

Cornerstone Conversations

What do you picture when you hear the word *faith*?

One of my mental pictures of faith in action is the memory of my two-year-old son, Stephen, standing halfway up the steps of our house, waiting eagerly for his dad to walk past the bottom of the stairs, suddenly he would shout “Dad catch me” and he would hurl himself into mid air. In that moment Stephen was in a major crisis of faith. Can he trust that his dad is powerful enough to catch him if he jumps? And does he trust that his dad’s character is good—that he will keep his promise to catch him?

After a moment of contemplation, Stephen acts on his faith, jumping into his dad’s arms! Giggling, he’s ready to climb up the stairs and do it again . . . and again . . . and again!

That’s what faith is. It’s putting your belief and trust in something or somebody outside of yourself, and then acting on that belief. Thinking about the examples given in Hebrews 11:1-40, for instance, Abraham, venturing from his home to the unfamiliar, trusting a promise that wouldn’t materialize for decades. How about that same patriarch, placing his beloved son, Isaac, on the altar, trusting that somehow God would either provide an alternate sacrifice or raise his son from the dead? Or think about Moses, choosing to leave behind the pleasures and power of the pharaoh’s palace to shepherd a group of grumblers out of slavery into the Promised Land. Step by step and day by day Moses acted on his faith in a promise that wouldn’t even completely materialize until after his death. The writer of Hebrews recounts these and many other examples of trust in this “Hall of Faith” chapter.

Of course, acting on faith isn’t always easy. It calls us to step away from what is comfortable and safe and, like a two-year-old halfway up the stairs, looking into unknown and unfamiliar circumstances. Maybe it’s a challenge to surrender our finances to God’s control, a career change, a move overseas, or waiting patiently on the Lord for the right spouse. It may be forgiving an offender or risking something for the sake of integrity or purity. Whatever the case, when God nudges our heart beyond what we can manage and manipulate on our own, we have an opportunity to act on the faith that we profess to believe.

The questions we face are as simple as the question in my son’s little heart when he’s on those stairs. Can we trust that our Father is powerful enough? And do we trust that He is good? The answer to both questions, if we understand and believe the teaching of God’s Word, is a resounding “Yes!” Our all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present God can handle every situation we face. He is the very essence and definition of what is good. He will always do what is right and we can trust Him to ultimately not let us fall or fail.

What I like best is that Hebrews 11:6 tells us that faith triggers a response of pleasure in God’s heart. As we demonstrate our trust in Him, He is not apathetic or indifferent, but actually delights in our belief in Him. In fact, as His children, the writer says, we cannot please Him without faith! It is impossible.

I don’t know what “step” you are standing on today. But I do know the character of the Father who is calling you to act on your faith in Him. I invite you to the pleasure of trusting Him today. Come on jump! It will be fine!

Rev'd. Linda