# “But if Not” Faith

(All prophecies are Jesus speaking unless otherwise indicated.)

You just cannot make your obedience contingent on your terms and the way you think God ought to answer, and providing everything goes all right. You can't just only be God's fair-weather friend! You have to keep on serving the Lord even when everything goes all wrong! If you're only going to be willing to believe and obey the Lord as long as everything goes all right, you won't be believing or obeying very much, because a lot of things go wrong when you're serving the Lord!--"Many are the afflictions of the righteous!" [(1)]

It is easy to trust and have faith when all goes well, when all around you are blessings; but when all seems to go wrong and you feel as though your very life and your very desire to live is being snuffed out, when you feel your heart sink and ache within you, if you still have faith, oh, what great faith it is! How it pleases Me! [(2)]

Having your faith tried in a difficult situation is never easy and never will be, and not something one looks forward to or would wish upon themselves. But it is during those times that you have to remind yourself over and over again that I am in control. I love you. You are My bride, I am your Husband, and I will never abandon you or desert you. I am with you through all things, both the good and the bad, and during those times of trial and tribulation I am right by your side, no matter how much you may think or feel I am not, or whatever lies the Enemy whispers in your ear. [(3)]

This is the victory which overcomes the world--your faith! And faith is hanging on to the fact that I will turn each and every circumstance to good, no matter how it looks to you. That is faith, and faith always results in victory. It's as simple as that. [(4)]

It is hard to understand "Why." So don't try to. Instead, understand "Who." Don't wonder, "Why did this happen?" But proclaim in faith, "My Jesus allowed this to happen!" Then, instead of looking at the horrible situation, you will be looking at Me, the Founder and Lover of your life. When all you see is the fact that I allowed it, then your faith is sure and your heart is encouraged and your spirit is refreshed--because you know that I only allow that which is good in your life. When you have faith in the "Who," then you don't need to worry about the "Why." [(5)]

It's easy for circumstances and conditions to hurt your faith, if that's what you're going by. You can find so many things that didn't work, and so few that were obvious and irrefutable miracles. It's also easy to lack faith and feel you don't "deserve" a miracle when you start looking at your sins or faults or imperfections, or other factors that you feel have some bearing on being able to ask in full faith. All of these things contribute to fewer answers than you think you should see.

Christians throughout the centuries have puzzled at length, as well as been derided by atheists, over the core question of, "Why doesn't God always answer prayer?" The solution is not to try to understand why things do or don't happen--unless there is a specific cause that I want to show you so that you can learn for next time--but instead to work on your reactions to those things. Your goal should be to approach each situation with fresh faith and trust, counting on Me to do what I know is best, and believing that I've come through for you regardless of how things turn out.

It's that "But If Not" faith (ML #313). It's the wisdom of knowing that, although on the one hand nothing is impossible for you, yet not everything is according to My will, and many are the afflictions of the righteous. The power that I've promised you is understood to be in balance with the other things that I've promised you; for example, about the trials of life and how I use them to strengthen you, or the difficulties of serving Me and how that is part of your testimony, or the lessons that you come to Earth to learn in the first place.

As far as what you can do to be more effective in your use of the spiritual weapons and have access to greater spiritual power, of course there are steps that you can take. It's all in the Word. But it takes effort to live this way, and it's not possible for you to be perfect in this regard--although growing spiritually and being more in tune with Me and fulfilling the requirements for accessing spiritual power are things that I intend for you to be continually working toward and growing into.

But you have this treasure (My power), in earthen vessels (your weak, sinful human frames), that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of you (2Cor.4:7). Keeping all the conditions in the Word and being obedient and staying separate from the world does increase your ability to channel more spiritual power. But at the same time, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. You have to balance these things. You must understand that you are capable of doing a lot for Me, yet at the same time I know that you're sinners, and I take you where you're at and work with you.

There are so many factors in play, and the only absolute is faith--a faith that goes beyond "proof" or validation, a faith that you hold to and keep strong all the days of your life even if you do "die in faith, not having received the promises" (Heb.11:13).

The fact is, you are special. You are chosen for a special ministry, but like all the other Christians down through the

years, you must walk by faith and not by sight (2Cor.5:7). Reconciling the many positive promises in My Word against the difficult and often terrible conditions of their lives was part of their test and their testimony. It's part of their honor. It's part of the faith life. It's the same for you.

You're not the first ones to have faced this dilemma and you won't be the last. That's why it's time to get back to that "But If Not" faith and not worry about the things that haven't happened or didn't turn out as you'd hoped. Picture yourself in a room with endless doors, and I tell you that you have the keys in your hands which will unlock all of them. You try door after door, and while the keys unlock them all, some don't open because a greater power and force is holding it shut--My will.

The thing to do is to thank Me for what doesn't work out, and move on to find the one that will. Trust Me that I will take care of you, and I will prosper you, and I will bring you success--the success I know you need, according to My standards. If you expect that you'll be able to demand something according to your will, not Mine, you'll be disappointed (Jn.5:30).

True success in the realm of miracles and answers to prayer comes through faith--believing and not doubting. That doesn't mean everything will work out as you think it should, but it means I will be victorious in the end, and so will you, because we are one.

Consider all the Christians who have been martyred or have died in accidents or even from sickness, despite My promises of "it shall not come nigh thee," or "I will deliver you from every evil work" (Psa.91:7; 2Tim.4:18).

Even in the Early Church, when there were so many obvious miracles and manifestations of My power, the disciples still had to face this issue. James was executed very early on, despite the prayers prayed for his release and safekeeping. At the same time, Peter was freed (Acts 12). The victory in such a case is to praise Me, and to continue to fervently trust Me despite the seeming contradictions.

My plan always bears fruit in the end, and you will always be grateful for the times you have walked by faith and not by sight. The more you question Me, the more your spiritual power decreases. The more you trust Me, the more you are empowered to ask and receive. You want the signs first, but it doesn't work that way. You have to believe and keep believing, and that's when you see the answers.

Back to the room full of doors: If you sit down and cry at the foot of the door you can't enter you'll open fewer doors (less miracles), because you're losing faith in My power to answer. But if you can shrug off the one that didn't open, trusting in My goodness and believing that there was a good reason, and continue to use the keys in other doors, then chances are you will see more miracles because you had the faith to keep asking and opening.

There is no bypassing the faith factor in your life for Me. Everything in your life of service and sacrifice and even your belief in Me is based on faith. There are some proofs of My divine guidance, such as My creation, and you do see miracles that remind you that I am supernatural and work on your behalf. But even those miracles require faith to believe and to recognize and appreciate. It's all a matter of faith from the beginning to the end, and if you want to be successful, you must learn how to be encouraged by My "yes" without being discouraged by My "no."

If something doesn't work out as you'd asked, even if you targeted it with key power, then trust Me that you have done what you could. Rejoice in Me anyway, practice extreme praise, and try again to find My will. Whatever My plan is for you, chalk up times of disappointment to My knowing better than you, and having a plan that is more wonderful and mysterious than yours.

That's what faith is--knowing that I'm here, and that what I've promised I'm not only able to perform, but I'm going to perform. I know that you sometimes feel that My promises are a bit nebulous--that there are so many conditions, or that to receive an answer it has to be exactly in line with My will. That's true--any promise could be fulfilled in a number of ways. It's hard for you when you don't fully know what the outcome will be. But when you base your faith on a certain outcome instead of trusting Me to fulfill My perfect will, that's when you're easily disappointed.

There is always more to any given situation than you can see, aspects which are beyond your understanding. You must remember that and base your faith on My ability to do what I know is best, not what your limited sight deems to be best.

This is not a new battle you are facing. Any Christian, any man or woman of prayer throughout the ages, has had to come face to face with this reality and reach a place of yieldedness and humility before Me in their faith.

Look at the very clear promise, "If you shall ask anything in My name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14). Imagine all the people who have claimed this promise, asked for something in My name, and then had it not happen in the way they had hoped or asked. It's a tough pill to swallow in many cases, and when you try to prove Me one way or the other by saying, "Okay, Lord, if this is all really true, make a box of gold appear in front of me," chances are that's not going to happen and you're going to be faced with the decision of trusting Me anyway, even if there are apparent contradictions and things you don't understand.

That's really what it all comes down to. You have to take it by faith that not everything happens as you think it should. Every Christian has faced some share of disappointments and crises of faith, along with miracles and touches of My love. So although you will face disappointments, if you have a true relationship with Me and a true belief in Me, you will choose faith and belief contrary to all reason, and you will understand that when everything seems broken and mixed up, that I have a better plan somehow, that I'm most certainly still here, and that all things are possible with Me.

In a way, the disappointments that test your faith benefit you more in the long run than the things that turn out the way you want them to. The disappointments make you search your heart, they make you examine your faith, and when you do, you'll come down to the core of it all: that very little of the spiritual realm is provable in the physical, and that the decision

to believe or not is simply based on your choice, not on the facts. That's the way I made it. That's why it's called faith, because you can't see it, you can't prove it. "More blessed are they who, having not seen, yet have believed" (Jn.20:29).

You can choose to have faith or you can choose disbelief. If you choose faith, you become more powerful in spirit, you are less daunted by the "winds and the waves," the circumstances and conditions that would pull you away from faith, and you grow stronger, not weaker. When you are strengthened in faith, you command more of My power. It's a cycle of victory and growth and greater answers to prayer, greater happiness, greater trust in Me.

Faith is the victory; there's no other way. There's no proof that will satisfy the carnal mind, there's no test that I can be put to that will put to rest these questions once and for all. There's nothing that can supersede the role of faith. Faith is the invisible bridge between what you see and what you can't see. Faith spans the gap and obtains miracles. Even if you die in faith without receiving the fulfillment of the promise, you are more than a conqueror, because you walked by faith and not by sight, and you did what you were supposed to do and you finished the course.

There are countless things that you don't understand--and not only that you don't understand, but that I'm not going to reveal to you. You hear some things, you understand some concepts, you let Me explain to you some spiritual truths, and then you feel that you should be able to put it all together and sum it up in a logical conclusion that doesn't require faith. But that isn't possible. You don't get to see what's on this side and all the reasons for things and all the mysteries until you get here.

From now until then, faith is the only connection that you have to this side. It's nothing you can see, nothing you can feel, and nothing you can prove. It only exists in the hearts of those who love Me. And when you have faith, you somehow know, even if you don't know at all. There's something beyond the physical, something inside you that makes that link and connection, even though the path is so unapparent to the carnal mind.

Real faith isn't contingent on results. You don't strengthen your faith by the events around you; you strengthen your faith through trusting Me despite the events around you. You strengthen your faith by belief in Me and taking Me at My Word despite the results, not because of them. Anything else is proof or confirmation of faith, not faith itself.

Things go wrong and you love Me anyway--that's faith. You claim the keys and things don't turn out as you wanted, but you still go on for Me--that's faith. You have been disappointed before, but you try again next time--that's faith. You don't quit, no matter what things look like and no matter what does or doesn't happen--that's faith.

When you keep doing these things, living in this faith-filled way, the end result is that you come to realize that all things really are possible to you, and that there is no defeat or setback in My service. By taking the road of faith and not worrying about the "proof," you eventually find that your questions have been answered, all your needs have been supplied, and I have worked things out just like you asked Me to. If something wasn't My will for you, you didn't really want it anyway. All the things that needed to happen have happened, I was never defeated, and in the end, My plan has been fulfilled.

You'll see those days, you'll feel those feelings, but only through faith. Now and forever it's going to take faith. [6]

There is no situation that is outside the reach of My love. There is no heartache that I will not heal. There is no situation that is completely bad, because there is always something good that will come from it, for those who trust in Me. [7]

Though you feel the loss today, there will come a time when these tears and this loss will be forgotten and we will be together forever. At that time you will be so grateful that you continued on in faith; that you kept fighting, that you kept believing; that you kept trusting in My Love; that you were willing to let go of your natural mind and your carnal way of looking at things; that you forsook the Enemy's lies that this was just a punishment to you, a condemnation to you, a judgment by an angry God, and you were willing to receive My Words of truth that this is from My hand and it is My Love and it is part of My plan for you and for many. [8]

I don't let you get into any pickles I can't get you out of. I don't let things happen to you that shouldn't, and that won't do some good in some way. So you should never look at any situation as bad, as a loss, as a failure, or as hopeless. Either I'll make it better or it's the way I intended for it to be. There's nothing you can't look at positively and with faith, no matter how bad it might seem. [9]

Your job is to pray; your job is to be desperate and full of faith, regardless of how I seem to answer or not answer.

It comes down to whether you believe I will answer prayer or not. If you believe that I can take every prayer and do something with it, then you can always pray in faith. But if you're always worrying about whether I'm going to do something other than what you're asking for, and if you'll end up looking foolish or disappointed in the end, that hinders your praying a full-of-faith prayer.

My solutions are often slower, subtler, and require more faith on your part to believe that I'm really working.

Prayer and the working of miracles will always take faith. For you to be powerful in prayer, you'll have to stop holding Me to your own standards of what you think should be done. Are you asking Me for My will or yours to be done? When you pray, state the petition you have need of, but ask Me to work in My way. You can give Me direct requests, but know that I will answer in My way, which is so far removed from your way that it's like it says in the Bible, "as far as the heavens above the

Earth." You'll never fully understand how I work. Sometimes I answer exactly as you wanted, and sometimes it seems nothing like what you wanted.

All I need from you is trust. Give Me a little more slack, a little more room to work in the way I see fit, without your starting to murmur and complain and doubt and say that I'm not coming through, and that you're always having to make excuses for My failures.

Let go of that pride that needs to see results and vindication. Who are you trying to justify this for, anyway? Why do you feel humiliated when your prayers aren't answered exactly as you had hoped? Are you weak in faith? Do you want to see big showy miracles so that you can have something tangible to stand on to justify your faith in Me to those who mock?

I ask you to walk by faith, not by sight. And the kind of faith that will overcome the world and all of your detractors and enemies is the kind of faith that says, "But if not." You need the kind of faith that doesn't need a sign in order to feel vindicated, but that you'll believe in Me and My work even if nothing visibly changes. That's the kind of faith I will bless with real action! [(10)]

## What to Do When Things Don't Turn Out the Way You Wanted

When something doesn't turn out the way you thought or hoped it would, it doesn't necessarily mean that your faith has not met the challenge or the occasion. One of the fundamentals in calling on Me and availing yourself of the power and weapon of prayer is in allowing Me the freedom to work as I please and as I know is best.

Remember, I see way out in front of you, and with My great love for you and others involved in the equation, I always have the big picture in mind. But rest assured that when you put Me on the spot and your faith commands action and you are meeting the conditions, you can be guaranteed that the outcome will be for the best--even if it's somewhat different than what you expected.

I delight in working contrary to natural expectations, while still holding true to My promises. You may have your goal or desires set on the supply of a certain need, and that's understandable. There are many needs in your lives, all of which are part and parcel of your lives of service for Me. So while you may be petitioning Me and visualizing that need supplied in a certain manner, My eyes are seeing way beyond the supply of just that need.

For example, I like to surprise you with My ingenuity in being able to not just answer one of your prayers and supply one need, but in wonderfully answering that prayer and many other related needs and prayers at the same time. Some of you may remember a time in your life when you experienced these types of answers--seeing Me answer one prayer or need with many other little intertwined miracles along the way.

Remember that My main concern--the reason for it all--is to win the lost to Me. You, My brides and children of David, are of such incomparable value to Me, because there are no others like you. That's why if there is ever any way I can use you to help in the chain of events of reaching or witnessing or winning others to Me, I will do so. So I may take you on a roundabout path in answering your prayers, but you can know that that path is for a very special purpose and reason. I just work on a higher plane than you do.

That's why it's important that when I don't answer a certain prayer or request in the expected or desired way, that you don't look too much to yourselves and even to your own faith and start analyzing your own faith as the possible "glitch in the matrix."

Of course, perhaps on some occasions your faith has not met the conditions, or it needs some fine-tuning or realigning. Or sometimes you want something so badly, and you're determined that it's My will for you, that you can't even hear clearly from Me on the matter. Then you go ahead, thinking that you're proceeding in faith. Then when I bring about My will, you wonder what happened. What happened was that what you wanted, what you "had the faith for," and even what you thought was My will, was not--I had a bigger and better plan.

But more often than not it's a walk of faith, and you learn and grow as you take those steps of faith. Often you discover while taking those steps that I had a higher plan, a greater answer, and the solution was not in your analyzing and picking apart your faith--which can become a work of the flesh--but your part to play was in proceeding in faith in a spirit of trust. That's when faith's twin sister steps on the stage: trust. Faith and trust walk hand in hand, and very seldom do they walk alone.

Or perhaps I will answer in such a way that may not look to the natural eye like your faith has been rewarded, but in actuality I'm up the road peeking around the corner--a corner you can't quite see around at present--and I'm giving you an "around the corner" answer, the kind that only I, your awesome, multi-dimensional Navigator, can give.

So, My loves, when you get one of those "unexpected" answers and you know you've prayed in faith and met the conditions I've shown you, you can almost always know that I have something bigger and better up My sleeve for you.--One of those cool answers that you know only I and My helpers could have possibly engineered and brought to pass. And what do those type of answers do?--They engender even more faith, don't they? So it's a win-win situation. [(11)]

(Dad speaking:) There are lots of disappointments in life. Things go wrong. Sometimes things change midstream and end up somewhere else. Sometimes even your efforts to do good are rejected, and it can lead to disappointment. But even if

you're disappointed about the way things turn out, you don't have to be discouraged. There's a big difference between just feeling disappointed and letting things get you down and discouraged to the point that you feel like giving up, or get angry, or lash out and retaliate in some way.

It's okay to feel disappointed sometimes; in fact, the Lord allows incidents and circumstances in life that are disappointing to strengthen us. He tests and tries us to see how we're doing and how we're going to react. Even disappointment and things going wrong don't have to keep you down and discouraged, because your faith and your attitude can determine the way the circumstances affect you. And often your faith and trust in the Lord can even change circumstances completely, as the Lord works on your behalf. It's all in how you look at it, how you take it.

Circumstances and events don't have to control you. With the Lord's help and with the right positive attitude, you can go through any changes, any disappointments, any circumstances, and come out happy. There's real power in the spirit, and you have the opportunity to choose what kind of spirit you want to be in, whether up or down. It's often the tests in life that can really bring out the best in your attitude, if you'll let them. It's not a test to stay encouraged when everything's going right, but it's when things go wrong in life that your attitude and faith get tested.

The Lord has all the power and strength you need for any situation. All you have to do is look to Him and draw on His strength to overcome any difficulty. Just ask Him to change things around. If He can't change the circumstances, then He can help you to change how you feel about things. It's a wonderful thing to have the power of Jesus ready to help you. Praise the Lord! [12]


1. But If Not...! #0313:13
2. Freedom From Condemnation! #3009:20
3. Jesus' Life On Earth, Part 4 #3604:72
4. The Heavenly Vision #3608:64
5. Gold, Roses, And Thorns! #3639:74
6. Faith--now and forever! #3699:70-99
7. Beyond Boundaries, Part 3: Second Generation Leave-takers #3809:97
8. Freedom From Condemnation! #3009:25
9. Positively Positive, Part 4 #3705:89
10. The Mysterious Keys, Part 2 #3473:88, 89, 91, 94-96, 98
11. Greater Faith, Part 2 #3632:38-47
12. Gems and Jewels, Part 1 #3416:62-65