

# HOW TO OVERCOME UNBELIEF

CREFLO DOLLAR

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## CHAPTER 1

# ONLY BELIEVE!

Jesus has paid the price for every promise contained in the Word of God. Because of the finished works of Christ, you and I possess the grace of God which is essentially the power of God working in and through our lives to do what we could not do in our own ability. The grace of God is His unmerited favor that we didn't work for or earn on our own. It enables us to have everything that pertains to life and godliness in this life, and to live a life that pleases God. When we understand the grace of God, it provides a foundation from which our faith can grow.

Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." In order to be a victorious Christian every day of your life, you have to grab hold of the fact that in the unseen spiritual world there already exists everything you will ever need. God created man when He had completed everything else, including the earth and everything in it. Every resource was made available to Adam before he even came into existence, and the same is true for us. God will never put us in a position where we don't have what we need to thrive in life. When sickness attacks your body, healing has already been made available. When lack attacks your finances, provision is already there. The finished works of Jesus Christ include all these things and everything you will ever need in the future—physically, financially, spiritually, emotionally, and in every other area of your life. So the key to receiving the things of God is to receive the reality that "it is finished."

## WHERE IS THE MANIFESTATION?

Since it has been established that the works of Christ are already finished, and everything we need for life and godliness is available to us, then why are so many Christians struggling to receive what already belongs to them? If healing is a finished work, then why can't Believers get it to manifest in their bodies? If deliverance is a finished work, why are Christians still struggling and in bondage to certain addictions and behaviors? If provision is available in the spiritual realm, then why are so many saved people broke, in debt, and having a hard time getting their basic needs met?

For years people have been trying to get things to happen and have become frustrated because they are not seeing results. So, they resort to religious excuses as to why things aren't happening. One of those excuses is that they simply didn't have enough faith.

If you think the reason why you have not seen manifestation of God's promises in your life is because you don't have enough faith, I'm here to tell you that is *not* the issue. The reason why your prayers were not answered is not because you didn't have enough faith. Romans 12:3 says that every person has been dealt, or given, *the* measure of faith. This simply means that you have been given the exact same measure of faith that Jesus has. Second Peter 1:1 says, "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Notice here that you obtained faith through righteousness and through Jesus Christ. This is the faith that came from Jesus Himself! When you received Christ, you received righteousness, and you received faith. Faith was given to you the day you became born again, and no one has more or less of it than anyone else.

With that being said, we can see from the Scripture that the issue is not that you do not have enough faith. The issue is actually the presence of unbelief. Some of the typical religious answers people give to why certain things didn't come to pass include, "It must not have been God's will" or "God's answers to prayer are yes, no, and not now." Listen, the will of God is the Word of God, and if you can find it in the Bible, you can stand on it. It is not God's will for a person to be addicted to drugs or pornography. Nor is it the will of God for a person to be sick, broke, and emotionally broken. These things are not God's best for our lives, nor do they reflect the promise Jesus made to give us abundant life (John 10:10).

The other excuse people make for why certain manifestations aren't seen is, "Whatever will be, will be." The modern-day translation of that would be, "It is what it is." This simply isn't true. Things are what they are until the Word of God comes on the scene. At that point, things change to line up with the Word.

Unbelief neutralizes faith, which is why Jesus could not do miracles in His own hometown. Jesus had faith, but the people's unbelief shut it down and hindered the power of God. Christians must begin to evaluate whether they have unbelief in their hearts, because that is the reason why things aren't happening. Many people mistakenly believe that they can't simultaneously have faith and unbelief, but that's not true. Jesus said that the reason people don't get results is because of their unbelief. You don't need big faith to do big things; you just need to minimize the unbelief that is working *against* your faith.

## **NO UNBELIEF**

Mark 11:23 gives a picture of how the Christian must operate in order to see the finished works or Christ come to fruition in this

physical world. It says, “For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.”

Notice, according to this scripture, you can do two things in your heart: you can doubt and you can believe. But if you doubt in your heart, it is going to affect your belief. And what Jesus is saying is don't doubt! The issue is always going to be what is present in your heart at the same time, and if doubt and unbelief are present, they will hold your faith and trust in God captive.

Mark 5:35, 36 gives another example of the importance of not allowing unbelief to reside in your heart, “While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.” Jesus' response to the bad news was to tell the man not to be afraid and *only believe*. In other words, *Don't believe and be afraid at the same time*. When God says to only believe, He means don't do anything except that. Don't be afraid, don't doubt; only give attention to what you believe.

Until you know better, you cannot do better. What God is trying to get to you is the understanding that Jesus has already finished the work; everything in the Word of God that pertains to life and godliness is available now. You must simply believe and receive, having no doubt or unbelief in your heart. When unbelief is not present, your faith has free course to secure the promises of God and pull them out of the unseen spiritual realm into this natural physical world. Only believe!

## CHAPTER 2

# IDENTIFYING UNBELIEF

Now that you know unbelief will short-circuit your faith, the next step is to identify it so that you can recognize unbelief when it shows up. The primary way you can tell that you have unbelief in your heart is through your dominant thoughts. If you take some time to examine your most prevalent thoughts, you can easily locate unbelief. Fear, worry, and paying attention to the cares of this life are prime indicators of unbelief.

Worry is basically negative meditation, and it indicates that unbelief is present. It is meditating on the problem more than the promise, which gives birth to doubt. I can tell you from experience that worry will amplify the issue and cause unbelief to take root in your heart. I remember when I was diagnosed with a polyp on my vocal chords. When I got the doctor's report, I immediately began to research everything I could about polyps. I studied them, I thought about them, and I became a polyp expert. However, the problem with that was I was considering the polyp more than I was considering the Word of God, and that opened the door to unbelief, which hindered my faith for my healing. The Lord told me, *You keep this in your thought life more than you do My promise. You're considering how it got there, and you won't consider the stripes of Jesus and what I have done. You won't consider the finished works, and you're spending more time with the unbelief than you are with your faith. You had the faith to be healed, it was just being held captive by the unbelief.*

The same thing was true about the television bill that our ministry accrues every month. It used to be at the forefront of my

thinking until I made a decision to let it go. I refused to touch it with my thought life, and as soon as I did that I began to see my faith for the provision to pay the bill manifest. Whatever you are releasing your faith for, be sure there is no unbelief present. You can ensure this by keeping your mind firmly stayed on the promises of God.

### **THE MIND IS THE ARENA OF FAITH**

I always say that the mind is the arena of faith; it is where the battle is won or lost. The Word says that a double-minded man is unstable in all of his ways, and he should not expect to receive anything from God (James 1:7, 8). The bottom line is that you cannot be double-minded when it comes to what God promised in His Word. You must be single-minded, and only believe what the Word of God says. This is how you will see the finished works of Jesus manifested in your life.

Romans 4:18, 19 gives a picture of single-mindedness in the face of contrary circumstances. This passage recounts how Abraham's faith stood strong in the face of impossibilities, "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither (did he consider) yet the deadness of Sarah's womb."

Abraham didn't think about the problem. The Bible says that he didn't even consider it! God wants to do some amazing things in your life, but can you stay focused on the promise? You cannot be tempted with anything you don't think about, and if your thoughts are only on God then all you will be tempted to believe is what the Word of God says. Isaiah 26:3 says to keep your mind stayed on God, and He will keep you in perfect peace.

Satan has created havoc in the lives of many people by implementing his plans in their minds. You can't watch the news every day and expose yourself to information that is contrary to the Word of God and expect to stay out of fear and worry. If you find yourself battling fear and negative thoughts, check out what you have been listening to, looking at, and talking about. What are the different avenues through which the contradictions of God's Word are getting access to your mind? God says one thing, but you are presented with information to the contrary through the media, friends and family, and the suggestions of the devil. That information is designed to move you into a place of double-mindedness, which disrupts your faith.

The reason that Abraham was so blessed was not because he had more faith than we have but because he had no unbelief. In fact, if you study the lives of the great men and women of God who did exploits, it was their faith and lack of unbelief that got the job done (Hebrews 11). Instead of trying to get more faith, deal with the unbelief in your heart. If worry and fear are present, so is unbelief. Get rid of it by meditating more on the Word of God than you do the problem!



## CHAPTER 3

# UNBELIEF THROUGH IGNORANCE AND DISBELIEF

Have you ever wondered how unbelief gets in a person's heart? If you find yourself battling unbelief, the first step to overcoming it is to identify how it got there and to cut off the sources of unbelief. Many people don't realize why they have a hard time believing God's Word and why they just can't seem to make the faith connection. Examining the ways that unbelief comes is critical to getting rid of it.

The first way that unbelief comes into a person's heart is through plain old ignorance. Ignorance simply means you don't know something. When you don't have knowledge of God's Word and His ways, you simply don't have the tools necessary to believe, especially since faith comes through hearing the Word of God. Unbelief through ignorance can be corrected by simply preaching the Gospel to someone, or hearing the Gospel preached to you. When you hear the Word of God, faith comes, and you are more likely to receive the truth. Unbelief can no longer come through the avenue of ignorance when you know what the Word says and receive it into your heart.

The second way that unbelief shows up in your life is through disbelief. Disbelief is a little different than unbelief in that it comes through wrong teaching or tradition. Many people hear instructions from the Word taught the wrong way or not explained in the proper context. Sometimes they hear these things all their lives, and that begins to shape their mindsets. Disbelief is one of

the hardest things to get rid of because it comes through religious thinking that is so embedded in a person's mind. The way to get rid of it is to receive God's Word and accept what the Word truly says rather than what man has to say *about* it. It is saying, "I'm going to get in the Word of God, believe it, receive it, and refuse to allow the traditional way I have heard or viewed it to take precedence over what the Word is actually saying." You will eliminate unbelief by getting rid of disbelief that comes through tradition and wrong teaching.

If you find yourself struggling with unbelief because of ignorance or wrong teaching, there is hope! Have confidence that the uncompromised Word of God has the ability to change and rearrange things in your heart and mind. Get in the Word of God and meditate on it. Listen to it being preached by men and women of faith who have understanding of it and can impart that understanding to you. Believe what you hear, receive it in your heart, and expect faith to come. You will find yourself trusting and believing God more and more as you commit to reading and hearing the Word, and allowing it to penetrate your heart and mind. Unbelief cannot remain!

## CHAPTER 4

# NATURAL UNBELIEF AND THE HARDENED HEART

We have all experienced times when our natural circumstances appeared to be overwhelming. God created man as a tri-part being, meaning he is a spirit, who possesses a soul (mind, will, and emotions), and lives in a physical body. The tendency, as humans, is to allow our five physical senses to dominate our lives. When this happens, we pay more attention to what our senses tell us than to what the Word of God says. This allows unbelief to take root in our hearts. And when we don't consider the Word of God, unbelief takes precedence. Christians must guard against these two avenues of unbelief in order to become proficient in the life of faith and see results.

Whenever you look at your natural circumstances, and what you can perceive with your senses, your faith will be compromised. The Word of God says that Christians are to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). This simply means that you do not govern your life by what you can perceive with your senses; you govern your life by what the Word of God says. If you adopt 2 Corinthians 5:7 as your motto in life, you will find yourself avoiding the unbelief trap.

I understand that it is difficult to avoid giving attention to the things that are bombarding your senses. For example, you may have bills due, and according to what you see in your bank account, it does not appear that the money to pay the bills is available. However, times like that are prime opportunities to

allow the Word to be the final authority. Philippians 4:19 says that God supplies all your need according to His riches in glory. This means that every resource and provision you need is available to you now in the spiritual realm. Heaven's resources are accessed by faith, and even when you don't immediately see them, if you continue to believe and speak God's Word over your situation, you will release the faith necessary to pull them out of the spirit and into the natural realm. In order to do this, however, you cannot give attention to what things *look* like.

The thing about natural unbelief is that it is simply a matter of what is going on in the natural realm. Many Believers fail to see the Word of God manifest tangibly in their lives because they can't move beyond what is going on in front of their eyes. The key is to always keep Hebrews 11:1 before your eyes, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In addition, prayer and fasting is an effective way to eradicate unbelief because it allows your spirit to rise above your senses (Matthew 17:21). When your spirit becomes dominant, what you perceive with your five senses will not affect your faith. As Believers, our way of life is to believe *before* we see things manifest in the natural realm. When you understand this, you will not be moved or intimidated by natural circumstances, and your faith can work for you.

The fourth way that unbelief comes is through a hardened heart. Now, a hardened heart is the result of what you will *not* consider. Whatever you do not consider is what you will become hardened to. Let me give you an illustration. As I mentioned in a previous chapter, when Abraham was given the promise from God that he would have a child, he considered not his own dead body, nor did he consider the deadness of Sarah's womb, and he

staggered not after the promises of God. The only thing Abraham considered was the promise. And when you consider the promise, it will deliver you from the problem.

Now the word “consider” means to contemplate, bear in mind, ponder over, and think about. In essence, it means “to meditate.” Joshua 1:8 says that when you meditate in the Word day and night, you will make your way prosperous and you will have good success. There really is something phenomenal that happens when you consider the promise of God more than you consider the problems you face every day in this world. When you consider the promise, your heart becomes more flexible and open to that promise coming to pass in your life. On the other hand, if you consider the problem, your heart will become hardened toward the promise, and it will not come to pass. Faith cannot operate properly in a hardened heart.

The disciples had hardened hearts many times, and it was the reason why they struggled often with operating in the supernatural. For example, soon after Jesus performed the miracle of feeding a multitude of people with just a few loaves of bread and some fish, they experienced the storm at sea. Jesus walked on the water and they panicked when they saw Him defying natural laws, thinking He was a ghost! Why were they so astonished at Jesus being able to walk on the sea, especially after they had just witnessed and participated in a phenomenal miracle when He fed the multitude? Why were they so afraid in the midst of the storm when the one person whom they observed defy natural laws was in their midst? It was because they did not consider the miracle and their hearts became hardened. They should’ve been able to easily release their faith to calm the wind and the waves during the storm, but they didn’t. They were considering the problem more than the promise.

A lot of Christians today are no different from the disciples. They consider the problem more than the Word of God. The doctor's report shows up with a negative diagnosis, and they pay more attention to that than they do to what the Word says about healing. The news reports proclaim economic doom and gloom, and they pay more attention to that than they do to God's promises of provision and abundance. What you won't consider will harden your heart and hinder your faith. It's time for Believers to start *believing* and giving attention to the Word of God so that faith can work properly and not be short-circuited by unbelief.

When you find yourself thinking more about the things going on around you than what God says, it is an indication that you need to spend more time meditating on the Word. For every problem you encounter, there is a solution in the Bible. To get in the faith zone, find every scripture that provides a biblical answer to your problem and begin to think on those answers. Think about them when you're in the car, getting ready for work, or cooking dinner. Listen to the Word of God being preached and saturate yourself with it. Become a custodian over your thought life and check every doubting, unbelieving thought at the door. Instead of speaking about the problem, say what the Word of God says!

Second Corinthians 10:5 says, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Our instructions from God for avoiding a hardened heart are to cast down, or capture every thought that tries to set itself up in our minds as being higher than what the Word of God says. It takes discipline to do this, but it is vital to your faith working. You capture wrong thoughts by speaking the Word of God when they show up in your mind.

Every day we are bombarded with information that is designed to get us to consider things that don't align with the knowledge of God. There are so many distractions that can come in and cause your heart to become hard. But in order to overcome these things, you must create an atmosphere of faith in your life, on purpose, as an act of your will. The more you give attention to the Word, the more you will desire it. And faith is contained in the Word of God. Consider all the wonderful things God has already done for you. Consider past victories and situations that God has brought you out of. Keep in front of your mind's eye all the wonderful things that you've experienced and received from God thus far. If He did it once, He will do it again! Making it a point to *consider* the wonderful works of God gives your faith free course to operate without hindrance, and it will keep your heart in a place of expectation.

Jesus made a statement in Matthew 17:17, 18 that is very eye-opening, "Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour." He called the generation of people He was dealing with "faithless." Another version of that scripture says "unbelieving." And in the next couple verses He tells the disciples why they could not cast the devil out of the man's son. It was because of their unbelief.

I want you to make a commitment to refuse to allow the phrase, "because of unbelief" to define your life as a Christian. Choose today to simply believe God's Word in its entirety and identify areas of unbelief in your life. Now that you know how it gets in and you know how to get rid of it, you are equipped with the tools you need to live a life of faith, boldly and without

question. Consider only the promises of God and expect to see the end of your faith as you commit to believing the Bible. We walk by faith and not by sight!