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## Faith for Uncertain Times

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In the New Testament, words like “faith,” “believe,” and “trust” appears hundreds of times. Obviously faith matters. In many of those passages, we can learn exactly why it matters. Current economic woes make it even more important to figure out this thing called “faith.” Here are a few verses and notes that have helped me appreciate the value of faith in God when “faith in the market” goes wobbly.

### The Downside of Riches:

1. If you possess wealth, it can create a false sense of security  
*A rich man's wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall **in his own imagination*** (Prov. 18:11).
2. Wealth, by its very nature, is an inadequate basis for true security - at the moment its acquisition becomes a man's singular pursuit, it moves beyond his grasp.  
*Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, cease from your consideration of it. **When you set your eyes on it, it is gone.** For wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle that flies toward the heavens* (Prov. 23:4-5).

### The Only True Basis for Security:

1. Money is a medium of exchange - “movement” is in its very nature. God, on the other hand, is rock-solid dependable and committed to our good. There is no comparison - hope in God trumps “market confidence” every time!  
*Instruct those who are rich in this present world **not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches**, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy* (1 Tim. 6:17).
2. God defines faithfulness. God will keep His word - you can take that to the bank! The man who decides to fix his hope on what-God-has-said-He-will-do enjoys true and lasting security. Market confidence cannot hold a candle to confidence in God.  
*“Know therefore that the Lord your God, **He is God, the faithful God**, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments* (Deut. 7:9).

### Unlocking the Benefits of the Faithfulness of God

When God says He will do something, faith believes what He says and acts accordingly.

1. When God communicates information from which men can profit, hearing alone is inadequate to unlock its benefits. Hearing must be accompanied by faith.  
*For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard **did not profit them, because it was not united by faith** in those who heard* (Heb. 4:2).
2. Faith is simply believing what God has said. It is the assurance that God will make good on His promises. Faith is NOT optimism, as if longing for something hard enough will somehow put words into God's mouth.  
*Yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and **being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform*** (Rom. 4:20-21).

3. Authentic faith is demonstrated by action. Truly believing what God has said will alter the trajectory of a man's words and deeds.  
*What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? . . . Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself* (Jam. 2:14, 17).
4. When men and women believe what God has said He will do, that belief is an invitation for God to effect what He has promised.  
*And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven" (Matt. 9:2); But Jesus turning and seeing her said, "Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well." At once the woman was made well (Matt. 9:22); As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When He entered the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "It shall be done to you according to your faith" (Matt. 9:27-29); Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed at once (Matt. 15:28); "And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all" (Acts 3:16).*
5. Faith is a variable. It can be absent or present, weak or strong, little or great.  
*Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel" (Matt. 8:10); "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:31-32); The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:5).*
6. The presence of faith can be discerned by others.  
*This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who, when he had fixed his gaze on him and had seen that he had faith to be made well, said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and began to walk (Acts 14:9-10).*