

Expanding God's Reach

Developing a dynamic faith that defines future generations



Introduction

Is your faith strong enough to inspire the next generation?

Living by faith means living with unwavering confidence in God, rooted in deep conviction from Scripture. This means resolutely believing in the possibilities of God rather than the setbacks of our past.

Too often, I've found myself living too apprehensively to boldly take risks to change, to discover, and to pursue new endeavors with God. I fear if I do take these risks, setbacks from my past will be repeated in the future. This is a defensive mindset absent of faith and ignorant of God's passionate determination to give people hope for the future (Jeremiah 29:11).

To do our part in expanding God's reach to the next generation and beyond, we must develop

deep conviction rooted in the Bible. When we embrace and live with biblical conviction, it generates genuine faith that merely holding onto religious or moral principles cannot produce. The evidence of this kind of faith is obedience to and reliance on God, which lead to dynamic change (James 2).

Dynamic faith is what sets apart those who inspire the next generation from those whose lives drift towards religious irrelevance. This study will help us develop a dynamic faith in God to ignite change to generations beyond tomorrow!

Dynamic Faith Can't Be Contained

“Lord, you have always been our eternal home, our hiding place from generation to generation.”

– Psalm 90:1 TPT

- God thinks in terms of generation to generation when it comes to his purpose of changing and saving lives. He doesn't believe his reach and vision should stop or be limited to just one generation, but expand beyond to future generations!
- When we grow up or spend an extended period of time around church, it is easy to become religious rather than faithful.
- The religious focus on following rules and modifying behavior, instead of building the kind of dynamic faith in God that changes lives and influences generations.
- Has religiosity replaced your faith?
- To expand God's reach we must develop a dynamic faith from the Bible. It is only this kind of faith that ignites tangible change that lasts, leading to defining future generations!

17 O God, you have taught me from my earliest childhood, and I constantly

*tell others about the wonderful things you do. 18 Now that I am old and gray, do not abandon me, O God. Let me **proclaim your power to this new generation**, your mighty miracles to **all who come after me**. 19 Your righteousness, O God, **reaches to the highest heavens**. You have done such wonderful things. Who can compare with you, O God?*

- Psalm 71:17-19 NLT

- Genuine gratitude fuels genuine faith.
- When my dad was battling with terminal cancer, my relationship with him deeply changed. This was only possible with the help of spiritual friends who had a greater faith than I had that my father and I could ever become close.
- My friends helped me with the Scriptures to take personal responsibility for the choices I had made that caused distance between my father and me. Not only did God help us find healing in our relationship, but my dad also decided he wanted to build a personal relationship with God and he became a Christian before he passed!
- This was a defining moment that ignited in me a deep gratitude for God that could not be contained. My gratitude for God gave me the faith to help my cousin and later my older sister become Christians as well.
- Does your gratitude for God compel you to share with as many friends and family as possible about the greatness and power of God and what he has done in your own life? Why or why not?

⁵ I remember your genuine faith, for you share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother, Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you. ⁶ This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. ⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

- 2 Timothy 1:5-7 NLT

- Only “genuine faith” continues to live from from one generation to another, whereas superficial faith and religiosity remain limited to an individual.
- Without genuine faith, God’s reach is limited (*Mark 6:5-6*).
- The evidence of “genuine faith” is the “fanning into flame” of God’s power, love and self-discipline not only in your life, but igniting these spiritually transformative qualities into the lives of others.
- Do you have a genuine faith? Or do you tend to just go through the right religious motions? Does your faith expand God’s influence into the lives of others?

Faith Is God’s Language

6 And without faith living within us it would be impossible to please God. For we come to God in faith knowing that he is real and that he rewards the faith of those who give all their passion and strength into seeking him.

- Hebrews 11:6 TPT

- Faith is essential to pleasing God. It is the language through which we connect with him.
- Without faith we cannot attach to God nor understand anything he’s saying, because faith is God’s language!
- Do you have greater faith after you’ve finished spending time with God - reading the Bible and praying honestly - than you had before you started?
- What keeps you from hearing God’s voice, understanding God’s message, and allowing your heart to be reached by him?
- We cannot spiritually influence or reach others, unless we’ve allowed God to reach us -



this takes having a heart that's free of doubt, and full of faith!

Eliminate Hidden Unbelief

12 So search your hearts every day, my brothers and sisters, and make sure that none of you has evil or unbelief hiding within you. For it will lead you astray, and make you unresponsive to the living God. 13 This is the time to encourage each other to never be stubborn or hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

- Hebrews 3:12-13 TPT

- Unbelief and sin make our hearts unresponsive to God. We also learn from this scripture that unbelief and sin *hide* within us; we have to search them out, because they aren't always easy to see.
- There are many times I've been stubborn toward change and stubborn toward listening to truth told to me by spiritual friends. In these instances, I've often made excuses for why I can't change or why I am having difficulty listening to spiritual feedback.
- But the truth is, unbelief often stems from refusing to face and deal with the personal sins that have deceived me and those I'm being deceitful about. These sins make me unresponsive to God's plan and unbelieving of God's Word.
- When my heart is in this condition, the Word cannot penetrate nor take root to develop biblical conviction that would expand into a dynamic faith and fruitful life. (Matthew 13:22). This is why searching for and uprooting hidden sin daily is essential to having a heart that's capable of believing.
- Do you search your heart daily and allow spiritual friends to help rid your heart of hidden sins and doubts?
- When we eliminate stubborn unbelief and hidden sin from our hearts, God's influence and vision can flow through our lives to inspire those around and beyond us!

No Heart Is Out of Reach

20 “You don’t have enough faith,” Jesus told them. “I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible

- **Matthew 17:19-20 NLT**

- Jesus tells us that nothing is too great or too far for God’s reach, if we would just have even a “mustard seed” amount of faith!
- Often when we think of mountains we envision something external, rather than the internal mountains of the heart – those sins or chronic issues that keep our hearts **stuck** in our past, **stubborn** towards change, or **scornfully** apathetic.
- These 3 “S’s” are the mountains that only God can move when we choose to have faith in his power and the Scriptures, rather than human strength or strategies.
- Anytime I find myself shaken, stubborn or stagnant, it is always because of a mountain that I don’t want to face or admit – such as a mountain of cynicism, character weakness, circumstances beyond my control, or unrepentant sin in my life. Only God can move us beyond these mountains.
- Have you considered that the size of the “mountains” obstructing God’s power from reaching and moving in your life is equivalent to the size of your unbelief?
- Do you blame your circumstances or human limits more than you believe in God’s power and possibilities?
- What would it look like for you to have a mustard seed size of faith?

17-19 **By faith**, Abraham, at the time of testing, offered Isaac back to God. **Acting in faith**, he was as ready to return the promised son, his only son, as he had been to receive him—and this after he had already been told, “Your descendants shall come from Isaac.” Abraham figured that if God

wanted to, he could raise the dead. In a sense, that's what happened when he received Isaac back, alive from off the altar. 20 By an act of faith, Isaac reached into the future as he blessed Jacob and Esau.

- Hebrews 11:17-20 MSG

- Abraham's example of faith deeply and permanently reached Isaac.
- Years later, Isaac would personalize his father's deep trust in God by acting on his own faith, raising his sons to understand and trust that any blessing in their life would come from God alone.
- The genuine faith of Abraham - one man - not only ignited faith in his son Isaac, but in turn would reach millions in the future beyond them!
- What act of faith and personal change is God calling you to embrace, so that he can transform not only your life, but many others he has destined you to reach?