

CRISIS OF FAITH

The LORD has appeared of old to me, *saying*:

“Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love;

Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.

⁴Again I will build you, and you shall be rebuilt... Jeremiah 31,3

This morning I went for a walk up to the pond at the foothills of the mountain. When I go for a walk it is by inspiration and when I walk , I think and am in turn inspired.

As I was walking I was thinking about yesterday’s post on the story of the pastor who lost faith and reclaimed it when he was asked to renounce it. Crisis of faith- he survived. Praise God.

Crisis of faith – is it real? Does it happen to everyone? Where can I turn to when I go through a crisis of faith.

This generation is pampered and spoilt by infinite lifestyle choices and in the ensuing confusion our faith also gets muddled.

I may be wrong, but most of those in the older generation as far as I have seen, never had this phase, “crisis of faith.” At least not my father, mother or our elder church friends. But it is the present and younger generation that is assaulted by this crucial phase of life.

What exactly is this crisis of faith?

I think it is when we don’t trust God like we did when we first were touched by God. When we don’t believe prayer alone can bring victory.

When we don’t believe God can totally and completely fight for us.

Sometimes when we think was all that spiritual experience when I first came to faith was real or was it just an emotional trip.

Then when we stop trusting God to pray or read the Bible. We may trust God for others but not anymore for us.

We may still be actively doing ministry but that relationship to God, deep trust in His workings would have slowly slipped away.

These are some of the diagnostic statements for a typical crisis of faith.

As I was brought up in a family with strong Christian faith and values, God was part of my everything as early as I could remember. I cannot pinpoint and tell from this day I became a Christian. I loved the Lord and He was there for everything.

Being brought up in an evangelical background we were against immersion baptism. I remember arguing with one of my friends against this for three hours. But then I asked the Lord to reveal what should be done. I don't know how it happened, but after a couple of years I knew it so deep in my heart that a baptism is a baptism only when it is taken when you can be aware of sin.

So when I went to a youth camp, without telling anyone, I took immersion baptism and first my family was quite shocked, but praise God later on everyone believed it.

But after that God became very personal and so many things changed in my life for good. The words of the Bible came alive. I who cannot normally remember everything started recording the verses in my heart.

And then two years after my father's death, I had a very powerful encounter with God. My Pentecostal moment. God was that close. I knew it was His voice. The verses of promise were falling around like rain. I was led to a great fellowship. Heavens literally

opened over me. When I opened my mouth so many accepted the Lord. I was speaking and God was changing hearts. The first heart to change was mine. It was truly supernatural, some would say emotional. But knowing me better than others, I know the difference between both☺ The fire was burning bright.

But then as the years rolled by, the mountain top experience receded and down in the rut of routine, the early passion was slowly ebbing away.

The eyes saw too much, ears heard too much. When I looked around I saw evil on the throne. The cause of the poor and the weak thwarted. Lies masquerading as righteousness. I almost hit a point when I really asked myself was it all real. Those early days? Why when God was so near then, seems so distant now and why so silent?

I think I somehow connected the incompatibilities I saw in the church and the world and blamed it on God. Added to that I also had a major personal problem. But I never stopped witnessing. But the frequency was really low. I lacked the conviction as before. My heart wouldn't just respond to God in church. My times of prayer was dull and boring for me.

Nothing was happening in my life. No visible sign. Everything seemed plateaued. I asked should I continue believing or just existing like everyone else. But underneath them all, God was working. I always knew that but only that I was too resigned to believe that.

I had to take stock of my life. I for one, never believed in this crisis of faith in the arrogance of my early burning faith, but was very shocked to know that this can happen to me also.

Searching in the Scriptures, I was surprised to find out God hid His face in order to test the heart of His children and most of the

characters in the Bible had this crisis of faith. Elijah, Jonah, Habakkuk, Peter to name a few.

I think it is not scandalous to have a crisis of faith, but the real issue is how to respond to it.

Most of the crises of faith happen when we look at the circumstance around and are intimidated or disheartened or betrayed by it. We attribute it to God.

But God is on the throne. Not evil or lies, though they may seem to rule. It is this turn around faith that will restore our faith. To see God invincible by all the evil and to see Him faithful in all His Promises, to see Him working His way through all the evil and pain. There was never a point that I questioned the reality of God, but the problem was my degree of belief in Him.

It is at this moment sadly most believers choose to blame God and leave.

One needs to once again take this 'great leap of faith'(borrowing from Kierkegaard) and look at this God at the throne and in perfect control of the universe.

Coming back to my story, nothing epiphanic happened. No voice, no dream and no vision. But my heart started believing again. As I started writing every day, the reality of God's word started thawing my heart again. No the heavens haven't opened again, but I believe firmly that God surely has a purpose again, whatever God has for me will come to me, be it spiritual or secular.

Am glad after the crisis, after the depression, after the storm is past, the grace of God has still kept me close to the Cross. I believe to trust God again is a conscious, intelligent decision when no supernatural revelations abound. To trust in His written

word proclaiming His undying love(Jeremiah 31,3), His eternal purpose for us destined even before the foundations of the world(Ephesians 1,5)

I don't know why I was led to write this today, but I think when most of us undergo this phase we are terrified. Some would feel very guilty and will torment themselves more, some would vault and jump over to the other side into the world which would be tragic.

Lord bring us back to your heart with your unending love and grace. In Jesus name. Amen.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_aeeYF7huY