

40  
DAYS  
— *of* —  
FAITH

PAUL DAVID TRIPP

40

DAYS

— *of* —

FAITH

## **Books by Paul David Tripp**

*A Quest for More: Living for Something Bigger Than You*

*Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide for Parenting Teens* (Resources for Changing Lives)

*Awe: Why It Matters for Everything We Think, Say, and Do*

*Broken-Down House: Living Productively in a World Gone Bad*

*Come, Let Us Adore Him: A Daily Advent Devotional*

*Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry*

*Forever: Why You Can't Live without It*

*Grief: Finding Hope Again*

*How People Change* (with Timothy S. Lane)

*Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change* (Resources for Changing Lives)

*Journey to the Cross: A 40-Day Lenten Devotional*

*Lead: 12 Gospel Principles for Leadership in the Church*

*Lost in the Middle: Midlife and the Grace of God*

*My Heart Cries Out: Gospel Meditations for Everyday Life*

*New Morning Mercies: A Daily Gospel Devotional*

*Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family*

*Redeeming Money: How God Reveals and Reorients Our Hearts*

*Sex in a Broken World: How Christ Redeems What Sin Distorts*

*Shelter in the Time of Storm: Meditations on God and Trouble*

*Suffering: Eternity Makes a Difference* (Resources for Changing Lives)

*Suffering: Gospel Hope When Life Doesn't Make Sense*

*Teens and Sex: How Should We Teach Them?* (Resources for Changing Lives)

*War of Words: Getting to the Heart of Your Communication Struggles* (Resources for Changing Lives)

*What Did You Expect?: Redeeming the Realities of Marriage*

*Whiter Than Snow: Meditations on Sin and Mercy*

40  
DAYS  
— *of* —  
FAITH

PAUL DAVID TRIPP

 **CROSSWAY®**  
WHEATON, ILLINOIS

## *40 Days of Faith*

Copyright © 2020 by Paul David Tripp

Published by Crossway

1300 Crescent Street  
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher, except as provided for by USA copyright law. Crossway® is a registered trademark in the United States of America.

The devotions in this book appeared previously in Paul David Tripp, *New Morning Mercies: A Daily Gospel Devotional* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014).

Cover design: Josh Dennis

First printing, 2020

Printed in the United States of America

All Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

All emphases in Scripture quotations have been added by the author.

Trade paperback ISBN: 978-1-4335-7425-2

ePub ISBN: 978-1-4335-7428-3

PDF ISBN: 978-1-4335-7426-9

Mobipocket ISBN: 978-1-4335-7427-6

---

### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Tripp, Paul David, 1950– author.

Title: 40 days of faith / Paul David Tripp.

Other titles: Forty days of faith

Description: Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2020. | “The devotions in this book appeared previously in Paul David Tripp, *New Morning Mercies: A Daily Gospel Devotional* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014).”

Identifiers: LCCN 2020022785 (print) | LCCN 2020022786 (ebook) | ISBN 9781433574252 (trade paperback) | ISBN 9781433574269 (pdf) | ISBN 9781433574276 (mobipocket) | ISBN 9781433574283 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Trust in God—Christianity—Meditations. | Faith—Meditations.

Classification: LCC BV4637 .T75 2020 (print) | LCC BV4637 (ebook) | DDC 242/.2—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020022785>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020022786>

---

Crossway is a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

LB        28   27   26   25   24   23   22   21   20  
14   13   12   11   10   9   8   7   6   5   4   3   2   1

## INTRODUCTION

FAITH IS AT ONCE A VERY IMPORTANT and very confusing word. I once tried to get a definition of faith out of a small group of people I was speaking to. We walked a circle of synonyms that led us back to the original word—*belief, trust, faith*. As we arrived back where we began, it hit me that these people heard and used this word all the time, but didn't understand it. The word *faith* was in the Bible that they read, in the songs of worship that they sang, and in the sermons that they heard, but it still wasn't clear to them. Yet God, in his word, gives it an extremely high level of importance.

Habakkuk 2:4 says, “The righteous shall live by his faith.” Just as you cannot physically live without breathing oxygen, you cannot spiritually live without exercising faith. Faith is breathing in the oxygen of God's grace, giving life to my once-dead heart. What could be more important than that? Hebrews 11:6 says, “And without faith it is impossible to please him” (God). You and I will never be what we were designed to be and live as we have been called to live without faith. It is faith that propels us to live in a way that is pleasing to the Lord. What could be more important than this?

Here is why faith is so essential in God's redemptive plan. Sin has rendered us incapable of pleasing God on our own. On

our best day, with our best intentions and exercising our best efforts, we fall horribly short of God's holy and wise standard. We can't even keep our own laws, let alone his. That is why God sent his Son. Jesus measured up to God's standard in all the ways that we are unable to and he paid our penalty with his own life. So God doesn't ask us to perfectly obey his law in order to please him. No, what God asks of us is this one simple thing: faith.

Faith is more than intellectual assent to God's existence. It is more than committing yourself to a community of faith and a regular set of religious habits. Faith is more than developing biblical literacy and doctrinal knowledge. Faith is not saying, "I believe that," when it makes little difference in the way you think about yourself, the way you relate to God, and the way you live your life. Faith is something that shatters you and rebuilds you. Faith is a transaction of your heart that will radically alter the way you live your life.

Faith is abandoning your own righteousness and entrusting the hope of your soul, in this life and the one to come, to the righteousness of another. Faith is the willingness to confess, without excuse or shifting the blame, sins that you once denied or hid. Faith is abandoning your own wisdom and feeding your heart on the wisdom of God. Faith is giving up on your delusions of control and resting in God's sovereign authority. Faith is admitting your weakness and crying out for the strength that only God can give. Faith is refusing to be a glory thief any longer and living for the greater glory of God.

Faith is taking up your cross, dying to yourself, and committing yourself to live as a disciple of Jesus. Faith is letting the cross of Jesus Christ and his empty tomb define your identity and your hope. Faith is much more than a one-time decision; it is a lifestyle lived with the presence, promises, and call of God always in view.

I'm about to write something that will surprise you. Faith is impossible. It is unnatural and counterintuitive for us all. Self-trust is natural. Fear is natural. Worry is natural. Self-righteousness is natural. Doubt is natural. Autonomy and self-sufficiency are natural, but faith isn't natural. So here's where the call to faith always leads you. Faith, properly understood, always leads you to cry out for God's grace. It takes grace to have the faith to entrust yourself and everything you are and have to God and his grace. Faith is important because it is the only pathway to finding and receiving God's greatest gift, his grace in the person of his Son, Jesus.

So I am inviting you to take a forty-day faith journey with me. If you do, you will come to know Jesus better, you will celebrate his grace more fully, and things in your heart and life will become more pleasing to him. Remember, without faith it is simply impossible for anyone to please him.



# DAY 1

*Faith in Christ is not just about knowing the truths  
of the gospel, but about living them as well.*

IT IS VITAL TO KNOW that faith is not just an action of your brain; it's an investment of your life. Faith is not just something you think; it's something you live. Hear these words from Hebrews 11:

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation. By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (vv. 1–7)

What is faith? Verse 6 is very helpful. Biblical faith has this foundation—you must believe that God exists. This is the watershed, the great divide. There are only two types of people in this world—those who believe that the most important fact that a human being could ever consider and give assent to is the existence of God, and those who either casually or philosophically deny his existence. But intellectual commitment to God’s existence is not all that faith is about; faith means you live as though you believe in God’s existence, or as though you believe, as the writer says, “he rewards those who seek him.”

Faith is a deep-seated belief in the existence of God that radically alters the way you live your life. Now, here’s the rub. Faith isn’t natural for us. Biblical faith is counterintuitive and countercultural. So we even need God’s grace to have faith to believe in the existence of the one whose grace we so desperately need. And the grace is yours for the asking again today.

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND ENCOURAGEMENT

*James 2:14–26*

## DAY 2

*God calls you to believe and then works with zeal to craft you into a person who really does live by faith.*

I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH you've thought about this, but faith isn't natural for you and me. Doubt is natural. Fear is natural. Living on the basis of your collected experience is natural. Pushing the current catalog of personal "what-ifs" through your mind before you go to sleep or when you wake up in the morning is natural. Living based on the thinking of your brain and your physical senses is natural. Envy of the life of someone else and wondering why it isn't your life is natural. Wishing that you were more sovereign over people, situations, and locations than you will ever be is natural. Manipulating your way into personal control so you can guarantee that you will get what you think you need is natural. Looking horizontally for the peace that you will only ever find vertically is natural. Anxiously wishing for change in things that you have no ability to change is natural. Giving way to despondency, discouragement, depression, or despair is natural. Numbing yourself with busyness, material things, media, food, or some other substance is natural. Lowering your standards to deal with your disappointment is natural. But faith simply isn't natural to us.

So, in grace, God grants us to believe. As Paul says in Ephesians 2:8, faith really is the gift of God. There is no more counterintuitive function to the average, sin-damaged human

being than faith in God. Sure, we'll put our faith in a lot of things, but not in a God we cannot see or hear, who makes promises so grand they seem impossible to keep. God gives us the power to first believe, but he doesn't stop there. By grace he works in the situations, locations, and relationships of our everyday lives to craft, hammer, bend, and mold us into people who build life based on the radical belief that he really does exist and he really does reward those who seek him (Heb. 11:6).

Next time you face the unexpected, a moment of difficulty you really don't want to go through, remember that such a moment doesn't picture a God who has forgotten you, but one who is near to you and doing in you a very good thing. He is rescuing you from thinking that you can live the life you were meant to live while relying on the inadequate resources of your wisdom, experience, righteousness, and strength; and he is transforming you into a person who lives a life shaped by radical God-centered faith. He is the ultimate craftsman, and we are his clay. He will not take us off his wheel until his fingers have molded us into those who really do believe and do not doubt.

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND ENCOURAGEMENT

*Mark 6:30–52*

## DAY 3

*As God's child, live today with the surety,  
hope, and courage that come from knowing  
that your standing before God is secure.*

YOU WANT TO BE SURE. You want to be secure. You want to have hope. You want to live with courage. You don't want to be weakened by fear, paralyzed by doubt, or filled with the anxiety of wondering what's next. You want to know that your life means something. You want to know that your labors are worth something. You want to know that you're not alone. You want to know that you'll have the resources to face whatever is coming next. You want to have inner peace. You want to have motivation to continue. You don't want to feel unprepared, weak, or unable. You don't ever want to think that it's all been for naught. Yes, you want to stand on the firm foundation of surety, and you will look to something to give it to you.

The fact of the matter is that in a world where things break, die, get corrupted, or otherwise fade away, surety is found only vertically. If you're God's child, your standing before him is sure, and because it is, you have surety in life right here, right now; in death; and in eternity:

- You have the surety of knowing that you don't have to hide or playact, because every one of your sins and weaknesses has been covered by Jesus's blood.

- You don't have to fear that you will not have what it takes, because your Savior gives you all that you need to do what he's called you to do.
- You don't have to worry that you'll be left alone, because your Savior has made you the place where he dwells.
- You don't have to live with regret, because all your past sins have been forgiven by his grace.
- You don't have to search for identity, meaning, or purpose, because he has made you his child and called you to his purpose.
- You don't have to worry about the future, because all the mysteries of what is to come are held in his sovereign hands.
- You don't have to fear trouble, difficulty, or suffering, because your Savior uses all these things for your good and his glory.
- You don't have to hope that your labors are worth something, because the work you do in his name is never in vain.
- You don't have to fear being punished, because your Savior took your punishment and satisfied God's anger.

Yes, by faith you stand before God sure and secure, and because you do, your life right now is blessed with every kind of security you could ever want.

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND ENCOURAGEMENT

*Ephesians 1*

## DAY 4

*You're not called to work for God's acceptance; you're called to trust the one who completed that work on your behalf.*

WE KEEP TRYING IT, even though we've been told again and again that it's impossible. It causes us to be either delusionally proud or irrationally fearful. It causes us to hide in guilt and shame, fearing the only one who can help us. In fear, we work for what we have already been given. In weakening hope, we seek what we already have. In redemptive delusion, some of us boast about what we did not earn or achieve on our own. In our misunderstanding, we envy what we think others have and we wish we could achieve what they have accomplished. We spend our lives feeling not only that we haven't measured up, but also that we'll never measure up. We wonder what God really thinks of us, and the thought of his presence produces more fear than comfort in our hearts. It all gets to the very heart of the message of the gospel.

Jesus lived the perfect life you and I never, ever could have lived, and now his righteousness is credited to our account by faith. He died the death that we should have died. His death satisfied the Father's anger with our sin. He rose again, conquering sin and death so that we would know life eternal too. All of this was done so that the chasm between us and God would be bridged, so that we would be fully and eternally accepted into his family, never again to face his rejection, never again to pay the penalty for our sins, and free from having to measure

up to his standard in order to garner his love. What needed to be done, Jesus did. The work is complete.

Now, having said that, it is true that you have been called to work. You have been called to give yourself to the work of God's kingdom and to daily obey the commands of the King. You've been called to recognize that your life is no longer your own because you were bought with a price. But the work you do is never to be done in order to earn something. The work you're called to do is to be done in celebration of something. You don't work to earn God's favor; rather, your work is a hymn of thanks for the favor that Christ achieved on your behalf. You don't have to wonder if you've worked enough. You don't have to fear that you'll mess up and get booted out of the family. You don't have to fear seeing the back of God's head. You don't have to be haunted by the question of whether you've done enough for long enough. The bridge of impossibility has been walked by Christ. The job is done. Your relationship with God is eternally secure. Now, in thankfulness, go out and do his work in faith.

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND ENCOURAGEMENT

*Luke 1:67–79*



## DAY 5

*Jesus paid it all! There are no bills due for your sin! You are now free to simply trust and obey.*

STOP TRYING TO EARN SOMETHING from God. Stop trying to gain more of his acceptance. Stop trying to earn his favor. Stop trying to win his allegiance. Stop trying to do something that would pay for his blessing. Stop trying to morally buy your way out of his anger. Stop trying to reach a level where you will know lasting peace with him. Just stop trying. Just stop.

So many Christians load onto their shoulders a burden that they do not have to bear. They get up every morning and pick up the heavy load of trying somehow, some way to achieve something with God. They work hard to exercise what they do not have in hopes they can achieve what is impossible. It simply cannot work. So where does it lead? It leads either to the scary pride of self-righteousness—a culture of moralistic self-backslappers, who have no problem judging those who have not achieved the level of righteousness they think that they have—or to fear and discouragement—a culture of people who don't run to God with their sin because they're afraid of him.

Paul wipes out this distorted, debilitating “buy your way into grace” culture with a striking economy of words: “Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law” (Gal. 3:11). It is a statement that requires no preamble and no amendment. No one is ever accepted by God because he or she has kept the law. No one. That's it; no compromises

and no deals are needed. They are not needed because, first, it is impossible to buy your way into God's favor because sin makes you a lawbreaker and, second, your bills were fully and completely paid in the single payment of the cross of Jesus Christ. Christ did not make the first payment on your moral mortgage; he paid your entire moral mortgage in one single payment so that you could live in relationship to God debt-free forever. God's law is not your payment plan because there is no payment plan when the demands of a mortgage have been satisfied once and forever in one single payment.

So stop trying to measure up to get whatever from God. Stop hiding from him when you mess up. Stop comparing yourself to other people, wondering if God loves you less because you're not as "good" as them. Stop naming the good things you do as righteousness that not only gets you closer to God, but also proves to others that you are. Just stop asking the law to do what only grace can achieve, and start resting in the fact that you don't have any moral bills due because Jesus paid them all on the cross. And when you sin, don't pretend you didn't, don't panic, and don't hide. Run to Jesus in faith and receive mercy in your time of need, the kind of mercy he paid for you to have.

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND ENCOURAGEMENT

*Isaiah 53*

*“Faith is breathing in the oxygen of God’s grace,  
giving life to my once-dead heart.”*

As breath is to the body, so faith is to the Christian life. Through 40 daily meditations from his best-selling devotional *New Morning Mercies*, popular author and speaker Paul David Tripp explores how deep-seated trust in God and his word radically alters not only the way we think, but also the way we live. Tripp urges us not to rely on our own wisdom, experience, and strength—but to ask God to transform us into people who live by faith with a radical, God-centered point of view.

**PAUL DAVID TRIPP** (DMin, Westminster Theological Seminary) is a pastor, award-winning author, and international conference speaker. He has written numerous books, including *Parenting; What Did You Expect?*; and *Suffering*. His nonprofit ministry exists to connect the transforming power of Jesus Christ to everyday life. Tripp lives in Philadelphia with his wife, Luella, and they have four grown children.

DEVOTIONAL