

## **The Faith of a Fool**

Sunday, January 19, 2020

**Fool** (as defined by my good friend Marriam Webster): A person lacking in judgment or prudence; a harmlessly deranged person or one lacking in common powers of understanding.

**Now, the question is, “Which of those two definitions best defines you?” (Just Kidding... or maybe not!)**

*We’ll come back to the whole “fool” thing later... **Actually, here’s a question for you...***

**Have you ever heard someone say, “God will never give you more than you can handle?”** (Get a showing of hands, etc...)

**I am willing to bet that many of us here today would say that the phrase, “*God will never give you more than you can handle*” is found in the Bible? *Right?***

**Well, if you will allow me to burst you’re bubble, let me make it clear that nowhere in the Bible does it say, “*God will never give you more than you can handle*”!**

***So, where did the phrase, “God will never give you more than you can handle” come from?***

**The phrase is actually a misinterpretation of 1 Corinthians 10:13. *But as with all verses in scripture, this verse is better understood in its greater context.* Look with me at 1 Corinthians 10:1-13...**

### **1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and that they all passed through the sea. <sup>2</sup> They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. *(Paul uses the word baptism here in a figurative sense. In that, Israel’s union with Moses was a part of God’s redemptive plan for Israel, just like our union with Christ is a part of God’s redemptive plan for you and I)* <sup>3</sup> They all ate the same spiritual food <sup>4</sup> and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup> Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. <sup>7</sup> Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.” (*Revelry - loud, crazy, drunken partying*) <sup>8</sup> We should not commit sexual immorality (*engaging in sexual acts outside of the sanctity of marriage*), as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. <sup>9</sup> We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. <sup>10</sup> And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

<sup>11</sup> These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. <sup>12</sup> So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!

<sup>13</sup> **No temptation** (*The Greek for tempted or temptation can also mean tested or testing*) **has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted (tested) beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted (tested), He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.**

*Pause....*

***The other night I was cleaning out my drawers...*** (*And NO, this had nothing to do with me having the stomach virus! I’m talking about my DESK DRAWERS, as I was moving out of my old office into my new office! Geez Louise!*)

*Let me rephrase that... This past Monday night, I was cleaning out my DESK DRAWERS, and I was tired. It was 10:30pm and I was still in recovery mode from the stomach flu, and had been at the office for well over 12 hours, and I was at the point where I was tossing more in the garbage than I was keeping... I came across two mangled up, folded up, pieces of notebook paper, and was about to toss them when something told me to open them up to see what it was... **it was a drawing and a note from a child that literally stopped me in my tracks!** Here’s the first page...*

It says, “To Astor Chris from Emma Smith” at the top. *Expand...*

But that’s not the piece of notebook paper that stopped me in my tracks. It was this...

It says, **“God doesn’t give us what we can handle, He helps us handle what we are given”**.

**Friends, that is powerful! POWERFUL!** I mean, I don't even remember receiving this note and have racked my brain all week trying to figure out who that little girl was that gave it to me.

I still don't know who she is, or how the note ended up in my desk drawer. But I do know this... **GOD HAD ME OPEN THAT NOTE ON MONDAY SO THAT YOU COULD HEAR WHAT LITTLE EMMA SMITH HAD TO SAY ON SUNDAY!**

Let's look at **1 Corinthians 10:13** again...

### **1 Corinthians 10:13**

**<sup>13</sup> No temptation** (*no testing of your faith... your faith in God*) **has overtaken you except what is common to mankind.**

In other words, what ever you're going through, tempted by... whatever is testing your faith, is nothing that someone else hasn't already been through. *Expand...*

**And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted** (*tested*) **beyond what you can bear.**

**God is faithful!** When circumstances are beyond your control... when the mountain seems too difficult to climb... when the diagnosis isn't good... when we experience unexpected loss... when the marriage is broken, the family is a wreck, the job is on the line... whatever it is, **GOD IS FAITHFUL!** *And even though you may never understand "the what or why" on this side of heaven, you can trust in God's perfect will, and His perfect plan. And BTW... it's a plan that goes way beyond this short leg of our eternal journey called "life on this earth".*

The verse goes on to say...

**But when** (*not if*) **you are tempted** (*tested*), **He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.**

### **A few things here...**

- 1. You will go through trials and temptations.** How you **choose** to respond to them is what will either make you or break you.
- 2. God will always provide a way out of it, or a way to get through it.**
  - I can't tell you how many times God gave me an opportunity to not "TO DO OR BE STUPID" and what did I do... STUPID! (*Expand...*)

- Or maybe for you, you've suffered a loss, be it the death of a loved one, a miscarriage, or a family member leaving or deserting you... Know that God will put people around you to help you through it, and love on you through the pain. And maybe someday, God will use you to help someone else that is going through a similar situation. There are things that have happened in my life that I could never wrap my head around a reason as to why God would allow them to happen... but looking back, I can see how God has used those times to shape me, mold me, and make me into the man I am today. He's doing the same thing in many of your lives right now...

3. **You have to endure. You have to keep keeping on keeping on!** You have to press on, you have to fight! You have to get up tomorrow morning and say, today is going to be better than tomorrow because God is faithful! When you fall down, you have to get back up, knowing that God is for you, and that He is with you!

**But you do have to choose...** You have to choose how you are going to respond when the bottom falls out... when you can't stop the drinking or the drugs without help. When you are tempted to go against God's will and plan for your life as He has laid out for us in scripture. *(Pause...)* **And you have to choose to trust God when you don't understand, when you can't see the why or the what... That's hard... It takes Unshakeable Faith.**

Look with me at James 2:14-26 *(I will read straight through without stopping)*

### **James 2:14-26**

<sup>14</sup> What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? *(In other words, you "say" you have faith, but you don't exhibit your faith by your actions)* Can such faith save them? <sup>15</sup> Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. <sup>16</sup> If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

<sup>18</sup> But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

<sup>20</sup> **You foolish person**, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? <sup>21</sup> Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? <sup>22</sup> You see that his faith and his

actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. <sup>23</sup> And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. <sup>24</sup> You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. <sup>25</sup> In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? <sup>26</sup> As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

FAITH without ACTION is what I like to call, "**The Faith of a Fool**".

If you'll remember when we read I Corinthians chapter 10, many people who claimed to be a part of the Tribe of Israel, many who claimed to be followers of God never crossed the red sea, nor made it to the promised land...

You see, they claimed to Trust God, have faith in God, but when the rubber met the road, when times got tough, when life happened, when loss came, when the burden became too heavy, the road too long... they gave up, they quit, they stopped trying... *Truth be told, they never truly trusted, nor had faith in God.*

Let me remind us of what Emma Smith wrote... **God doesn't give us what we can handle, He helps us handle what we are given.**

The words of Jesus from **John 16:33** - In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

***When you have Unshakeable Faith, you don't have to tell people about it or put on a Christianese Mask... Your faith will be evident by what you do, how you respond, especially in the midst of your trials and temptations. Again, you have to choose... Are you going to be known as a person with Unshakeable Faith? Or will you be as a person who has the faith of a fool? If you choose the later, know that you're only fooling yourself.***