

## Pastor Andrew's Weekly Thought

### Exercising Our Faith

**Psalm 103:1-2** Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits--

Many Christians think that if you have great faith, you will overcome difficult circumstances automatically. Your great faith will somehow automatically rise up and the difficulties will evaporate. Some Christians think that faith is the good feeling you have that will help give you the confidence to face your problems. But faith is not something automatic or necessarily something that gives you a good feeling. We must have faith all the time. And we need to exercise faith all the time. Yes, faith needs to be exercised.

Whether the Psalmist was feeling good or feeling down, he tells his soul to praise the Lord. If he were feeling down, he is summoning his soul to praise the Lord no matter his feeling. If he were feeling good, he is still commanding all his inner being to praise the Lord. So whether you are feeling good or bad, you need to exercise your faith. Praising and thanking God is a command, and we do it in obedience no matter what our feelings may be.

I don't usually wake up in the morning ready to praise the Lord, but I understand the Scripture and my faith enough to just praise and thank the Lord anyway. I sing songs or hymns which help. I recall Scripture that affirms who God is and what He has done and speak those words out to Him in praises. Then I recall all the good things that happened recently and thank Him for His tokens of love and faithfulness. Does it make a difference for me by doing this? Yes, it does. It surely focuses my eyes on Him, kindles my faith, and lifts up my soul. I know that all I have said are true and He is with me no matter how I feel. Then I continue with my devotion.

I know that it is very easy for Christians to just follow our emotion and to be governed by it. If you wake up one morning feeling down to find your devotion dry and meaningless, you may be saying, "What's the point? I'm getting nothing out of it." And with that you may give up and allow a negative mindset to dominate the day. With the pandemic and the CMCO over our heads, some of us may feel this way perpetually. We only see negative things and remain in foul moods. We need to conquer and overcome the dark clouds above our heads. We do this by exercising our faith.

The Psalmist says, "*Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him*" (Ps. 42:5). The Psalmist speaks to his own soul to place his hope in God. So, when discouragements and depressions seem to overwhelm you, do what the Psalmist do. Tell your soul to get out of the foul mood and place your hope in God. Exercise your faith, don't let your negative feelings drag you down.

Perhaps you may want to memorize a few verses such as Rom. 8:28, 32, 37; Phil. 4:6-7.

**Prayer:** Lord, You have made me "more than conquerors" because You love me. Help me to conquer my little battles each morning as I face a new day. Amen.