

A SHOT OF FAITH

Driving Your Faith to the Limits

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Introduction

Sometimes, we get to a point where everything seems impossible; our dreams, hopes, visions suddenly become so blur and our faith is tested. Fear takes a hold of us and we become insecure and doubt everything we have believed in.

This 10 day devotional is designed to create a boost in your faith when fear and doubt sets in.

Taking examples from heroes of faith in the bible it provides practical tips on how to overcome fear and reactivate your faith in the trying moments.



SHOOTING UP FAITH

DAY 1



Bible Passages:
Mark 11:23
Hebrews 11:1, 7-13

When drug users take a shot of whatever drug it is they are using, they feel “high” and get this extra boldness, strength and confidence – they feel almost invincible. So how about shooting up some faith into your spirit and get yourself at a spiritual high? How about letting faith be your drug, letting it work through you to produce boldness, strength and confidence? The thing about faith is it produces results that will last unlike drugs.

Jesus said in Mark 11:23 that whatever we say will be done if only we believe in our hearts and do not doubt.

What exactly is faith? Faith is defined in Hebrews 11:1 as being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. It is when we have a sure assurance and deep conviction in our hearts about the things we hope for, having no doubt of their certainty, even though they are not yet visible or tangible.

Faith happens in our hearts but it is proved by our actions. If you say you have faith, then what you say, what you do and how you behave should prove that you have faith indeed. Abraham, one of the greatest heroes of faith in the bible proved his faith by his actions. He put his only son on an altar and was about to sacrifice him to God, he left his home, family, friends and set out for a place he didn't even know! His faith was proved by his actions.


As you go through these 10 days, I encourage you to nurture your faith and make it grow. Faith is like a seed that was deposited in you when you first believed in Jesus. It grows as you act on it. Every time you use your faith, it grows. You use your faith through your words, your actions, your attitude, your behavior. If you are praying for rain, go out of your house with an umbrella, if you want to be a president someday, let your speech now resemble the speech of a president. That is faith!

ACTION POINTS

- Let your words today reflect your faith.
Take out doubt and negativity from your speech
- Take an action of faith today towards something you have been praying and hoping for

PRAYER SHOT

Lord, help my unbelief and give
me the grace to make my faith
grow



THE UPPER ROOM

DAY 2



Bible Passages:

Daniel 6:10

Mark 14:12-26

The upper room is used in several instances in the bible and it is usually a place of privacy. In the bible it was mostly found in the roof of houses and usually it was a private room either for a guest, or for other private purposes. Jesus had the last supper with his disciples in an upper room. It was just before he was going to face the torture of the crucifixion; he had a private dinner there with those closest to him. It was an intimate moment.

In Acts 2, the famous story of the Pentecost, the disciples were gathered together in an upper room, praying and fellowshiping together when the Holy Spirit came upon them in tongues of fire.

The upper room also known as "Cenacle" is a derivative of a Latin word which means "I dine".

You need to find yourself an upper room where you can "dine" with Jesus, have some private and intimate moments with him, talk to him, pour out your heart to him and listen to him. This doesn't have to be in the roof of your house, just find a quiet place where it's going to be just you and Jesus, no one else and make it your "upper room". This is going to be uplifting to your spirit and spending time alone with Jesus will strengthen your faith.

Daniel was faced with a great trial; the king was persuaded to issue a decree that will have anyone who prays to another god be thrown into a den of hungry lions. Daniel knew this, still, he went to his upper room and prayed to God – this was a great act of faith! Remember faith is proved by actions – and even though he was thrown in the den, God protected him and he came out unharmed.

Through the trials and storms you face in life, when the enemy attacks you from every side and you feel like giving up, go to your "upper room" and spend some time with God. Let him be your strength.

ACTION POINT

Find a private and quiet place and spend at least 30 minutes in prayer every day. Focus on Jesus, do more listening and less talking

PRAYER SHOT

Lord, visit me in my upper room as I come to spend time with you, talk to me and strengthen my faith



FACING THE GIANT

DAY 3



Bible Passages:

1Samuel 17:39 – 50

Ephesians 6:11 - 18

In life, we are confronted with 'giants' at some point; situations or circumstances that seem to hover over us and instill fear and insecurity in us. Difficult problems, challenges or trials that intimidate us and make us crawl back and hide in our holes. We become afraid; afraid to step out, afraid to face the 'giant'. But you see, until you confront the giant, it cannot be defeated.

In the famous story of David and the Giant Goliath who intimidated God's people and made them tremble with fear, we can learn a few lessons from David that we need when facing our 'giants'.

First we need to get the right weapons. David rejected Saul's armor because it says he hadn't 'proved' them. The one weapon that has been proven to be effective against the enemy is the word of God. It worked for Jesus when he was tempted, it worked for the apostles, it has worked for many and it will surely work for you. It is sharper than a double edged sword (Hebrews 4:12) and it will destroy the giant. So use the word of God against the giant together with the full armor of God as described in Ephesians 6.

Second, declare what you want to see happen in faith. David declared his victory before it happened in faith (1Sam 17:46). Speak destruction to the giant with boldness, confidence and in faith. Remember faith happens in the heart, but it's proved by words and actions.

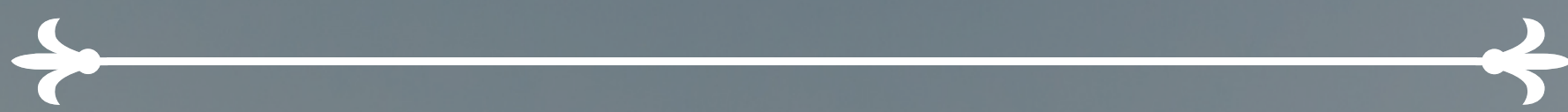
Finally, with the right weapons and the word of faith in your mouth, run towards the giant and defeat it. When Goliath started coming towards David, he didn't run away, he ran towards him instead, with confidence that the Lord was going to deliver him into his hands.

ACTION POINT

What 'giant(s)' do you have in your life that you are afraid to confront? Confront them today in faith

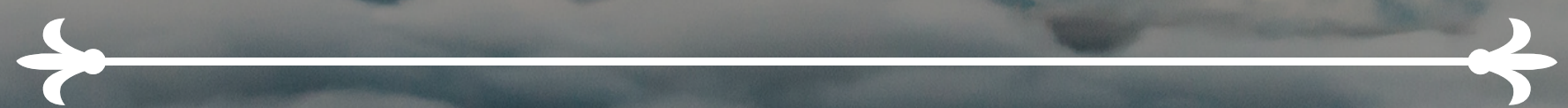
PRAYER SHOTS

- Lord instill in me the courage and boldness to face the giants in my life
- Lord grant me victory over the giants in my life



GO FOR IT

DAY 4



Bible Passages:

Esther 4:11-16

Zechariah 4:6

In life, we have dreams, hopes, aspirations, goals, visions and just things we want to become or desire to achieve. But sometimes we face obstacles, challenges and roadblocks that seem to prevent these things from happening; we get discouraged, afraid and want to give up. In our journey of faith too we face really challenging situations and sometimes we are scared to put our faith to action because we are scared to fail. It could be praying for healing for someone, or starting a business, or even just preaching the good news to someone; we sometimes get doubts in our minds like 'what if they don't get their healing?', 'what if the business fails?', and 'what if they don't believe in what I'm saying?' But until you take the risk and go for it, you will never know what the outcome could have been. All you have to do is trust God and do what you have to do because really it is not by your might, neither is it by your power, but it's by the Spirit of God that it will be done (Zechariah 4:6).

Esther was faced with a challenging situation, a matter of life and death. It was against the law for anyone to approach the king without being summoned. Such a person was to be put to death unless the king extended to them the gold scepter. Esther asked the people to fast for three days and after that she said 'I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.' (Esther 4:16). Esther did what she could do, that was pray and seek God's face, whatever was going to happen, she was ready to face it. She took the risk and went for it. That is faith put to action. God heard her and the king extended the gold scepter to her.

Until you put your faith to action, take risks and overcome your fears, you really would not know what the results could have been or what God is capable to do through you. The situation will remain the same until you take an action to change it.

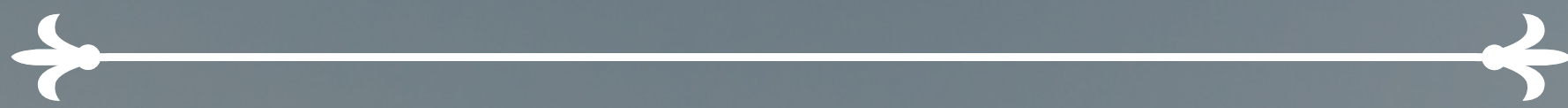
The Spirit God gave you is not a spirit of fear, it is a spirit of power (2Tim 1:7), so do not let fear control you, take big leaps of faith, looking to Jesus who is the author and finisher of your faith (Hebrews 12:2).

ACTION POINTS

- Take risks today towards any goals you have set and push your faith to its limits
- If you have something God laid in your heart to do, take an action towards starting that today

PRAYER SHOT

Dear Lord, help me to
overcome fear and take
risks with my faith



A HOLY INDIGNATION

DAY 5



Bible Passages:
1 Samuel 17:26,
Matthew 11:12,
Matthew 21:12-13

The enemy is always at work, he is a busy being. He never rests; always roaming around, looking, and waiting to pounce on the next available prey. When he attacks, he shows no mercy, he is wicked and there is no good thing in him. That's why you have got to get mad at the enemy!

When he comes at you, let a holy indignation rise up inside of you and declare war on him. Gentleness is not a language the enemy is familiar with. With him, you have got to get violent in the spirit.

David was mad when he heard Goliath defying the people of God and he said 'Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?' How dare he defy God's chosen people? Just like David, get angry at the enemy, he has no right to inflict pain or suffering on you, he has no right to instill fear in you, he has no right to prevent you from becoming what God wants you to become. The spirit you have in you is greater and you have already overcome the enemy through Jesus (1John 4:4) , you have so much power and authority in Jesus, so do not let the enemy bully you just like Goliath did to God's people before David came along.

Jesus got into the temple and saw his father's house turned into a market place, all sorts of wrong dealings were going on there and he got a holy anger in him! He turned the tables of the money changers and drove them out of his father's house. Take a cue from Jesus. Sometimes, you have to get violent with the enemy because he does not give up without a fight. Jesus said the kingdom of God suffers violence, and only the violent take it by force (Matt 11:12). Sometimes we let the enemy wrongfully take what is ours because of ignorance. You have to rise up and take it back from him by force.

ACTION POINT

Get angry at the evil one today
and command him to get his
hands off of everything that
belongs to you

PRAYER SHOT

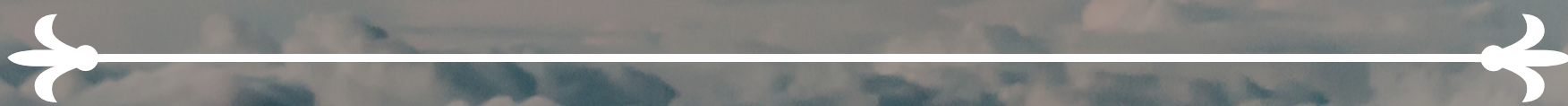
Lord, destroy all the plans of the
enemy against my life and
destiny in the name of Jesus



HALL OF

FAITH

DAY 6



Bible Passages:

Psalms 103

Deuteronomy 3:21-22

When someone does something great and commendable, or achieves big and interesting things, their names or images and achievements are written or put up in a structure known as a 'hall of fame', 'wall of fame' or 'walk of fame'. This stays up and for generations to come people read about them and their great achievements.

It would be a great idea for you to create a 'hall of faith'. A hall of faith will contain the great things God has done for you or through you in the past. The prayers He answered in the past, the struggles and difficult situations you faced but God delivered you from them all and the great things you achieved through the help of God. Looking through your 'hall of faith' will be a great source of encouragement for you and it will be a faith booster when you are facing another struggle that seems to overwhelm you.

When you look back at what God did for you in the past, it will help you put your trust in Him again because if He did it for you once before, He can definitely do it again because God is the same forever, He never changes.

In the first three chapters of Deuteronomy, Moses recounted to the Israelites all they went through in the wilderness and how God was with them, how he threw down kings for them and delivered them. Moses was trying to remind the people just how powerful the God they served is and what He is capable of doing. They had a greater challenge in front of them, they had to go in and possess the land God had given to them; that meant fighting with the people who were temporarily there and overthrowing them. Moses did not want them to be afraid; he wanted them to put their faith in God, so he reminded them of what God had already done. Moses said to Joshua who was going to be their leader "You have seen with your own eyes all that the Lord your God has done...The Lord will do the same...Do not be afraid of them".

Sometimes, we need to look back at all God has done for us and believe that He can still do it again.

ACTION POINTS

- Start creating your 'hall of faith' today by writing at least 5 great things God has done for you in the past. When you are struggling with your faith, go back to them, read them and get encouraged.
- Get a friend or a group of friends to also start a 'hall of faith' and you can share with each other and encourage one another

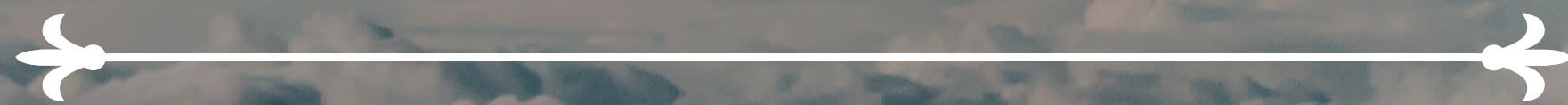
PRAYER SHOT

Thank the Lord for all the great things He has done for you in the past, every answered prayer and every difficult situation He rescued you from



GETTING CHARGED

DAY 7



Bible Passages:

Mark 14:32-37

Matthew 14:13

Just like the batteries of electronic devices need to be charged, your spiritual battery too needs to get charged. Spiritual activity uses up battery and if you do not get your battery charged, you will crash. There is much more going on in the world than meets the eye. There is a great struggle and warfare going on in the spirit realm every day. Every time you overcome a temptation, you use up some spiritual energy, every time you struggle with sin and win, you use up spiritual energy and every time you have to battle in prayer, you use up spiritual energy. So you need to get recharged.

Before any battle, soldiers need to get prepared, they spend months training and putting their armor and weapons together; athletes also spend months training and getting ready before any game they have to play. We also need preparation before we face any battles in life, and because we face attacks from the enemy daily, we always have to stay charged and prepared.

So how do we get charged? The bible tells us that the word of God is light (Psalm 119:105). Light produces energy; the word is a source of spiritual energy to keep us running so we need to study and meditate on God's word daily in order to keep our batteries charged.

Spending time in prayer; worshipping and praising God also gets us charged. Jesus went about preaching the good news and performing miracles, but he always took out time to be alone, away from the crowds where he could pray and recharge his battery.

The Spirit of God also gets us charged. After the spirit of God came upon the apostles, they received so much power and boldness and their faith was shot up to another level. They went about preaching the gospel boldly and fearlessly, performing signs and wonders. They had been in hiding, scared of what the authorities will do to them as followers of Christ. But when the Holy Spirit came, all fear left them and they went about preaching the good news and performing miracles in the name of Jesus.


Your faith will be tested in your walk with God. There will be difficult times when you will feel spent and completely weak. So let the word of God and his spirit keep you charged and ready to face the daily battles and those ahead of you.

ACTION POINTS

- Spend some time today worshipping God; singing songs of praise and adoration unto Him
- Choose any Psalm of praise and use that to worship God throughout the day

PRAYER SHOT

Lord fill me with your Spirit today and as I worship you and meditate on your word, may I be strengthened and charged up to face any battles coming my way fearlessly and courageously.



RIDING ON THE STORMS

DAY 8



Bible Passage:

Acts 8:1-8

The eagle is quite a fascinating bird. One particularly intriguing fact about the eagle is its behavior within a storm. When a storm sets in, the eagle is the only bird that flies straight into the storm. It sets its wings against the strong winds and lets the torrents propel it higher. It rests its wings and lets the storm carry it while it soars – the eagle rides on the storms.

What storms are you facing in life? Maybe you face storms in your marriage or your relationships, storms in your business, at school, at work – there are always storms to face in life. How you face them is what matters. While other birds run from the storm and hide in the trees, the eagle sees it as an opportunity to soar higher. Just like the eagle, do not let the storm ride over you. Instead, you ride on the storm. Let it propel you higher and take you to another level because really every storm you face is actually a gateway into another level in your life. When you go through the storm you come out stronger, wiser and better than how you were before it came along. You discover new strengths that you never even thought you were capable of, you learn new strategies on how to overcome difficulties, you become stronger!

The believers in the book of Acts in the bible are a great example of 'riding on the storms'. They faced fierce persecution for preaching the gospel; they were flogged, locked up in prisons and some were even killed for this. They had to be on the run and were scattered all over – away from their families and homes. They however used this as an opportunity to preach the gospel wherever they went and that is how the gospel began spreading. They faced violent storms but they let these storms take them to another level in their ministry.

When the storms come fiercely upon you, spread your wings and ride on them; the stronger the storm, the higher you will soar.

ACTION POINT

What storm are you facing right now in your life? Do not hide from it. Face it and ride on it by speaking words of faith and by taking actions in faith towards overcoming them

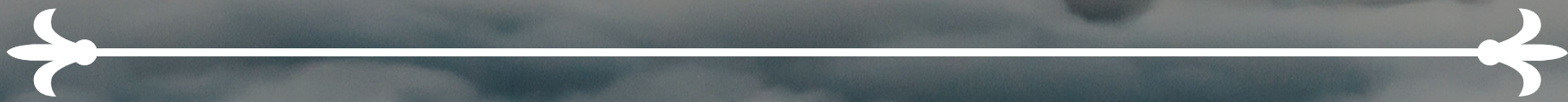
PRAYER SHOTS

- Lord please give me the courage and strength I need to face the storm and ride on it
- Lord do not let the storms ride over me but help me ride over them



KEEP GOING

DAY 9



Bible Passages:

2 Kings 4:18-37

Psalms 23:4, Is 41:10

One of my favorite musicians has a song in which he wrote: "If you catch hell don't hold it, if you're going through hell don't stop...Go ahead, go ahead, don't stop, go ahead, go ahead" (Ron Kenoly)

When the storms and difficulties in life come your way (because they will come!) and you are literally "going through hell", what you mustn't do is give up! Just like Ron Kenoly said: don't stop, keep going! These are the times when your faith is tested the most but at the end of it all, your faith will grow. You will come out stronger and wiser. During those times always remember God's words, his promises. He promised to always be with you and to be by your side when you go through the valley of the shadow of death. Speak these words to yourself and keep your hope and faith alive. You are not expected to have it all together all the time; truth is you will breakdown and cry sometimes, but that's ok! What's most important is you get right back up again to your feet, wipe off those tears and keep going! Whatever you do, don't stay down. Paul wrote to the Ephesians and told them; "...after you have done everything to stand, stand firm" (Eph 6:13b NIV). So stand firm through the trials and keep going!

The Shunamite woman in the Bible verse is a remarkable example of faith that doesn't give up. We can learn a lot from her behavior during her trying period.

First don't panic! Fear is the exact opposite of Faith, but Faith is the antidote of fear. The enemy will always try to use fear to attack you. This woman on hearing the news about her son's death didn't throw a tantrum – as would be typical of any woman getting such news – she was so composed and didn't lose hope. It is amazing that a woman will react the way she did upon hearing that her only son whom she conceived after so many years of marriage had passed away.

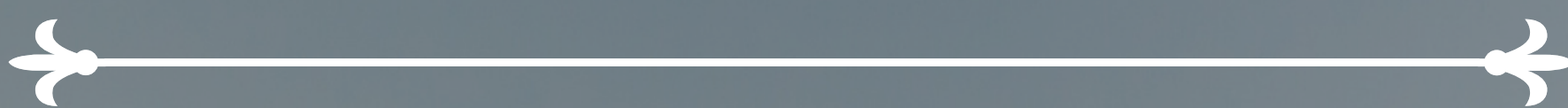
Secondly, she looked to the source of her hope never giving up until she got her son back in her arms again. Until you get through the storm, do not give up!

ACTION POINT

If there is something in your life you've given up on; maybe a business, maybe your marriage, education, whatever it is, I encourage you to take steps today towards making that work again

PRAYER SHOT

Lord I ask you to stay by my side as I go through the valley of the shadow of death. Be my strength and uphold me with your mighty hand



STAY FOCUSED

DAY 10



Bible Passages:
Hebrews 12:1-2
2Corinthians 4:8-10

In ballet and most other dances, balance is fundamental. One technique used by dancers to keep balance when dancing (especially when doing spins) is by picking one stationary spot and focusing on that in order to avoid losing their balance - a technique called "spotting". The goal is to avoid dizziness and keep their balance under control.

When going through life and its ups and downs, it's almost like your being spun in so many directions and sometimes you feel like it is getting out of your control. You must not lose focus in order not to lose your balance and fall off. So what should your focus be on? In Paul's letter to the Hebrews, he asked them to put away everything that will weigh them down, sin that so easily entangles and to run the race with patience and endurance, focusing on Jesus who is the "author and finisher of our faith". Jesus is our focus. Through it all, you must not lose sight of him! Stay focused on him. Paul is a great example of someone who didn't lose focus through all the trials and persecutions he faced. He didn't lose sight of Jesus not even for a moment. At one instance, he said "we are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus..." No matter what he went through, he stayed focused on Jesus and that was his motivation throughout his ministry. At the end of it all, he could proudly say "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2Tim 4:7NIV).

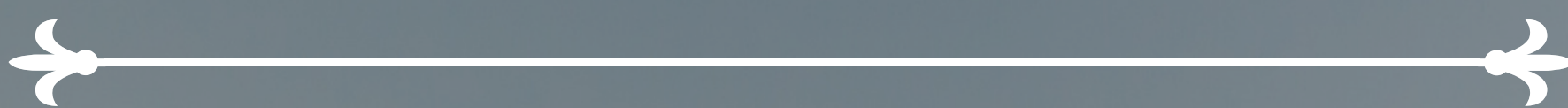
Whatever hardships and trials you go through in life, no matter how hard your faith is tested and how deep and dark the tunnel is, always remember that you've got God by your side and you will get to the light at the end of the tunnel. Just do not lose sight of Jesus along the way. Stay focused on Him!

ACTION POINT

Choose any bible verse(s) and make it(them) your "focus reminder(s)". Every time you feel like you're losing focus, recite it(them) to yourself over and over and over again until you get your focus back

PRAYER SHOT

Lord help me keep my balance by focusing on Jesus the author and finisher of my faith. And please help me to remain focused until you come again



GOD
BLESS
YOU

