

## The Six Phases of Faith to Reach Your Dream

### Phase 5 – What to do while you wait on God?

I hope that after all that we taught about faith that yours has grown as well as your understanding of how God works. Hebrews 11.1 says that **Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.** What are you hoping for? What is your dream? A Portuguese poet called Fernando Pessoa, once said that **God wills, man dreams, the work is born.** When God wants to do something He gives someone a dream.

During the series we looked at the example of Abraham as he went through the 6 phases of faith. These steps follow a predictable pattern that we all go through. It starts with a dream, then there must be a decision to embrace that dream, then inevitably there are delays and difficulties followed by the most difficult of all phases which is the dead end stage, when it seems that the dream dies.

God had promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation but at the age of 99 the promised son was yet to be born. When least expected, Sara becomes pregnant and Isaac is born. It is then that they are confronted with a dead end. God asks Abraham to sacrifice his son. Probably at first he thought it to be a joke, as he had waited so long for this child, and now that the dream was being taken, he faced a dead end.

How do you know you're at a dead end? You feel hopeless, your dream fades before your eyes, and nothing makes sense. There are several words that represent things dead ends in life: cancer, divorce, losing your home, bankruptcy, infertility, unemployment and so on. When you face things that are out of your control and you can't do anything about it, you're in a dead end. That's when many start doubting God's love, wisdom and asks, "Why is this happening? Why is it that God gives me a dream and then takes it away?"

The answer is that this is happening to you because God is preparing for the last phase of faith which is deliverance. The greater is the despair; more miraculous will be the deliverance. You'll say, "Only God could have done that." God is preparing you for a miracle, the miracle of deliverance.

But what should you do while waiting for God to deliver you? The answer is found in Romans 4. In that chapter we see what Abraham did meanwhile he waited for deliverance and how he went from a dead end to a miracle.

**1. Remember what God can do.** The situation may be out of your control, but it's not out of God's control. Therefore don't focus on what you can do but rather on what God can do. What can He do? Romans 4:17 **Abraham believed in God who gives life to the dead and who creates something out of nothing.** This verse reveals that God can do two things that you can't do:

- a. God can give life to something that is dead
- b. God can create something from nothing.

This is the definition of a miracle, of deliverance. If God can give life to a dead person, He can give life to a dead marriage, dead finances, and dead dreams. God can create something out of nothing.

Notice that the verse says that **Abraham believed** in a God that gives life to what is dead and that calls things that are not as though they existed. In Mark 9:23 Jesus said: **Anything is possible if a person believes.** Abraham didn't put his faith in what he saw or felt but he placed his faith in God. When you reach a dead end you need more than positive thoughts and feelings, you need faith in God. You need to believe that even now He can control the uncontrollable, He can change what seems unchangeable and He can create anything from nothing. You have to

believe in Christ's words in Luke 18.27 where He said that: **What is impossible with men is possible with God.** Therefore when you are in God's waiting room you must **remember what God can do.**

**2. Rely on what God has said.** This was what Abraham did and we ought to do also. Romans 4.18 **Abraham, when hope was dead within him, went on hoping in faith, believing that he would become "the father of many nations". He relied on the word of God...** Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping and believing.

You know your hope is dead when you start using the word "never". **I'll never marry... I'll never have a baby... I'll never get out of debt ... I'll never be happy... My marriage will never get better... Things will never change... I'll never be able to buy a house... She will never forgive, etc. You'll start saying NEVER when hope dies inside of you.** What should you do when that happens? Do like Abraham, continue to believe in what God has said.

He believed though there was no reason for hope. He relied on the word of God and this was what kept him going. God is not limited by your hopelessness, but by your lack of faith. The problem is that when we need it the most, we forget what God has said and stop coming to the house of God where we remind you of His promises so you don't lose faith.

The dead ends of life are a test to your faith. Hebrews 11.17-18 says: **By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."** God was testing Abraham's faith and he proved that he had faith in God, as he didn't panic but rested on what God had promised.

When his son Isaac went up the hill with him and asked: *Daddy, where is the sheep that we are going to sacrifice?* He replied: *"The Lord will provide."* He didn't doubt that God would not allow his son to die, or if that would happen that He would raise him from the dead. How come? Because he had a promise from God.

Although he didn't understand, he obeyed, while we only obey what God asks of us if we understand. There are moments in our lives that everything that we can and must do is to remember and rest in what God has said.

**3. Face the facts with faith.** Romans 4.19-20 says: **Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead, since he was about a hundred years old, and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God.** He was 99 years old and she was infertile, so it was impossible for them to have a child. But despite the facts Abraham didn't doubt.

To have faith doesn't mean to deny the reality. Faith is not pretending that you don't have a problem. Faith does not act as if there were no difficulties. No, faith continues to believe despite the facts. Faith is not positive thinking. Faith is not saying "I'm not suffering" when you are hurting. Faith is not saying "I have no debts" when you're on the verge of bankruptcy. Faith is not saying "I'm happy" when in reality you are crying inside. That's not faith, that is to be untruthful and God never asked us to be that way.

God says he will work in your life according to your faith and that means that you have to face facts. Recognize that although the situation is bad, or even if it hurts, you are going to keep believing. Hebrews 12.2 says **Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.** The key is to look beyond the circumstances and the facts and see Jesus. When you put your eyes on Him He will perfect your faith. When you face a dead end you need to remember what God can do and rest in what God has said facing the facts with faith.

**4. Expect God to deliver.** Whatever might be your problem, what are you waiting on God to do for you? The answer to this question is important because the word of God says in Matthew 9.29 that **According to your faith will it be done to you**, therefore if you expect nothing, that's what you'll get.

In Romans 4.20-21 we read that **Abraham never doubted. He believed God, for his faith and trust grew ever stronger, and he praised God for this blessing even before it happened. He was completely sure that God was well able to do anything he promised.** Abraham gave glory to God in advance. The ultimate form of faith is to thank God ahead for what He is going to do. Abraham **praised God for this blessing even before it happened.** Thanking God after the prayer was answered is not faith, but gratitude. To have faith is to thank God before things happen. Although you don't see it, nor feel, or even see how it might happen, you thank God because you know that the answer is on its way. God is pleased when we demonstrate this kind of faith.

In 2 Corinthians 1.9-10 Paul declares that **God has delivered us... he will deliver us, he will continue to deliver us.** You won't know that God is all you need until God is all you have. If you trust in Him He will make a miracle. By allowing things in our lives that are beyond our control, it forces us to trust Him instead of ourselves. When that happens the promise that we have is **He has delivered us... he will deliver us, he will continue to deliver us.**

### **There are 3 kinds of deliverance...**

1. Circumstantial deliverance. In this type of deliverance God miraculously deals with your situation. He will do this many times in your life but not always. Other times He will give us a:

2. Personal deliverance. Instead of changing the circumstances He changes you and that problem, that person, that circumstance will stop bothering you because you have matured, because He gave you a new dream, because you have a new attitude and a new perspective. The situation does not change but you change.

3. The ultimate deliverance is Heaven. God didn't promise to remove all the pain, or solve every problem that we ask to be solved, or keep alive everyone you love for the rest of your life. God didn't promise that those people you love will live as you wish they did or that they won't disappoint you. God didn't promise that you weren't going to have delays, or face difficulties or dead ends. We live in an imperfect world and we'll suffer because of it.

But we must not forget that we weren't created to live here forever. There is pain that will disappear only when the ultimate release takes place which is Heaven. One day, all who have accepted Christ as their Savior, will go to a place where there is no sadness, no pain, no tears, no suffering, no death- and that's God's ultimate deliverance.

But there is only one way to get there, through Jesus Christ. That's why He said **I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** The biblical word for "deliverance" is "salvation". Jesus Christ is your Savior, He is your deliver. And if you seek deliverance Jesus is your hope. The ultimate deliverance is eternal and only can be reached by those who ask forgiveness for their sins and accept Christ as their Savior.

Christ can turn your despair into hope if you give him your dead end. God will deliver you the way He knows is best. Jesus can change your desperation into endless hope. Give to Him any problems that seem hopeless and give your life to Jesus Christ today. Tell Him "**Lord Jesus I give you my problem and I give you my life today**".