

## INTRODUCTION

We all want faith. We truly *want* to believe in that which we *say* we believe. We want to be able to point to a mountain and command it to move, then stand back and watch while it does. We want to be able to lay hands on the sick, then watch them get up and walk. We'd even settle for a little miracle like seeing our neighbour get a new job or paying the bills we can't pay. Yet, for many of us, faith leaves us baffled at times—frustrated, confused and upset.

While our faith in God might be strong, many have lost their faith in what *He can do*. And so, my hope for this study is to restore that faith and remind us that He is the same powerful God that He's always been.

First and foremost, the power of God is not limited to the measure of our faith. In fact, there's not enough faith in every believer combined to match the unlimited power of God.

I remember back a few weeks ago when one of my sons asked me why we don't see miracles today like we used to. The answer is simple. We do. We see them all the time, but because of our unbelief, we fail to recognize them for what they truly are. The case in point here is that my son himself is a miracle.

While I was pregnant with him 17 years ago, the doctor warned us over and over again, "If he even makes it to term," he said. "his health problems will be significant."

His kidneys were abnormally large. I saw it. My husband saw it. The ultra sound technician saw it. And upon close inspection, the doctor himself saw it too. The next week we were called in for a second ultrasound, during which time we had made the decision that his name would be Nathaniel, meaning "Gift from God." We knew that every day this child lived was yet another gift from our Lord. And so, we went to the second ultrasound with hope in our hearts that whether this child lived or whether he died it was all a part of God's plan.

There we were, in the ultrasound room, me on the bed, and my husband on the chair beside me when the doctor walked in with more results in his hand.

"I'm not sure what happened," he said, "I don't know what we saw the first time, but this baby is perfectly healthy today."

I knew that God had healed our baby that week, but I also knew that miracles like this are a little too hard for most people to swallow. We'd rather believe in human error than we would in the power of God. We'd rather believe in luck than we would in His provision and foresight, and yet we're surrounded by His mighty works every day.

The idea that this earth hangs in mid-air is a miracle in itself, the fact that we're breathing without having to think about it is yet another. Stop reading right now. Take a look around the room for just a moment and let the idea of His provision and power sink in.

Consider the things that you have. How many of them did you pray for? Did you pray for a husband, a family, a home? Did you pray for your health? Did you pray that you'd have enough food in the fridge or a job to pay for that food? Did you pray that you'd have a good friend? Did you pray for your family, your church or your pets? If you're a faithful woman or man, chances are you've prayed for a lot of the things that you're taking for granted today.

I'm sitting in the living room right now listening to my pug snore. We have an adorable bird munching on seed in the corner and a bull mastiff stretched out on the couch. My husband's upstairs fast asleep. The children (now grown) are healthy and safe. My daughter is five months pregnant, with a husband and home of their own. In the afternoons, I love to sit in the sunroom where it's warm and cozy. Every once in a while, I'll see a couple of deer run through the yard. The other day there were twelve. I see chipmunks and squirrels. I hear the sound of the wind chimes when the wind softly blows. The smell of spring is in the air, and with that I know that the flowers, the grass, and the leaves will return. Why? Because they do every year without fail.

In the same way, I know that I know that I know God will provide, because He has proven Himself every day without fail.

Don't get me wrong. If you're trusting in God, don't expect a smooth ride. When Jesus takes the wheel, He takes us on a journey through rough terrain, and barren land. He leads us to and through the heart of a storm before He safely drives us out. Why? Because one will never be complete without the trying of our faith. And so, we experience sickness and death, poverty and sorrow and pain. As gold refined in a fire, so is the trying of our faith.

Charles Spurgeon once said, "Whenever God means to make a man great, He always breaks him in pieces first."

We see this throughout scripture as men and women are brought down to their knees before they are lifted back up. Joseph is sold into slavery by his brothers. David is relentlessly chased down by King Saul, and then later betrayed by his son. Moses is led through the desert of testing for 40 years. Paul is beaten, tortured, imprisoned, and blind, all for the sake of the gospel.

At the center of each one of these lives, there's one thing that stands out more than anything else. One thing sets them apart from the others. One thing shines bright, and let me tell you, it isn't the fact that they're moving mountains or driving new cars. It's the simple fact that they

lived in obedience to their faith. When God spoke, they moved. Whether it caused them poverty, sorrow, or pain, they were ready to follow His voice.

“There would be no sense in saying you trusted a person if you would not take his advice. Thus, if you have really handed yourself over to Him, it must follow that you are trying to obey Him. But trying in a new way, a less worried way. Not doing these things in order to be saved, but because He has begun to save you already. Not hoping to get to Heaven as a reward for your actions, but inevitably wanting to act in a certain way because a first faint gleam of Heaven is already inside you.” — C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

I WANT TO BE A WOMAN WHO  
OVERCOMES OBSTACLES  
≡ by tackling them in faith ≡  
INSTEAD OF TIPTOEING  
AROUND THEM IN FEAR.



## WEEK 1

### FAITH IS COURAGEOUS

As I was studying this chapter, the same verse kept coming to me over and over again, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.” – **James 1:2-3**

And so, I want us to start here—with this verse—and branch out from there.

Here’s an interesting thought: God doesn’t tempt us with sin, but the trying of our faith reveals the sin from within us. **Trials prove the depth of our faith, by our love for the Father.**

Sometimes a test calls us to obedience, will we choose God’s will if it causes personal discomfort and pain? Sometimes it calls us to sacrifice the things we hold dear in this life. Are we willing to let go if it’s not in line with God’s will? Sometimes faith calls us to exercise courage. Will we make a stand against sin when no one else will? Will we follow our faith or give in to peer pressure? Sometimes faith calls us to exercise patience and contentment, as we trust in the providence of our Lord. Can we count it all joy when we’re feeling the sting? Can we be joyful through poverty, sickness, and pain?

Here’s the thing: **joy comes to those who trust in the provision of God. Even on the darkest of days, we have the assurance that He’s got our best interest at heart.** It’s for this reason that we could be in the midst of turmoil and still experience peace in our lives. That in itself is a gift.

He rewards the faithful with an incorruptible crown. We’re focused on instant gratification, but God in His wisdom offers eternal rewards for our faith.

When we read about the provision of God in scripture we see Him working in miraculous ways. We see believers courageously suffer and die for the God they believe in.

We don’t always see the results of our faith, but neither did they. In fact, Abraham and his wife Sarah were given the promise that the Messiah would come from their off spring, and yet they died hundreds of years before this promise came to pass.

Sometimes we'll never understand why God is directing our path the way that He is. I imagine that people like David, Elijah, Daniel, and Paul experienced trials they didn't understand at times either. What makes a believer stand out from the crowd is that they trust in the wisdom of God.

This week in our study we find courageous faith in action. We see how faith can bring peace to a difficult situation. We see how our faith may be tested and tried.

Through it all we discover that God rewards those who serve Him. Not always in the way we expect, but always in a way that is good for our soul.

As you're reading, take time to focus on faith one day and God's provision the next. What do you learn about each? Use the resources provided at the beginning of this guide to dig deep.



# MONDAY

Read Acts 16:16-40  
“Paul and Silas in Prison”

What have I learned from this scripture?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

How was faith exercised?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## TUESDAY

What have you learned about God's provision?

## WEDNESDAY

Read Genesis 22:1-19  
“Abraham is Tested”

What have I learned from this scripture?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

How was faith exercised?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



[illegible]

## THURSDAY

What have you learned about God's provision?

# FRIDAY

Read Joshua 2:1-21 and Joshua 6:21-22  
“Rahab Hides the Spies”

What have I learned from this scripture?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

How was faith exercised?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## SATURDAY

What have you learned about God's provision?

[illegible]

