

INTRO: Welcome to Grace Notes. This is the concluding program on the topic, ‘How to succeed at the most important job of your life’. In case you’ve missed any of this series, let’s review what we’ve covered. As Believers in Jesus, our most important job IN LIFE is to serve as an ambassador – to represent Christ well in word and deed. This is effectively done as we yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Our objective is to tell everyone how they can be reconciled to God through Christ.

Doing our job well pleases our Heavenly Father. We work, not to earn our salvation – Jesus did that for us – but rather to prove that we believe what we say we believe.

Several things displease God – worry, fear, unbelief, disobedience. These all point to a lack of FAITH or TRUST. As we conclude our series let’s again look at why faith is such an important job requirement.

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Everyone is talking these days about how bad the economy is and how we might have to start hoarding food. As Believers, we shouldn’t fall prey to this. King David wrote in Psalm 37:25, “I was young and now I am old, and I have never seen their righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.”

God says in Hebrews 10:38 that the righteous WILL live by faith. We’re considered righteous in God’s sight through the blood Jesus shed on the cross to pay for our redemption. Accepting Christ’s sacrifice as the only way to be in right standing with God places us in this position. It’s then that we can claim His precious promises, one of which is Psalm 1:6...”The Lord watches over the way of the righteous.”

Psalm 34:15 states...

“The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ear is attentive to their cry.” Verse 17 reiterates...”The righteous cry out, the Lord hears them, and He delivers them from ALL their troubles.”

Get that? God delivers us from ALL – not just SOME of our troubles. These are promises. The shed blood of Jesus that makes us righteous is precious to God – that’s how He sees us! How can we ever doubt His care and concern for us?

The Psalmist said it well in Psalm 46:1...

God is our refuge and strength, an EVER PRESENT help in TROUBLE.

We need to believe it and know, as Psalm 27:5 put it, that...

...in the day of TROUBLE, He will keep me safe in His dwelling; He will hide me in he shelter of His tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.

Let's praise Him with a song from Psalm 32:7 that says...

You are my hiding place; You WILL protect me from TROUBLE and surround me with songs of deliverance.

***** YOU ARE MY HIDING PLACE *****

Worry is UNBELIEF in action. TRUST is FAITH in action. To please God, we need to choose to TRUST and not to WORRY.

Alexander Maclaren writes...

Faith came singing into my room, and other guests took flight: Fear and Anxiety, Grief and Gloom sped out into the night.

In Matthew 8:23-27, Jesus again chided the disciples for their little faith, but this time because they were AFRAID when the waves came over them in their boat. Jesus was capable of calming that storm, but they didn't believe it.

Again Maclaren writes...

If faith is not exercised, the true cause lies...in the pride of independence, which says, 'who is Lord over us? Why should we have to depend on Jesus Christ?'

George Mueller once said...

"Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where man's power ends."

WORRY – FEAR – these are both results of trying to do it OUR WAY.

The apostle, Peter, started off well when he got out of the boat to meet Jesus on the water, but he let his eyes wander from Christ. Jesus said, "You of little faith - why did you doubt?"

E. Stanley Jones writes...Faith is not merely you holding on to God, it is God holding on to you. He will not let you go!

Matthew 13:58 explains that Jesus did not do many miracles in His own hometown because of their lack of faith. It's not that He couldn't, He wouldn't, because He judged them unworthy. He was not pleased with them.

On the positive side, Jesus healed the paralytic because his friends had faith (Matthew 9:2).

He healed a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years, because she believed that if she but touched the hem of His garment she would be cured. (Matthew 9:22)

Two blind men's sight was restored according to their faith (Matthew 9:27-34)

A Centurion received healing for his servant. He believed Jesus could accomplish this with just a word. Matthew 8:10 says that Jesus was **ASTONISHED by this Gentile's faith.**

FAITH is like a **MUSCLE; it must be exercised through trials and testings to **GROW**. So, if you're facing them, be thankful. God is training you to do a good job!**

I can't imagine how Paul and Silas must have felt when they were hauled off to prison for preaching the Good News – probably elated that they were suffering for Christ's sake, but surely apprehensive about what awaited them. It was cold, damp, and dark there. Their bruised, bleeding hands and feet were locked in stocks. Yet, they didn't complain – they sang praises to God. Praise brings the presence and the power of God down. It surely did that night. At midnight, there was an earthquake that shook the prison and loosened their stocks. They could have run away but they didn't, and guess what, the

other prisoners didn't either. They must have been so impressed by the disciples' testimony that they stayed, too. What an opportunity they had to witness the love of God as they kept the jailer from killing himself and eventually led him and his family to belief in Christ. He saw a difference in them because of the way they handled their trial. Now that's living by faith!

Are we willing to demonstrate our faith by singing songs and staying put in a difficult situation for the sake of someone else?

We are the Lord's feet, hands, and voice on earth. We need to go where He leads, help those in need and tell them of the love of Jesus.

There's nothing on earth that can compare with the riches we'll receive in Heaven by pleasing the Lord. So, to please God... to give joy to Christ, who died for you...

Be faithful in...

Whatever TASK He's calling you to do

Whatever TEST He's allowing you to go through.

And in return, we can count on God, the GREAT "I AM", our ever present, ever ready MIGHTY DEFENDER to guide us and be with us all the way.

***** MIGHTY TO SAVE *****

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Until then, let your grace notes be a song of praise!