

# Developing Faith Muscles

Ken Birks, Pastor/Teacher

## I. Introductory Remarks.

In this message I want to talk about the importance of developing faith muscles through our everyday circumstances. Faith is the essence of the Christian walk and unless we learn how to apply it in our daily lives we will not grow in it as God desires.

**Hebrews 11:6** *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

**Romans 1:17** *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Our day to day lives are to consist of a walk in faith. In order to grow from faith to faith our faith must be exercised on a regular basis. We need to look at the many things we are involved in each day and the problems we come up against as opportunities to exercise our faith.

What kind of a faith picture do you have for your life, family, marriage, job or your business? Do you know what God's will is for you in all of these areas? If so, then you can begin to apply faith. God's will is for you to prosper in all of these areas.

**3 John 1:2** *Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.*

- **Faith's Definition** – *Hebrews 11:1 Amplified Bible.*

*Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title-deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality--faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses. (Amplified Version)*

Using this definition of faith we should be able to come up with a whole new vision and purpose for our lives and what we can actually accomplish through faith. You do not have to settle for your life as it is. God wants you, through faith, to come into the fullness of what He has for you.

Faith involves assurance and conviction. When your faith is solid, it stands under every situation and supports it with assurance. It is being convinced, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that God will take charge of the situation.

- **Faith always relates to something yet future. The word "hope" points to the future.**
- **We must see tomorrow in light of God's abilities, not our own.**
- **Faith will prepare us for the adventure instead of fear, because of our assurance that God can handle all things.**
- **Faith has as its object "things not seen". Faith is fixing our attention on what we cannot see. It is thinking broadly, beyond the realms of natural expectation.**

The walk of faith and the exercising of our faith is found in being spiritually minded rather than carnally minded. The natural thing to do in many situations is to approach it through a carnal approach, but that approach does not lead to peace. It only adds to the stress of the situation.

***Romans 8:5-6*** *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

Before we were saved our minds were trained to respond according to our carnality and natural reasoning. But now that we have been born again and made new God wants us to learn how to live and function in this life according to faith and being spiritually minded. This means that we no longer lean upon our own understanding.

***Proverbs 3:5-7*** *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil.*

As Christians, we are now a people of faith, which means God wants us to move in realms of faith rather than unbelief. Our belief system has to be firmly established in what we believe God wants for our lives. We must see our lives as He sees them.

Do you ever wonder why we so quickly receive those things that are negative and unwanted in our lives? It is because doubt and unbelief have been firmly entrenched in our lives and when we give place to it, it comes almost

immediately. What would happen if belief and faith were as strongly entrenched in our lives as doubt and unbelief used to be? Watch out!

How do you remain a person of faith when everything around you speaks of unbelief and doubt? We live in a negative world of uncertainties.

This doubt, unbelief and lack of certainty is exhibited and projected in the people that we often find ourselves in association with. Are we influencing them or are they influencing us? Big Question! We are to be the salt and the light in our society to influence their lives in a positive and meaningful way.

## **II. Exercises that Develop Faith Muscles.**

In order for our faith muscles to grow they must be exercised on a daily basis. Our growth in faith is very similar to the natural growth and the deterioration of our bodies. When we were young our bodies just grew.

As we begin to age we must exercise and eat right in order to preserve the strength of our bodies. As young Christians we grow very easily in faith, but as time goes by it becomes more of a struggle. We now have to exercise our faith more strategically by doing faith exercises.

### **1. Begin Every Day with a Faith Picture of what You See God Doing.**

***Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

Begin to get a faith picture of what you see God doing in your lives, whether it's your marriage, the disciplining of your children, relationships, finances, work, business or whatever.

As you meditate and pray about your day expect God to speak to your heart what He has in store for you. What do you see Him doing in every aspect of your life?

***Proverbs 3:5-6** Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways **acknowledge** Him, And He shall direct your paths.*

### **2. Begin to Confess to One Another the Things You See God Doing.**

***2 Corinthians 4:13** But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak....*

**Philemon 1:6** *that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgement of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.*

**Romans 10:8** *But what does it say? "The word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach).*

What do you desire to see God doing in your lives on a daily basis? You must confess these things to one another and to God. Make your faith declarations!

### **3. Faith Comes By Looking For and Finding the Biblical Solution.**

**Romans 10:17** *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

**Joshua 1:8** *"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

Learn to go to God's Word and study it for the help that you need. It has all of the answers contained in it. The Bible is about people like you and me, who went through the same kind of conflicts that we go through. It is the word of God that establishes our belief and faith. We must stand on the word.

### **4. Your Faith Picture Must Be Put Into Action.**

**James 2:14-26** *....if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save Him?...Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.... faith without works is dead.... Do you see that faith working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?*

#### **Illustration:**

A Christian man worked each day transporting tourists across a lake. On occasion he would present the Gospel and its implications for life in a most unusual way. He had painted the word "Faith" on one of the oars of his rowboat and "Works" on the other. When they got quite far from shore, he would stop, then, beginning to row with only the one oar marked "faith," he would cause the boat to go in circles to the left. Reversing the process, he would pull on the other oar marked "works," and they would circle in the opposite direction. By this time the bewildered passengers were waiting for an explanation. This afforded him a wonderful opportunity to give them the truth concerning discipleship and the Christian life. He always concluded by saying, "You see, neither faith nor works can stand alone. They are twins that cannot be separated!" (*James 2:20*)

## Do you want serious changes in your every day life?

- You have to apply the principles of being a good husband or wife as well as the faith.
- You have to apply the principles of training your children right as well as believing and confessing for it.
- Do you want to see your financial situation turned around? You have to begin applying the principles of financial integrity and giving as well as believing, confessing and hoping.

**It all works together.**

### 5. Expect Changes To Occur.

After you have firmly established a faith picture of what you desire in your lives, begin to expect a real change to occur. It takes a heart of anticipation and expectation for faith to be fully released.

**Mark 11:24** *"Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them."*

- Do you want to see your marriage change? Begin expecting it to.
- Do you want to see your ability to discipline your children change and become more consistent? Begin expecting it to.
- Do you want to see your financial situation change? Begin expecting it to.
- Do you want to see increase in your business? Begin expecting it!

### III. Concluding Remarks.

Life should be lived like this: Yesterday is a cancelled check; we cannot negotiate it again. Tomorrow is a promissory note; it can't be utilized until it arrives. Today is cash in hand; it must be invested.

The psalmist expressed this way: *"This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it"*.

**Remember:** Faith is like a muscle.... it must be exercised every day.