. By faith Elijah declared:

As the Lord God of Israel lives, in whose presence I stand, there will be no dew or rain during these years except by my command!"

– 1 Kings 17.1

God knew that such a statement and the stunning reality of God's judgment on the land would make Elijah a target, so the prophet is instructed to hide in the wilderness ... where he would be sustained by the ravens. He remained there for quite awhile ... long enough for the wadi he was drinking water from to dry up. He is in a desperate situation ... and notice how God makes a way.

He was commanded to go to Zarephath and stay with a widow who would provide for him. Notice as you read 1 Kings 17.10-24 how God made a way for both individuals to survive the great drought. They both needed each other. At first it appears she had lost all hope and would have been the last person to help Elijah in his great time of need. But as we continue to read, God supplied both Elijah *and* the woman and her son *for many days*, 1 Kings 17.15. As we continue in the story, the son of the woman died. Elijah prayed to the Lord three times and the Lord raised the boy from the dead, 17.23.

Here we find two people in desperate situations who trusted in the Lord's providence to provide a way to survive.

What are some lessons you can gain from this story?

### *Elisha and the army of God*

A few years after Elijah, his successor Elisha served as the prophet for Israel. At this time the king of Aram was making war against Israel. Elisha, by the power of God, was telling Israel's king the plans of the army of Aram. When the king of Aram asked as to who was passing along this information one of his servants identified Elisha who *tells the king of Israel even the words you speak in your bedroom*, 2 Kings 6.12. The king sent his army to Dothan, where Elijah was, with orders to capture him. Early in the morning Elisha's servant went outside and saw the enemy army all around. They surrounded the entire city.

Elisha said, “Don’t be afraid, for those who are with us outnumber those who are with them.” Then Elisha prayed, “LORD, please open his eyes and let him see.” So the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he saw that the mountain was covered with horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

– 2 Kings 6.16-17

What an incredible sight this must have been! And from there we read how God answered the prayer of Elisha and his servant. Verse 23 ends like this: *The Aramean raiders did not come into Israel’s land again.* The reason ultimately goes back to the delivering power of God and Elisha’s deep, committed trust. It’s a great example for us. When we are in distress can we see the action of God? Are we looking for God to act?

Several years ago, Reid Lancaster penned the following words that have been turned into a beloved hymn:

*I know the Lord will find a way for me.*  
*I know the Lord will find a way for me.*  
*If I walk in heaven’s light, shun the wrong and do the right,*  
*I know the Lord will find a way for me.*  
*Won’t it be grand to hear Him say, “Well done.”*  
*Won’t it be grand to hear Him say, “Well done.”*  
*If I walk in heaven’s light, shun the wrong and do the right,*  
*I know the Lord will find a way for me.*

## Conclusion

Are we, even in our darkest moments, willing to be a tool for His cause? Will we, walk by faith? Do we believe that God will, ...make a way?

## For Thought and Reflection

1. What does it mean to you to *let go and let God*?
  
2. How successful are you at applying 1 Peter 5.7?
  
3. How has God worked in the past to deliver you from temptation?

4. When are some of the times that God has brought other people into your life to help bear your burdens? How is this an example of providence?
  
5. What are some things you need to be doing to let go more so that you can experience God's providence? What are some of the things that hold you back?
  
6. How did God work by providence to meet both the needs of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath? Why do you think this passage has been placed inside Scripture?
  
7. How did God work by providence to deliver Elisha and his servant? Why do you think this passage has been placed in Scripture?
  
8. What are some things you can begin doing today to walk by faith and thus trust more and more in God's delivering providence?