

"But Even If...!"



“O God my rock,” I cry, “Why have you forgotten me? Why must I wander around in grief, oppressed by my enemies?” Their taunts break my bones. They scoff, “Where is this God of yours?”

Korah | Psalm 42:9-10 (NLT)

A title fight begins well before the bell rings. The boxer’s verbal taunts start flying as soon as the match is announced. Boxers know that, though the fight will ultimately be physical, the mental battle is on. Likewise, your insidious enemy has taunted, “Where is this God of yours?” since the day you accepted Christ, desiring to render your faith fruitless and fill your life with grief.

Who hasn’t prayed and prayed and received no answers, sought God’s direction only to suffer silence, felt they had fallen on their face while pursuing their Mission... and not heard the question rise, “Where is this God of yours?”

“But I keep praying to you, Lord, hoping this time you will show me favor.” King David (Psalm 69)

Like King David, we push ourselves to re-up for another round, “hoping this time you will show me favor.” Our minds stew as the taunts echo... “Maybe I’m doing something wrong... not enough faith?” Or justify that, “God will use this for something good... someday,” all the while attempting to dismiss the enemy’s jabs.

Korah's questioning rings true...

Reflect: Lord, have you forgotten me? Must I wander around in grief?

The root of doubt grows deeper. We lament, "If God doesn't answer, why put my faith in him?" We're at a crossroads ready to throw in the towel. "Am I a fool to believe in God?" Our enemy has us on the ropes and the bell hasn't even rung! He spreads the notion that to have faith in God, He must perform...

"Contingent" faith leads to a life of discouragement and apathetic testimony. Is this the full life Jesus promised? Must you wander around in grief?

"Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!" Korah (Psalm 42:5-6)

Having looked down both roads, the psalmist says "No, I choose hope!" At this same point myself, I came to ask, "Who or what else would I place my faith in?" I could think of nothing.

"You have allowed me to suffer much hardship, but you will restore me to life again and lift me up from the depths of the earth. You will restore me to even greater honor and comfort me once again." (Psalm 71:20-21)

We can speculate about why God allows hardship, unanswered prayer, etc. but, the faithful throughout the Bible chose, regardless of what God did or didn't do, to focus on the hope of eternal salvation.

Consider: My faith and joy aren't dependent on God's performance; they're anchored in eternal hope.

Imagine standing in the shoes of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

"O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Daniel 3:16-18)

Makes my troubles seem like grasshoppers! Were they not standing at these same crossroads? In proclaiming "but even if," they discarded any notion of contingent faith. They knew their only viable option was to rely on the eternal salvation promised by the one true Majesty. They saw all other roads as eternally fatal.

Imagine: Unwavering faith, regardless of what God chooses to do, becomes joyful and fruitful.

Look at what happened! Unwavering faith in this life-or-death situation led to lifesaving testimony.

"Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God... There is no other god who can rescue like this!"
King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3:28-19)

Think of the agonizing grief and regret they would have experienced had they let their faith cave in... Instead, they experienced God's mysterious ways, incredible Kingdom bounty, and great joy as well. Follow the precedent these men set. Joyfully set your sights on the eternal salvation God has promised and proclaim...

"But Even If!"

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach's Questions

- What distrust in God has the enemy exposed with his taunts?
- How will I refocus away from contingent faith and toward eternal faith?
- How will I react the next time I hear, "Where is this God of yours?"

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

Confident hope keeps me fruitful and joyful.

"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."

The Apostle Paul | Romans 15:13 (NLT)



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Beware the Boxer

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Mike's house to watch the Friday night fights.... [Keep reading](#)

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