



FAITH- FOCUSED

7 Mindset
Shifts

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Introduction

If you're going through a challenge, don't get stuck wondering why you're there. Focus on Jesus and get solution-minded.

There's a lot of great teaching available on the topic of faith. God's Word shows us that we are not just passive pawns on this planet, destined to live out our lot in life. We partner with God through our faith, which can move mountains and bring about incredible miracles.

Unfortunately, some are misled to believe that if you have any problems, you must have a lack of faith, and they judge people who are struggling.

Jesus didn't teach us that we can avoid all problems if we just have enough faith.

In fact, He told us plainly that this world has trouble, although I do want to point out that He did not say God was behind that trouble. This world has plenty of trouble of its own.

This misbelief about faith is very destructive. If we are bent on judging people who are going through hard times, some who are struggling will hide it from the very people who are supposed to be giving them the help and encouragement they need. Others will frantically look for a deeper cause when things go wrong. Although it's important to assess if your choices are contributing to your problems, sometimes storms hit that have nothing to do with your choices.

"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

John 16:33 (NLT)

If you're going through a challenge, don't get stuck wondering why you're there.

Remember that having a problem doesn't necessarily mean you're on the wrong track. After all, Paul had plenty of faith and yet he was whipped, beaten and driven out of town regularly. You may just need to **press on, focus on Jesus and get solution-minded**. You have all you need within you to overcome!

Now, let's jump into seven practical ways you can shift your mindset and stay focused on your faith.

Deal With Doubt

Remember God's track record and begin to praise and meditate on His promises!

Do you ever have times when you doubt God or His promises? You're not alone. **We all struggle with doubt sometimes.** Even the great John the Baptist had a season of doubt.

One day Jesus approached John as he was baptizing people in the river. Suddenly John saw Holy Spirit descend on Jesus like a dove—the very sign John had been waiting for to reveal “the Chosen One of God” (John 1:34, NLT).

Some time later, John had a moment of weakness when he was in jail and his chances of getting out were slim. As he sat in his cell, he questioned if Jesus really was “the one,” even though he had seen the sign firsthand. So John sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus, “Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?” (Luke 7:19, NLT).

Then he [Jesus] told John's disciples, “Go back to John and tell him what you have seen and heard—the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.”

Luke 7:22 (NLT)

It's interesting to read how Jesus responded. He didn't get upset or make any big claims; He just asked them to examine the evidence. In Luke 7:22, it was like He was saying, “Take a look at my track record and decide for yourself.”

If John the Baptist needed a reminder to look at Jesus' track record, you will too.

Don't get down on yourself when you doubt. Just remember the miracles God has done in your life and in the lives of those around you. Like John, we can so quickly forget—but we combat doubt by reminding ourselves of His power in our lives. When you're going through a hard time, doubt can cause you to wonder if you really heard from God correctly. You may question if you were meant to start your business or set out on the career path you're on. If you're struggling in your marriage, you may wonder if you made the right decision.

Those doubts can seem even worse at nighttime, when worry and fear seem to have an easier time getting their tentacles around you.

When you have doubts, the Bible teaches you to do two things:

1. Remember the great things God has done.
2. Praise God.

Isaiah 61:1-3 says that you can trade that heavy, stressed out feeling for a praise-filled attitude. When you praise God for what He's done, for who He is and for what He's going to do, the heaviness lifts and is replaced with joy.

As you praise God, you focus on Him instead of the problem. You may still need to walk through difficulty, but you gain the strength you need to do it when you praise Him and spend time in His presence.

It's so simple, yet we forget it so often. If you're struggling today, don't look at the storm in front of you. Don't allow your feelings to take over. Decide to praise Him instead, and watch how your day turns around.

Spend Time With God

You need God's presence to handle what's ahead of you!

Do you ever forget to involve God in your life? It's important to plan and strategize, but if that's all you rely on, you're in trouble. Trying to live life on just your own strength and ability is stressful.

As believers, we can turn to God for the strength, power and ability we need.

All we need to do is spend a bit of time in His presence and that grace streams into our lives. The Bible says that we are blessed as a result—happy, fortunate and to be envied. But when we think we have to do it all ourselves, it only leads to burnout.

You have been called to do amazing things for God, but the only way you will make it in this life is if you continually rely on the power and ability God has given you.

Even Jesus needed to spend time alone with God, so you'll definitely need to as well!

You need God's presence to handle what's ahead of you. With Him, "nothing [is or ever] shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37, AMP). Jesus said you'll have problems in this world, but not to worry because He has overcome the world (John 16:33). He has all the power you need, so spend some time with Him and that power and ability will permeate your life.

God is our refuge and strength [mighty and impenetrable], a very present and well-proved help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains be shaken and slip into the heart of the seas, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its roaring.

Psalms 46:1-3 (AMP)

When you get up each morning, start your day with a prayer that goes something like this: **"Father, thank You for giving me the power and ability to be the person You made me to be."**

God's power and ability in your life isn't something you can earn. Jesus already earned it for you, so all you need to do is come to God humbly and ask for it.

Set Goals

You need to pray—of course—but then do everything within your power as you anticipate a positive outcome.

Working toward your goals while also believing good things will come your way is such an important mindset shift.

Many times we think that prayer involves asking God for something and then waiting for Him to come through. Sometimes we even think that doing something about the problem ourselves shows a lack of faith. Actually, that's not true.

Early on in our married life, my wife Sally and I were in need of three hundred extra dollars one month. We agreed together in prayer that our need would be met, and then I asked my boss for a few extra shifts at work. I was able to put in a few hours here and there and our financial need was met.

Some would say that I demonstrated a lack of faith in that situation because I didn't wait for God to meet my need in a spectacular way, but I disagree. I don't think God wants us to pray and then just sit around, waiting for the cheque to roll in.

In fact, Ephesians 6:13 teaches us something very different. It says that **after you've done all, then you stand!**

Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Ephesians 6:13 (NKJV)

You don't have to sit around waiting for miracles to happen. You need to pray—of course—but then do **everything within your power as you anticipate a positive outcome.**

God will bless the work of your hands. He multiplies your efforts, but a million times nothing is still nothing. Put some effort in, no matter how small it may seem, and you'll be amazed at what God can do!

Remember the Finished Work

God has already released the miraculous into you.

So many Christians today are still caught in an Old Testament pattern of praying. They beg and plead with God because they think it's up to God to release miracles into their lives.

Before Jesus came along, things worked that way. But under the new agreement that Jesus made possible, it is not that way at all. **God has already released the miraculous into you.** You don't have to beg Him for something He's already given you.

After you give your life to Jesus, God lives in you. In the Old Testament, His presence was housed in a tent. Later He made His earthly home in a tabernacle. But today, He dwells inside you. He's not somewhere up in Heaven, so you don't have to try to call the miraculous down.

He's in you, and He's greater than any negative force that could ever come against you. He's bigger than anything that would try to prevent you from living the good life—a life filled with joy, healing and prosperity.

If you're not experiencing God's best in your life right now—whether that is in the area of health, financial prosperity, peace in your relationships or any other promise He's made—God is not the one who is delaying that promise. He is not withholding anything from you.

God has already released that promise into your life. Everything you need to take hold of is in you. This is your time to believe it. No matter what challenges you're facing, God is greater... and He lives in you. **You have what it takes to overcome!**

Believe for More

God gave you a desire for more, but you need faith to achieve it.

Wired into every human being is a desire to do more, experience more, accomplish more and have more. It isn't wrong. Think about it; without this desire, we would all still be living in caves and tents. It only becomes a problem if you let it overtake the number one spot in your life.

Some would argue that wanting more is greed, but Jesus came so you could have life—abundant life (John 10:10)! And think about it... you may be happy with your current income, but how many more people could you help if your income continued to increase? Having a marriage that is stable may seem “good enough,” but it's even better to grow a marriage that inspires others to go after building an awesome relationship with the love of their life!

Start going for it! Talk and act as though you really believe you will have what God says you can have. This doesn't mean you have to do anything crazy like toss out all your medications. Just start thanking God every day for His promises, and then take action. **Believe and then do what you need to do to go to that next level.**

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.

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

Here's how faith works. Let's say you begin to believe for more in an area of your life. Maybe you want closer relationships, better finances, healing or more joy. As you become more convinced that you can have what God promised you, you start to act on that belief, and that area begins to improve.

You enjoy that improvement for a while, but before long it stops being exciting. It becomes your new normal... and again your heart begins to cry out for more. Something within you will always drive you toward what you don't yet have. Some would say that you should just be satisfied with where you are, but **remaining stagnant actually shows a lack of faith.** And Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith, it is impossible to please God. **God gave you a desire for more, but you need faith to achieve it.**

You see, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). So if you stay at one level, you don't need faith. You already have everything you hoped to have. **Since you can't please God without faith, always go for more!**

Your growth should never end. **As you do things differently while expecting great results, an exciting sense of passion builds from within.** God is cheering you on! You don't please Him by settling in life. He wants you to experience more, whatever that “more” is for you.

Refuse to Settle

When you meditate on God's promises and picture them in your life, you won't settle for anything less than God's best.

A heart that believes won't settle.

Faith is not mental assent. Mental assent is agreeing with something in your mind, but you can't depend on your mind alone. Your mind relies on reasoning, which will try to talk you out of your miracle.

When you decide to believe, reasons why you think things can't change will pop into your head. For example, if you're diagnosed with cancer, you might justify that you somehow had it coming because it runs in the family. If your teenagers are struggling, you might reason that you deserve to get a taste of what you put your parents through because you had a few difficult years.

Even if you succeed in convincing your mind of what God says, **there's no power in mental assent**. You need to believe in your heart, which involves being able to picture it coming into your life.

Whatever God has promised gets stamped with the Yes of Jesus. In him, this is what we preach and pray, the great Amen, God's Yes and our Yes together, gloriously evident. God affirms us, making us a sure thing in Christ, putting his Yes within us. By his Spirit he has stamped us with his eternal pledge—a sure beginning of what he is destined to complete.
2 Corinthians 1:20–22 (MSG)

You see, Jesus died on a cross and paid the price so that you and I could walk in God's blessing. **The answer when you ask for any promise of God is always yes.** He wants you to experience His promises even more than you do.

Religion will try to make you accept that whatever will be, will be. **But if you meditate on God's promises and picture them in your life, you won't settle for anything less than God's best.**

Shake off the religious mindset. Resist anything that tries to limit you. And if people say "It can't be done" when you're going for a great goal with God, prove them wrong!

Remember Your Source

God meets your needs according to what He has to offer.

Does God lack anything?

If a 14-year-old girl holding a little baby stopped you on the street and asked you for money to buy milk for her baby, what would you do? If you could afford it, you'd probably buy her supper as well. And if she were homeless, you'd likely call the nearest shelter to find her a place to stay. Just meeting one small part of her need wouldn't feel like enough when you have more to offer. In other words, you would meet her need according to what you had to give.

God also meets your needs according to what He has to offer.

And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from His glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19 (NLT)

Does God lack anything? Does a financial need scare Him? His streets are paved with gold! Does healing overwhelm Him? He breathed life into all of creation! He doesn't just want to keep you alive, He wants you to thrive pain-free and filled with energy, passion, joy and peace. He doesn't want one cell cancerous or one cell functioning below optimum. God doesn't fulfill your needs from the supply you can see in your world.

He meets your needs using His endless supply, from His glorious riches. Even if your needs seem gigantic to you, they are miniscule to Him.

By the "power that is at work within us" because of Jesus, God is "able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams]" (Ephesians 3:20, AMP). **God doesn't just want your needs met. He wants them met exceedingly, so He's already placed what you need within you.**

Conclusion

While staying grateful within your current circumstances, you can sow seed for a different harvest.

Don't just accept your poor circumstances.

Many people think that Christians are supposed to just accept the lot they've been given in life. They would argue that it's God's will that some are poor and others are sick, so we just need to learn to be content.

Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.

Philippians 4:11 (NKJV)

Sometimes they use today's scripture to justify this belief, but I want you to notice the word "state." Paul was referring to a timeframe—a period or season of life. Other translations use the word "circumstances" instead, and circumstances change. They are not locked in for life.

Of course you need to be content in every season. If you're going through a hard time, you can find things to be grateful for, but that doesn't mean you have to accept it for the rest of your life. **Where does faith come in if we just accept poor circumstances?** I know that bad things happen, and we need to find joy in our relationship with God through it all, but where in God's Word do you find that He wants you to settle for "good enough?"

While staying grateful within your current circumstances, you can sow seed for a different harvest.

Joy doesn't come from a nice house or a fat income. It's not attached to whether you have an entry-level position or you're the CEO. You find joy in your relationship with Jesus, but there can still be a drive within you that says, "I want to experience more of God and do even more with Him."

If you're facing a hard time, you will overcome it. It's just a state, a season, a circumstance. Continue to believe and picture yourself enjoying the incredible life He promised you!