

Eternity Daily Bible Study - No. 400

Series: Solution-Focused Faith

Topic: Faith For Specific Solutions

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I have been a bit of a tease by putting the study that everyone wants, the one that tells them how to have faith for solutions to their own specific problems, this far along in the series. There is a reason for that. It is because without a solid biblical foundation it is easy to slip into idolatry, the prosperity gospel or even into magical thinking by misinterpreting what the Scriptures are saying here.

Solution-focused faith is not some sort of “magic wand” which enables instant gratification of our most immature and materialistic desires. Solution-focused faith is the patient trusting connection with God that envisions the Kingdom of God arriving on earth and which taps into the powers of the Kingdom, which enable that solution to happen. We must seek first the Kingdom of God – that is primary.

There are five steps in applying solution-focused faith to daily life they are:

1. Reframing – changing your point of view from being immersed in the problem to seeing the Kingdom solution.
2. Believing – taking the Kingdom solution and laying hold of it with our spirit and our heart and our faith so that we believe in the solution without doubting.
3. Activating – by praying, speaking, commanding, using an authoritative word of faith or by “believing that we have received.”
4. Waiting – Patiently waiting on God for His perfect answer in His perfect timing.
5. Receiving – that which was promised and rejoicing in God’s answer with all thankfulness

The Hebrew prophets used this when viewing the situations of their day. Firstly they saw the “mess” through God’s eyes and saw God’s solution arriving – as either justice or mercy, chastisement or deliverance, they caught God’s vision of the future and believed it, they then activated this by a prophetic action or by giving a word of prophecy. Often the prophets spoke about future events in the PAST tense. This is frequently lost in modern translations as it is deemed “confusing to the reader” to have future events referred to in the past tense. But the prophets believed they had received and by faith they spoke about the future as having already arrived. Here is

Young's literal translation of Isaiah 11:1-9 - notice the past tense

Isaiah 11:1-9 YLT And a rod hath come out from the stock of Jesse, And a branch from his roots is fruitful. (2) Rested on him hath the Spirit of Jehovah, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and might, The spirit of knowledge and fear of Jehovah. (3) To refresh him in the fear of Jehovah, And by the sight of his eyes he judgeth not, Nor by the hearing of his ears decideth. (4) And he hath judged in righteousness the poor, And decided in uprightness for the humble of earth, And hath smitten earth with the rod of his mouth, And with the breath of his lips he putteth the wicked to death. (5) And righteousness hath been the girdle of his loins, And faithfulness--the girdle of his reins. (6) And a wolf hath sojourned with a lamb, And a leopard with a kid doth lie down, And calf, and young lion, and fatling are together, And a little youth is leader over them. (7) And cow and bear do feed, Together lie down their young ones, And a lion as an ox eateth straw. (8) And played hath a suckling by the hole of an asp, And on the den of a cockatrice Hath the weaned one put his hand. (9) Evil they do not, nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For full hath been the earth with the knowledge of Jehovah, As the waters are covering the sea.

Though given eight hundred years before Christ it is in the "prophetic past". Such Scriptures "speak over" reality - commanding it into being. When we pray and command we can "speak over" the situation, as if it is already achieved, and already accomplished, and already in the past. For instance when Mary exalts the Lord she speaks of the future Messianic rule as something already accomplished:

Luke 1:46-55 YLT And Mary said, `My soul doth magnify the Lord, (47) And my spirit was glad on God my Saviour, (48) Because He looked on the lowliness of His maid-servant, For, lo, henceforth call me happy shall all the generations, (49) For He who is mighty did to me great things, And holy is His name, (50) And His kindness is to generations of generations, To those fearing Him, (51) He did powerfully with His arm, He scattered abroad the proud in the thought of their heart, (52) He brought down the mighty from thrones, And He exalted the lowly, (53) The hungry He did fill with good, And the rich He sent away empty, (54) He received again Israel His servant, To remember kindness, (55) As He spake unto our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed--to the age.'

So lets apply this to the problem of anxiety. If you are anxious do NOT pray "Lord take this anxiety away from me" – that is focusing on the problem. Instead pray "The Lord has filled me with peace and my heart rejoices, God has solved my problems and lifted me on high. I am delivered and I am free and I dwell in the joy of the Lord".

We often see this formula in Psalms e.g the well-known Psalm 23:

Psalms 23:1-6 LITV A Psalm of David. Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not lack. (2) He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me to waters of rest; (3) He restores my soul; He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. (4) Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. (5) You prepare a table for me before ones vexing me; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

(6) Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah for as long as my days.

David is looking into the future and speaking about the blessings of the Lord as actually happening. David is not focusing on the problem but in the divine solution, which he sees as actually arriving in his life.

Similarly the Lord's prayer is an invocation of God's rulership over this world. It is commanding reality in the name of God, calling new things into existence, and is properly written with many exclamation points e.g. "Your Kingdom come!"

Matthew 6:9-13 LITV So, then, you should pray this way: Our Father who is in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name. (10) Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as it is in Heaven, also on the earth. (11) Give us today our daily bread, (12) and forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors. (13) And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil, for Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory to the ages. Amen.

Thus when it says: "Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory" it is "speaking over" reality and invoking the rule of God over all things.

So we see that solution-focused faith speaks over reality and commands it to take the shape of the Kingdom of God. When there is a storm it says "Be still!", when there is a leper it says "be cleansed", when there is a friend in the grave it says "Lazarus come forth!", when there is a demon it says "Come out of him!"

Solution-focused faith speaks so as to bring the Kingdom of God right into the present so that God's will can be one on earth as it is in heaven.

So say your problem is fear you can pray: "In the name of Jesus Christ the love of God is poured into my heart by the Holy Ghost and has cast out all my fear, I am bold and brave and I will rejoice in the Lord" (Romans 5;1-5, 1 John 4:18)

This may not sound like a "normal prayer" but it does sound like many of the Psalms. The spiritual realm is binary – either on or off, complete or incomplete, fulfilled or unfulfilled. When you say by faith "I am at peace, all fear is gone, God's love is in my heart, I am blessed with all the spiritual blessings in the heavenly realms" you are instructing the spiritual realm that these things "have happened" in the spirit (though they may not yet have happened on earth) and that causes them to arrive in reality. That may seem weird but it is the best way that I can describe it.

Just say that you feel like Joseph in prison and your life seems blocked and frustrating. You can say "I have been faithful and God has opened a door for me that no man can shut and has brought me into the place of blessing and has perfected all that which concerns me."

There are two related traps here – impatience and carnality. Impatience sets time limits on God (remember Abraham waited 25 years for Isaac) and carnality tries to equate the Kingdom with personal ambitions and dreams. So I dare not say "It is the

25th of this month and I am driving my own green Jaguar”. Such a statement would be covetousness which is idolatry and self-focused - not Kingdom-focused. Though prominent prosperity teachers might say such a thing I will not and I hope you won't either!

It is through faith and patience that we inherit the promises (Hebrews 6;12) and thus we must give God time. The Scriptures call that process of giving God all the time in the world “waiting on God”. We need to give God the whole process including the timing. Waiting is not passive or mystical. Don't be like the woman I knew who had an engine problem and who waited for God's perfect mechanic to be mystically revealed to her for four months until the engine finally gave out and she needed a new car. She should have picked up the phone book and checked out some actual mechanics! Waiting in faith does not preclude the use of common-sense.

Finally we need to receive the solution with gratitude and thankfulness (see Philippians 4:6,7).

We shall apply the five step process to “Joe” who is unemployed and praying for a job:

1. Reframe – Joe should not be problem-focused and sit around saying “the job market is so hard, why, why, why, I will never get a job, etc. Joe should see the Kingdom solution and get up and get moving, and start knocking doors. Joe should write out the job that he thinks God would want him to have, and be positive about it. Joe should not sleep in, rather he would use his time well and do some study or Christian service or even projects around the home. Joe would send out those applications, and not let them sit in the drawer.
2. Believe – that there is a perfect job for Joe with perfect pay that will come to him in God's perfect timing. The job will be a Kingdom job (not necessarily a church job) where Joe can make a contribution and do useful things for other people. [You can only “believe” that which is worthy, biblical and true. God had Adam do some work even before the Fall (Genesis 2:15), thus productive work is God's will for all of us. (see 1 Thessalonians 4;11,12; 2 Thessalonians 3:9-12)]
3. Activate: Joe should write out a faith statement that sees the Kingdom solution arriving such as any of those below:
 - a) “Jesus has blessed me and I have a wonderful job with wonderful pay and I give wonderful service in a wonderful way to the glory of God.”
 - b) “I speak to the mountain of unemployment and I say “Grace, grace to it. The mountain has become a plain. The problem is solved. The perfect job has arrived and I rejoice in it”.
 - c) “God works all things together for my good and is bringing me the job that He desires, the perfect job in His perfect time.”Joe would write it out and say it twice a day and Joe would tell the spiritual realm that this is an accomplished fact.
4. Wait – Joe gives God the stopwatch. He lets the job arrive in His perfect timing. Joe is not passive, he acts as a person of faith. He believes there is a

job for him and acts like it, sending in his resume and going job-hunting regularly.

5. Receive and Rejoice – when Joe gets the job he is glad and thanks God. Joe gives the first-week's salary in the offering. Just as Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils to Melchizedek as a concrete act of gratitude.

This five-step process can be “tweaked” and applied to many of life's concerns. Just a few things – let God choose the “perfect answer”, He may have a surprise in store for you. Secondly see the answer arriving as an outgrowth of God's character – of his love and concern for you, not as the outcome of a magical prayer. Solution-focused faith is not magic, it is getting you out of negativity and unbelief and aligned with God's character, processes and will. Thirdly do not doubt, be unwavering, keep the faith connection solid and trusting (see James 1:5-8).

Blessings,

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