

# REAL**Truth**. REAL**Love**. REAL**Hope**.

A quarterly newsletter from Pastor Jeff Schreve and *From His Heart Ministries*

Spring 2016

## How to turn a fragile faith into a **firm foundation** of trust

By Jeff Schreve

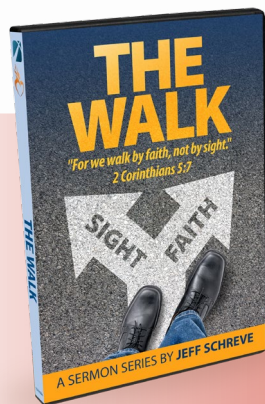
When I was a kid, my dad taught me how to build a house of cards. It was fun to see how far I could go before the rickety structure came tumbling down. Everyone knows a house of cards can easily collapse with the slightest bit of pressure.

As I talk with Christians today, I discover many of them have a faith that's a lot like a house of cards. It doesn't take much adversity to knock them down. Obviously, God does not want us to have a fragile faith. He wants us to have a firm foundation, a house built on the Rock that can withstand the storms and pressures of life. He wants us to have faith in His promises even when we don't see them—to "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7).

In Mark 9, there is a story about a father with a fragile faith. This man's son was cruelly demon possessed, and he asked the disciples to cast the demon out. He said to Jesus, "*Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit .... I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it.*" And [Jesus] answered them and said, 'O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!'

*They brought the boy to Him. ... And He asked his father, 'How long has this been happening to him?' And he said, 'From childhood. ... But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!' And Jesus said to him, 'If You can?' All things are possible to him who believes.' Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, 'I do believe; help my unbelief.'*" (vv. 17-24)

Without question, this father had a faith that was failing. The adverse circumstances were threatening to collapse his confidence in the Lord. His gnawing unbelief was  
(continued on p 2)



**Stand firm on  
God's incredible  
promises!**

See page 3 for details ...

## INSIDE >

- Q&A with Jeff, p. 2
- From Debbie's Heart, p. 3
- Your Gifts at Work! p. 4
- A Note to You from Jeff, p. 4

## How to turn a fragile faith into a firm foundation of trust *(continued from p 1)*

shaking the table, and his house of cards was about to fall. Can you relate? **The truth is, every single one of us, on some level, has a fragile faith.**

Well, Jesus responded to this father's fragile faith, cast out the demon, and delivered his son. I love what the Gospel of Matthew says happened next ...

*"Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not drive it out?' And He said to them, 'Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.' "* (Matthew 17:19-20)

What is needed to do great things in His name? A mustard seed of faith! The mustard seed was the smallest seed that anyone in that day knew about. Although the seed was so small, it did not stay small. It grew into a huge shrub. So, Jesus was saying that a small, fragile faith doesn't have to stay small and fragile!

**God wants to do something big with our fragile faith. He wants that mustard seed to grow, becoming large, strong, deeply rooted, and abundantly fruitful.**

God wants to do something big with our fragile faith. He wants that mustard seed to grow, becoming large, strong, deeply rooted, and abundantly fruitful. But in order to experience that, we've got to take a step of faith. We have to start believing God, regardless of the circumstances!

Today, your faith may be fragile. Step out on the Lord's Word and believe God for something big. Plant that mustard seed faith in the ground. Give it to God, and He'll make it grow into a firm foundation of trust!

## Q&A WITH JEFF

**Q: Jeff, I'm really going through a tough time right now. There are days I honestly want to just give up on my faith. What should I do?**

A: I can certainly understand tough times. I can understand the feelings of wanting to quit ... but don't do it! Remember 2 Chronicles 7:3—God is good and God loves you! In addition, Romans 8:28 teaches that "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God." No matter how difficult the circumstances may be right now, throwing in the towel is not an option. Be faithful all the way to your last breath (Revelation 2:10). Keep praising God and trusting Him. He is the God of hope (Romans 15:13) who can and will turn things around in your life as you refuse to quit.

**Q: I have a friend who goes to church but has a lot of doubts about faith. How can I encourage her to "plant her mustard seed" so God can grow it?**

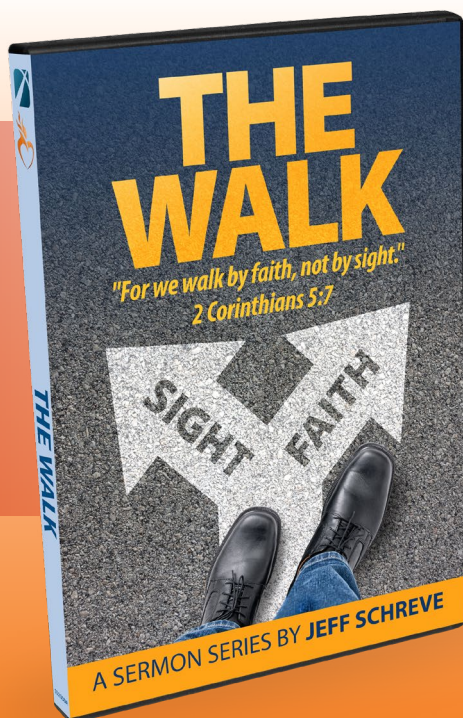
A: I would encourage your friend to study the life of Jesus, especially His resurrection from the dead. The empty tomb is the heart of the Christian faith. Jesus said He would rise from the dead ... and He did! Since He conquered death, hell, and the grave (no one else has ever done that), I can trust everything He says to be true and right. I can stake my life and my eternity on the Word of the Lord because "He who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23).



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Stand firm on  
God's incredible  
promises!



Dear Friend,

Walking by faith in the Christian life can be a real challenge. That's why I want to send you my new 5-message CD series, *The Walk*. In this series, I provide practical biblical guidance to help you take God at His Word and stand firm on His promises—regardless of your circumstances.

*The Walk* is my gift to say thank you for your partnership as we speak the truth in love to a lost and broken world. So be sure to request your copy on the enclosed reply card when you send your donation. Thank you for your support!

*Pastor Jeff*

## FROM DEBBIE'S HEART: **Believing Is Seeing**

By Debbie Schreve



The saying “seeing is believing” is well known. This idiom was first recorded in 1639, and it was meant to suggest that only physical evidence is convincing and everything else is questionable.

There is a good chance you've heard the story of “doubting Thomas” from John chapter 20. Thomas was the disciple known for his skeptical “seeing is believing” attitude. He was the disciple who said, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe” (John 20:25).

Thomas wasn't the only one with doubts, but he was the only one honest enough to voice his disbelief. And one of the things I love the most is when Jesus appeared to His disciples after the resurrection and spoke directly to Thomas. Jesus said, “Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing” (John 20:27). I love that Jesus wasn't angered by Thomas's disbelief. In fact, Jesus loved Thomas enough to call him

out by name and reassure him of His resurrection. Thomas responded with these words—“My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). Thomas's doubt was exchanged for belief and heartfelt worship.

Many people who saw Jesus physically never believed He was the Son of God. But there are many more today who never saw Jesus but still believe. Jesus said, “Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed” (John 20:29). The Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and changed lives testify to that fact that He is alive today. You can go to Him with your honest doubts and trust Him to reveal Himself to you.

I can take the Lord at His word regardless of what I see. I know His Spirit lives within me and will never leave me. I can bring my doubts and questions to Him and know that He loves me unconditionally and is faithful to meet all my needs. He may not answer all my questions, but He will ALWAYS assure me that He is a good God, He is in control, and He loves me. His Word is “concrete evidence” enough for me, and it can be for you too.

# A NOTE TO YOU FROM JEFF



Dear Friend,

You've probably had this experience before ...

You know you shouldn't do X. You understand God forbids it. But you give in and do it anyway. Then as soon as you do it, you experience tremendous guilt and shame.

The devil is quick to attack in those times of defeat. He whispers in his accusing hiss, "Look at what you did! And you call yourself a Christian? Do you think God could ever forgive you for what you did? No way! God is through with you. You might as well just curse Him and die." Sound familiar?

Yep, the devil is good at accusing and deceiving. He comes to us when we're down and discouraged, and he speaks lies. Those lies seem like the truth because they always match up with our feelings. We feel like a loser when we willingly sin—so the devil just reinforces those feelings with his lies.

That's why we walk by faith, not by feelings. When we let our feelings dictate how close we feel to God, it creates the perfect opportunity for us to believe the devil. But when we have faith that God is with us no matter what, Satan's lies fail to knock us down. We are able to overcome his deception with the truth of God's Word.

So what do you do when you fall? You get up, confess your sin, remember who you are in Christ, claim His promised forgiveness, and start walking again by faith.

My prayer is that this edition of our ministry newsletter has been an encouragement to you in your walk with Jesus. I also hope you've been reminded of how God is using your prayers and gifts to reach people all over the world with His message of love.

Thank you for your support of *From His Heart Ministries*. I'm grateful to partner with you!

Love,



## Your Gifts at Work!

Thank you for helping to make the following testimonies possible through your support of *From His Heart*!

*"Thank you for standing on the Word. Our nation is in grave danger, and I pray for you to continue in this important task!"* —Rick

*"I've been listening for one week, and I just wanted to say what a blessing your radio ministry has been. I so appreciate the way you bring the Word across."*  
—Vicki

*"I listen to you on my way to work, and your messages fill me with the love of Jesus. It lights my soul on fire! I have introduced a few people to you, and they love listening. My heart feels like it could burst open and shine His light all over the world!"* —Paula

## Find Encouragement in Our Online Community of Faith

Visit **fromhisheart.org** today and click on the Facebook and Twitter icons on the top half of the homepage—and be encouraged by the online community of faith you'll discover!

