

Authentic faith has God's approval and stands

Authentic faith does not speak of human perfection. Rather, it speaks of a repentant attitude which has determined to persevere at a Christ focused life. This attitude deals faithfully with the realities of Christian living.



The apostle Paul confessed; *"I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate"* (Romans 7:15). Paul, like us, knew the ugly realities of living Christ in a sin governed world. The truth is; we are not always victorious in our Christian walk as we should or could be.

Before salvation, we simply did what sin wanted of us and without giving it a second thought. There was little spiritual battle, if any, because we *"were dead in (our) trespasses and sins"* (Ephesians 2:1). But now that God has *"made us alive together with Christ"* (Ephesians 2:5), we are aware of the conflict between sin and righteousness. Faith acknowledges this conflict, and although fierce at times, faith determines to stand firm.

Standing firm recognises that in spite of occasions when you stumble, you stand again and walk on. Each rising from such stumbling's should be used to deepen your resolve and broaden your understanding of how it is that sin trips you.

Brotherly insights

James, Jesus younger half-brother understood this matter of Christian struggles and faith. Listen as he explains; *“Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful”* (James 5:11). James, and indeed all God’s children, respect and speak well of fellow believers who remain steadfast during great difficulties.

We should observe God’s faithfulness to those who live faithful through times of pain, discouragement, and disappointment. Even when feeling abandoned by those you hold most precious, the Holy Spirit opens deep recesses in your heart to explore the many ways God equips you to stand firm. Questions, challenged beliefs, and the sense of desperation, are all normal and acceptable feelings during such times.

Like Job, who lost everything of earthly value, you can discover uncharted facets and understanding of God’s purposes for your life when you suffer the most. Insights into God’s reasoning usually come clearer following times of determined faithfulness through great pain. As with Job, it’s following periods of silence, reflection, and challenge from others, that you more clearly perceive *“how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”*

Determined and dependant faith

It’s far too easy to be overcome by fear and a sense of failure which is often fuelled by the unloving words and responses of others. However, through determined and dependant faith in Christ you are to *“put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil”* (Ephesians 6:11). When Christ’s spiritual resources are applied through focused belief, you will *“be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm”* (Ephesians 6:13). Holy Spirit energised faith gives you the

determination to simply stand immovable, in spite of possible faltering and stumbling.

This spiritual firmness of purpose enables you to *“be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong”* (1 Corinthians 16:13). Every step of your day is to be a decision to live Jesus Christ in that moment. This is how you watch life with the expectation of God’s strength being sufficient to make you faithful in the on-going present.

Today, be encouraged, your authentic faith has God’s approval to make you stand firm.

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