

# Have a Little Faith



■ by Katie DeYoung, MA, LCPC, LMHC

Let me start off by saying that I do not consider myself to be a very brave person. However, I recently decided to explore something new and expand my culinary repertoire. Bravery at its finest. I wanted to try out a new recipe and, being the type A individual that I am, I needed to follow the directions precisely. In looking over the recipe though, I noticed it called for some unusual ingredients. For example: Does this cake really call for a can of tomato soup and three cups of sugar? This doesn't seem right.

What would you do in this situation? Would you:

1. Follow the rules?
2. Change the ingredients and quantities to what you think are best?
3. Throw your hands up in the air and quit?

Pushing past my initial concerns, I decided to “have a little faith” and trust the process. In doing so, I thought about other times in my life where I've needed to take on a similar mindset. Moments where I needed to have faith that everything would work out (even if doing so didn't always make sense). In the prior example, it meant trusting that if I followed the instructions given, I would have a good outcome. Let's be honest, there are things in this life that just don't make sense. I want to encourage you that when things in life are hard to understand, as Christians, it's helpful for us to respond in faith, to grow in humility, and to put on a posture of acceptance.

## Confusing Times

There are so many things in this world that confuse me. I don't understand certain fashion trends. I don't understand my 4-year-old son's reasonings for why he is right and I am wrong. And I don't always understand why God allows bad things to happen. Some things just don't make sense. Why would a delicious cake have tomato sauce in it? In these moments, we need to remember that we are not the God of the universe. It seems silly to say, but it's true. We need to remember the part that we play in God's story. It is not our story to know all the details. God created us with finite understanding (knowledge with limits).

Due to these limits, we may find it hard to accept certain truths. Could it also be pride keeping us from accepting what God's word says or doesn't say? I wonder how constant wrestling with these areas of uncertainty or disbelief will affect us in the long run. I believe that constant wrestling with the unknowns in our life could distance us from God as we emphasize understanding our personal worldview rather than placing trust and confidence in God. I also believe that too much time spent in these unanswerable questions causes emotional dysregulation and feelings of angst, anxiety, and depression. How do we protect ourselves from falling prey to these things?

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## Faith and Humility to Believe

It takes faith and humility to believe in the things of this world that we don't understand. How will being humble and increasing our faith change our life? If we can put on these characteristics, doing so will draw us closer to God. This will set off a domino effect, where being closer to God gives us peace and a better awareness of God and who He is. Everything in this world is being done by His power, not ours. Drawing closer to God will highlight our dependence on Him and put everything into perspective. If I can do that, will things magically make sense? Not a chance. However, I no longer need to feel anxious or uncertain about life, because I have more than a little faith in my God. Let's become humble enough to recognize that we don't have all the answers, and point to the One who does.

## Acceptance

Acceptance plays a huge role in a number of different therapies. For those in Alcoholics Anonymous, they learn the importance of accepting the things that they can't change. In Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, we are encouraged to accept our thoughts and emotions (rather than avoiding or denying them). For our purposes, let's shift this idea slightly to accept the things that we don't understand and that don't make sense. Radical acceptance (a concept found in Dialectical Behavior Therapy) is a complete acceptance of reality. Doing so encourages us to let go of our need to fight against things in our life that are out of our control (such as a recent loss, a new diagnosis, or undesired relationship problems). It helps shift our focus from the problems we can't solve and the people we can't change to the God we can fully trust.

## What Now?

Well, for a girl who loves all things chocolate, the "spice cake" I made wasn't too bad, but it won't be making a regular appearance on the menu. As we move on from here, let's have a little faith. Faith in the little things (like trying out a new recipe) and faith in the big things (like trusting God to work it all out for your good). I recognize that this isn't always easy. My prayer for you and me is that God gives us the continued wisdom and strength to keep fighting against taking things into our own hands or altogether quitting and to grow in our faith, humility, and acceptance of what He is doing and will do. ■

*Katie DeYoung is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and sees clients via telehealth.*



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