



Big Faith Andy Stanley

Scripture: Matthew 8:5-10

Idea: *Confidence or intentional dependency*

Introduction

1. Imagine with me . . . believers and unbelievers . . .
2. What if God really existed and you had perfect faith in him?
3. What if you were absolutely confident that God was with you?
4. What if you were confident that everything that came your way was part of a divine plan, and that some day you would look back and see how it all fit?
5. Imagine what would happen to your stress and fear level.
6. What if you were confident that God really had your best interests in mind when he gave us his laws and principles to live by?
7. What if when faced with temptation you immediately went into a mode of: God, I trust you to get me through this and you leaned hard and walked away?
8. If we lived with the confidence that God was with us, for us, working through us, our responses to everything would be different, wouldn't they? Job losses, sicknesses . . .
9. Every once in a while I meet Christians who have fully embraced that. They are compelling people. Usually they came to that realization the hard way. But they are amazing. At times they seem to be in denial. But over time it becomes evident that it is their amazing faith.

Here's something Christians believe . . .

I. Humankind's problems began when we quit trusting God.

- A. Before Adam and Eve ate, they doubted that God had their best interests in mind.
- B. When trust was broken, the relationship was broken. Sin followed.
 1. God has been on a quest ever since to get humankind to re-engage their faith in him.
 2. The entire Old Testament is a story of God saying, "Trust me."
 3. It is interesting that God didn't give Israel the law until they saw him work in their best interests in Egypt. "Trust me!"

The New Testament is no different . . .

II. Christianity is an invitation to reenter a relationship of trust with God the FATHER.

- A. At the cross sin was forgiven and we were invited once again . . . not to obey first—but to trust.
- B. It makes perfect sense that salvation comes by faith, not obedience, because the door out of relationship was faith. To re-engage, we walk back in.
 1. Obedience wasn't broken in the garden . . . faith was.
 2. Intimate relationships are not built on obedience. They are built on trust.
 3. Obedience can be forced. Ask the people of Iraq. Trust must be earned.

Go To Text. [*See Scripture Notes at end of outline.*]