

Doing, and Not Doubting

by J.R. Miller

We should not air our fears and doubts to others, but instead try to be encouragers and doers, trusting in God's strength and reward for our efforts.

Scripture: Psalm 34:4, Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 17:20, Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 5:7, Galatians 6:9, Philippians 4:13, Hebrews 11:1, James 1:6, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Faith in Action", "Overcoming Doubt"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes the importance of action over doubt in the Christian life, arguing that expressing fears and doubts can discourage others and weaken our own resolve. He encourages believers to focus on doing rather than doubting, as this aligns with God's will and strengthens both ourselves and those around us. Miller shares a poignant stanza that highlights the value of action, suggesting that our efforts, even if they don't yield immediate results, are recognized by God. He reminds us that burdens are part of divine discipline and that we should strive to uplift others with words of hope. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a proactive faith that seeks to overcome challenges through trust in God.

Transcript

Some good people talk altogether too much in a doleful strain. Indeed any doleful talk in a Christian is too much. We have no right to go about airing our fears and doubts. In the first place, we need not have fears and doubts, if we have truly committed our life to Christ. Surely we are safe in his hands. But if, in spite of our secure trust and our divine keeping, we still have gloomy feelings on certain days -- we ought not to speak them out to others. It is not good witness for our Master, for one thing. Besides, it makes life harder for others. We have no right ever to be a discourager.

Usually it is not possible for us to lift away people's burdens. Indeed it would not be well that we should do this, if we could. These burdens are God's gifts to his children; it is his will that they should carry them for a time, and if we lifted them off -- we might be interfering with the discipline of divine love, and doing harm, not good. But we surely sin against our brother when by giving him our own doubts and fears, we make him less brave and strong for his hard duty or his sore struggle. Rather, it is the duty of love always to try to make him stronger, by words of cheer and hope.

There is still another reason why we should not let our doubts and fears have wing. While we keep them in our own bosom, unexpressed, we can the more easily get the mastery over them. Talking gloomily, makes our own heart less brave. When we have said a discouraged word -- we have given way in some measure

to the disheartenment which is trying to get possession of us. And every time we yield to this temptation -- we are allowing the enemy to add another strand to the cable which, by and by, will bind us in the habit of life which will make us slaves of depression.

When Dr. Charles S. Robinson was pastor of a church in New York, he repeated in the course of a sermon this stanza:

"Oh, how many a glorious record

Had the angels of me kept,

Had I done, instead of doubted,

Had I warred, instead of wept."

He asked the congregation to repeat it after him, and then added, "You may forget the sermon, but do not forget the verse."

Years after this a prominent lawyer, in a private letter, recalled the incident, and spoke of the help which he and others had received. Dr. Robinson replied: "I remember the sermon and my little verse. It gives me more joy than I can describe, to know that I help anybody. Sometimes I think the highest reward I shall ever get in Heaven will be the words, not exactly, 'Well done' -- but 'Well tried.' Now and then, however, some thoughtful, generous person like you comes along and says, 'Well, when you tried that time -- you did.' So I try again."

The lesson of this stanza is one we all may profitably let into our life -- not to doubt -- but to do; not to weep -- but to war. Doubt paralyzes energy; doing brings the strength of God into hand and heart. The moment we begin to try to obey, God begins to impart grace to help us to obey. Brave struggle leads to victory; weeping causes weakness which ends in pitiable defeat.

Dr. Robinson's thought of a reward for trying well, is good. God will not forget our efforts, even if we fail of the result we hoped from them. It was said to David, "Whereas it was in your heart to build a house for my name -- you did well that it was in your heart." We shall have reward, at last, for the good things we sincerely try to do. This should encourage us when we have wrought faithfully, but do not see fruit from our labor.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jr-miller/doing-and-not-doubting/>

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