

## ASSURANCE IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

© Mark Beaird 2012

### **Text: Hebrews 11:7-9 (NIV)**

**7** By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

**8** By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. **9** By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

Sometimes, walking by faith can feel like a long and lonely walk through the darkness. It's easy to have faith when all is well. It's easy to have a good perspective when we look back over the years and see how God has provided. But, during those times when you are uncertain and facing a path that offers no apparent assurance, that is when we need assurance the most.

The good news is that God's Word and the Holy Spirit offer assurance and help in our time of need.

### **I. WHAT I KNOW WHEN I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING**

#### **A. I know my faith is in Jesus Christ.**

**Romans 5:2-4 (NIV)** **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; **4** perseverance, character; and character, hope.

#### **B. I know God is good—all the time.**

**Romans 8:27-29 (NIV)** **27** And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. **28** And

we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. **29** For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

### **C. I know God gives me strength.**

**Philippians 4:11-13 (NIV)** **11** I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. **12** I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. **13** I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

## **II. WHAT I CAN DO WHEN I CAN'T DO ANYTHING**

### **A. We can call out**

#### **1 John 5:14-15**

**14** This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. **15** And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

### **B. We can dig in**

**James 5:7-9 (NIV)** **7** Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. **8** You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. **9** Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

### **C. We can stand still.**

**Ephesians 6:10-17 NIV** 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

## **III. WHAT I CAN SEE WHEN I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING**

### **A. I can see the refining process at work.**

**1 Peter 1:7-9 (NIV)** 7 These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

**Hebrews 11:1-3 (NIV)** “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. 2 This is what the ancients were commended for. 3 By faith we

understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."

### **B. I can see there is always hope in Christ.**

**Hebrews 10:19-25 (NIV)** **19** Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, **20** by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, **25** not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

### **CONCLUSION**

"Each of these people [in Faith's Hall of Fame] demonstrated a life of faith lived out. They did not get the promise of the land in their lifetime, but they received so much more—a relationship with God and a place in eternity. Faith is beyond mere belief; it is allowing our confidence in Him for daily living to stretch us beyond what we think we can do, and God will reward us for doing so." -Dr. Richard J. Krejcir

### **Illustration:**

One night a house caught fire and a young boy was forced to flee to the roof. The father stood on the ground below with outstretched arms, calling to his son, "Jump! I'll catch you." He knew the boy had to jump to save his life. All the boy could see, however, was flame, smoke, and blackness. As can be imagined, he was afraid to leave the roof. His father kept yelling: "Jump! I will catch you." But the boy protested, "Daddy, I can't see you." The father replied, "But I can see you and that's all that matters."

**Study Note:**

The context to this faith is that it is connected to hope. Hope is not desire or a wish as we use the term today, like we hope our football team wins, rather it is a confidence and trust that God's promise and Jesus is real and guaranteed. It is an assurance, as in an anchor for our soul and life. This hope is also a focus point for us to be successful with our faith and life, if we just focus on our problems and only worry on it; we accomplish nothing, if we focus on Christ for His empowerment we succeed. Yet, real faith is still trusting what is not always seen and still believing our God! Real faith constitutes who we are, that what we believe has become more than just a view and a mindset; it has become who we are and what we do. Our authentic faith is secured in Christ, which starts at our acceptance of His transforming power of grace and is fueled when we realize no matter what happens, *all things work for good* for His glory. We can have confidence and trust because Christ personally loves, cares for, and deals with us. We have Him in our lives for daily empowerment and living so we can stretch beyond what we think is common sense, and have hope so we can be active in Him. This is not just an intellectual or academic way of thinking, although we do need to believe; it is the exercise of what we accept as true so we will go out and do. What God gives us and what prospects He brings can be seen as opportunities to learn, grow, and serve, not just in concept, but in action. Then our faith becomes righteousness because we trust and believe and grow to be limitless in Christ (Matt. 6:33; John 14:9; Rom 8). - -Dr. Richard J. Krejcir