

We trust in Christ and His word to us in scripture. Christ has begun the good work in us of salvation, and we believe He will be faithful to complete it. Therefore, we have no need to fear death and the grave, for God will use it to our glory, and we will be given new, imperishable bodies that are better than the bodies of sin and corruption that we currently have. This is on our best days, or, in our best moments. Other times we are weak and filled with doubt. How do we increase our faith? Let's work on being faithful, as the two go hand-in-hand.

Day 1

Absolute Honesty

Spend some time today, or this week, trying to be absolutely honest. By this I do not mean going out of our way to be offensive. Somehow, in our culture, we have the idea that being honest somehow means giving everyone an earful of our opinions on every aspect of their lives. Instead, let's be honest with ourselves. Let's turn that penetrating logic we wield on ourselves and strive to stop telling ourselves untruths. Let's also, while we are at it, refrain from telling untruths that are made to make us look better than we really are, managing our image to those we can manipulate into a better opinion of who we are. Let's also not be afraid of the truth, of what God has said. This does not mean we become insulting, but speak the truth with gentleness, respect, and love. Why is it important to be truthful as a way of increasing our trust in God? How can we try to increase our trust in his words while we give no weight to our own? God has commanded us to be honest. Do we trust that He will bless us in this endeavor? Can we somehow practice a lack of trust in His word in this area of our lives while we try to bolster our trust of His word about death and salvation? We must put trust in his word to the test, and then we will see that it is worthy of our trust, and this trust will be present in every word He utters to us, about our life as well as our death.

Verses: 1 Peter 3:10-12, John 8:31-38, John 16:13-15

Prayer Topics: Truth, Loyalty, Obedience

Day 2

Utter Dependability

Scripture encourages us to let our yes be yes, and our no be no. This means, I believe, that we are to be dependable to our word. As we commit ourselves to a course of action, we are to take that course even if the price of doing this is high. This changes a couple of things. First, it makes us take our word seriously knowing that there is a price that comes with it. I have people call the church daily to ask for money, and usually they tell me stories that do not seem to be true. Sometimes they will bolster the story with a direct statement that they are telling the truth. There seems to be in this statement, a frustration that there is no way to get around the problem that a lack of truth causes, all the while not wanting to pay the price, we, as a society, would need to pay to get over the problem we have caused ourselves. Why is there no low-cost way of giving my words value? This is something to ponder. In the meantime, we must pay the price to give our words weight and value. This will remind us that God does not speak without consideration. Secondly, our commitments having some cost gives our relationships value. Things are worth what you pay for them, no more. There is no such thing as a good deal, and there are no free lunches. This should help us to reflect on our relationship to the father, and help us to understand the value from His perspective.

Verses: Numbers 30:1-2, Matthew 5:33-37, James 5:12

Prayer Topics: Transparency, Confidence, Forthrightness

Day 3

Silence

Try to spend this day saying as little as possible, and keep a journal of your experience. This sounds like a contradiction, and to some extent it is. The point of the journal is to focus on your inner monologue that will be continuing despite the outer monologue's silence. Why silence? Learning the value of words is sometimes helped by their absence. We have a tendency to treat our words as if more of them will surely increase their value, and this is often a mistake. When you do speak today, measure your words to use as few of them as possible. What is your frustration with silence? When do you want to use more words and why? What do you learn from trying to speak less? What gives words value? Does God speak little or much? Would he experience frustration from remaining quiet? Why doesn't he speak more? Does more speaking solve the problems He has with us? Why not? What can you do with the words you already have from God? How can a different relationship to His words be better than simply having more words?

Verses: Exodus 14:14, Proverbs 17:28, Proverbs 29:11

Prayer Topics: Quiet Spirit, Humility, Wisdom

Day 4

Wholehearted Obedience

You will undoubtedly have some commands from someone today. It may be your boss, the state, and even yourself. With every legitimate command you receive today, practice whole-hearted obedience. Go the extra mile, look at command intent. Do your very best, no matter who gives the command, to not just obey it but to do so with heart, mind, soul, and strength. Then, at the end of the day, reflect on your experiences. What surprised you? What was different? Was it harder or easier than you thought? When did you forget? When did you struggle? What did you learn? Why is wholehearted obedience to God important? Why is it important to have a trust and faith in Him that can overcome the fear of death?

Verses: Matthew 22:37, Proverbs 4:23, Proverbs 3:5-6

Prayer Topics: Genuineness, Eagerness, Submission

Day 5

Encouragement

Try to be as encouraging as you can today without being fake or dishonest. Use your words, as often as possible, to give courage to others. Then think about why I am asking you to do this. That is all.

Verses: 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 10:24-25, Romans 15:2

Prayer Topics: Emboldening, Strengthening, Building Up