

“Losing” Your Faith

While it is true that we don't always *mean what we say*, (e.g. “I'm sorry” or “I love you” or even “I mean it”), it is also true that don't always *say what we mean* (“I *could* care less,” “hot water heater,” or even “Slow Children at Play”). This latter problem, of not *saying what we mean*, is usually the result of ignorance or lack of careful attention to our words, cf. Matt.12:36; Jas.3:2. However, this tendency is not limited to our mundane and inconsequential speech; it also creeps over into how we *try* to express ourselves spiritually. For instance, often when a “Christian” says, “**I think I'm losing my faith,**” they don't typically mean:

- “I've lost my Bible,” since real “*faith*” comes from hearing “*the word of God/Christ*,” Rom.10:17; or even necessarily that
- “I know longer believe the Bible is God's word and therefore true,” though such *doubts* may be involved, cf. Jas.1:6-8; cp. Jas.4:20.

Instead, what they often really mean is:

- “**God didn't do what I wanted Him to do.**” Perhaps they wanted something, or wanted God to do something, and prayed earnestly for such to no avail. Thus, they decide that if God won't do what they really want Him to, they're “done” serving Him. How *arrogant*, Rom.9:20; and *selfish*, 2Cor.12:7ff - Paul's *will* regarding his “*thorn in the flesh*” did not take into account God's *will* and *purposes* at first, cp.v.8 with vv.9-10, but regardless, he didn't abandon his faith! If our “faith” is dependent on God doing what we *think He should*, we have it exactly backwards regarding *who* serves *Whom* (and why!), Matt.7:21. That's not *losing your faith* – it's *abandoning your faith* for shortsighted and selfish reasons.
- “**I want or want to do something other than what God said.**” Many *departures from faith* (because that's typically a far more accurate description than “losing” it) stem from a simple issue of *desire*- we want something/someone God says we can't have, cf. Jas.4:1-4.
- “**God's word/will/perspective is different from mine, and I'm choosing mine over His.**” This one has unfortunately become more commonplace in our generation largely in two specific areas: **1) Sex**: the “Sexual Revolution” *departed from faith* regarding “when” – God said *after marriage*, but S.R. said *after puberty*; “with whom” – God said *with spouses*, but S.R. *anyone willing*; “how” – God said *male and female*, but S.R. repeated and adapted to *anyone willing* whether *male* or *female* (or *both*); “why” – God said *reproduction* and *natural expression of married love*, but S.R. said *whatever feels good* or *fulfills desire*, 1Cor.6:15-20; and, **2) Money**: when God's proper *purposes* for it, proper *means of attainment*, and proper *perspective* of it are abandoned for the world's, “faith” (and with it *contentment*) is sold for “*love of money*,” 1Tim.6:10ff. Because of the “standards” of *faith* conflict with “mine” (or *the world's* which are preferred and adopted), “I'm losing my faith.” NO, you're not “losing” your faith; you're selling/trading/giving it away, cf. Heb.12:15-16.
- “**I'm tired of trying to do what is 'right'.**” (Review last week's lesson: “Easy and Light Christianity”). There is always a danger to our faith when/if we take our

eyes off the real goal. It is NOT: a better life *here*; or even a better world *here*;
Weary and losing hope, Heb.12:3

There are some important *takeaway/conclusionary* realities regarding faith from these things:

1. **Faith is typically not “lost” as much as “misplaced”** (things or “blessings” rather than Him) **or “given away”** (sacrificed on the altar of “my will/wants, Phil.3:19).
2. **Faith, like a houseplant, must be *watered and fed*, accept *pruning*, and be kept *disease/predator-free*, John 15:2; Heb.5:11-14.**
3. **Faith must be *grown* or it will *die*-** “perpetual spiritual infancy” is a pathway to spiritual death, 2Pet.1:5-11.