

Degrees of Faith

by Charles E. Cowman

Faith comes in degrees, and the highest form of faith trusts God and His Word despite unfavorable circumstances.

Scripture: Judges 6:39, Psalm 56:3, Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 26:3, Acts 27:20

Topics: "Faith Development", "Trust In God"

Description

Charles E. Cowman preaches about the different degrees of faith, starting with the stage where believers rely on signs or feelings like Gideon's fleece, then progressing to trusting God without emotions, and finally reaching the highest form of faith where one believes God's Word despite contrary circumstances, emotions, and human reasoning, as exemplified by Paul in Acts 27. He emphasizes the importance of trusting God's Word even when everything else seems to point in the opposite direction.

Transcript

"Let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece" (Judges 6:39).

There are degrees to faith. At one stage of Christian experience we cannot believe unless we have some sign or some great manifestation of feeling. We feel our fleece, like Gideon, and if it is wet we are willing to trust God. This may be true faith, but it is imperfect. It always looks for feeling or some token besides the Word of God. It marks quite an advance in faith when we trust God without feelings. It is blessed to believe without having any emotion.

There is a third stage of faith which even transcends that of Gideon and his fleece. The first phase of faith believes when there are favorable emotions, the second believes when there is the absence of feeling, but this third form of faith believes God and His Word when circumstances, emotions, appearances, people, and human reason all urge to the contrary. Paul exercised this faith in Acts 27:20, 25, "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." Notwithstanding all this Paul said, "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."

May God give us faith to fully trust His Word though everything else witness the other way. --C. H. P.

When is the time to trust?

Is it when all is calm,

When waves the victor's palm,
And life is one glad psalm
Of joy and praise?
Nay! but the time to trust
Is when the waves beat high,
When storm clouds fill the sky,
And prayer is one long cry,
O help and save!
When is the time to trust?
Is it when friends are true?
Is it when comforts woo,
And in all we say and do
We meet but praise?
Nay! but the time to trust
Is when we stand alone,
And summer birds have flown,
And every prop is gone,
All else but God.
What is the time to trust?
Is it some future day,
When you have tried your way,
And learned to trust and pray
By bitter woe?
Nay! but the time to trust
Is in this moment's need,
Poor, broken, bruised reed!
Poor, troubled soul, make speed

To trust thy God.

What is the time to trust?

Is it when hopes beat high,

When sunshine gilds the sky,

And joy and ecstasy

Fill all the heart?

Nay! but the time to trust

Is when our joy is fled,

When sorrow bows the head,

And all is cold and dead,

All else but God.

--Selected

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