

The Author's Commentary
on
The Seven Steps
of
Faith Is Easy

By and Based on the Books of Robert J. Cormier (www.thefaithkit.org)
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The Seven Steps

Introduction

The mini-book *Faith Is Easy* claims that faith *is* easy, at least in terms of getting started. It's all been boiled down to seven steps.

The steps themselves are easy, most of them. Most involve reading something short, understanding something that is not hard to understand, and making a decision about what most people will see if, indeed, they will look.

Even where the steps ask us to do something, or to stop doing something, for most people, this ought not to be hard. Regardless, in all cases, it would be right, and what we get will be worth far more than anything we have to give (up).

This mini-book presumes that a person has read *Faith Is Easy*, and knows the seven steps. Its purpose is to clarify the seven steps and encourage you to take them. Please read this little book. Then take the seven steps.

Step #1

“Try to understand that ‘faith’ is about certain things we know that explain life as nothing else can.”

These “certain things” are explained in the text “What Is Faith?”

Please do try, and do try to understand that faith is NOT about believing that if I really believe God will do this for me, He will do it.

This is a false idea of faith.

It sees God as just some power within the world—and not the source of all things, who guides all things so that we will be prepared for a richer life forever.

It insinuates that I know better than God does what I need, or that God can be influenced to forget what is best for me by my own pleading, or acts of devotion, or pretence of “confidence” in Him (that He *can* give me what I want).

It allows people to go from church to church never noticing (or caring) that here and across the street there is a very different idea of God at work.

It ignores the breathtakingly beautiful idea of God and life which faith in its mature form offers, and which is the source of the greatest imaginable peace, purpose, and joy available on earth.

What is worse, it does not reflect any need to have an explanation of life. Life just is. No questions asked.

This, of course, is the attitude of people who are unreflective and deadily simple.

Please don’t let this be you.

Step #2

“Try to understand that faith helps people by giving them certain gifts’ — effects in their spirit—that follow automatically from knowing certain things.”

Step #2 employs the example: “How would you feel if you knew you were going to get \$100,000,000 for Christmas?” It points out that life with God, which is coming, is worth more than \$100,000,000.

In the text “The Gifts of Faith,” we find TEN tremendous effects in our spirit—ten gifts that we get just for believing the basics.

My frustration, at times, in offering in the Gifts of Faith comes from something that God sees all the time: He is offering so much, just for the taking, and people are breaking their backs going after what is really so much less—or maybe no good at all!

Because of how we’re made, no-thing we can get, and this includes fame or the attention of a specific other person, is going to make us really, really happy for more than a little while. In terms of joy, we can have so much more by using our dreams to look into heaven, and to glimpse the life we will have forever.

Because of how the world is made, nothing here can give us the security our heart wants. With faith, however, perfect peace IS possible because we know nothing can happen apart from God’s plan.

Best of all, you get these, and all the other gifts of faith, immediately, just for knowing the truth.

This is people’s dream about what faith can do: to change everything, to give us the best, just for believing. This IS possible—as long as what we want is really the best, the best thing for us!

It is available, immediately, all the time, including right now.

Step #3

“Try to understand that the best thing that faith can do for you is to teach you to believe in yourself for the right reason—because God has made you who you are.”

Here, of course, we are talking about the preeminent gift of faith, preeminent because it is an absolute pre-requisite of happiness and holiness. After all, if we are not happy to be who we are, then how can we be happy? If we do not love ourselves, seeing the goodness inside, then how can we afford to see the goodness outside so we can love others?

This idea is explained in the text, “Believing in yourself for the right reason: because God has made you who you are.”

In *this* text, I would like to talk about the aspect of this issue that bothers me most: my experience that people really like the material, say that they agree with everything, and then insist that they DO love themselves even though it seems obvious to me that they do NOT.

They say they love themselves but it seems to me that they are still, constantly comparing their lives to the lives of others.

They say they loves themselves but it seems to me that they are still very bothered about how some other person treated them.

I don't think it's pride. People are not so prideful about admitting other not-so-good things about them.

I don't think it's that people just don't understand the issue. People do understand the issue, and they know it's important.

Instead, I think it's something like this:

Knowing people who say they hate themselves, for reasons that seem much more terrible than anything that they've been through, they confuse not hating themselves for what God really wants for them—that they be thrilled to be who God is making them.

Rather than recognize that God's plan is preparing them for an importance to His family that will far surpass any sort of importance we see here, they have become so accustomed to feeling ordinary and unimportant they think it's normal and the best they should expect.

I think it's much like the story of people who have been living with some sort of chronic pain, finally find a cure, and then almost always say, "now that it's gone, I realize I didn't know how bad it was."

This, then, should be the test of whether a person is actually trying for the love of self that God has made possible for us all:

You say you love yourself but: Do you recognize that God's plan is preparing you for an importance to His family that will far surpass any sort of importance we see here?

You say you love yourself but: Are you still comparing your life to the lives of others?

You say you love yourself but: Are you still bothered about how somebody treated you?

You say you love yourself but can you say you are "thrilled" to be who God is making you?

God is thrilled with who He is making you.

Step #4

“Try to understand that God knew that lots of people would talk to us in His name, and that many would contradict each other, so he wrote the truth into all of our hearts. It can be seen by anyone for him- or herself who knows where to look.”

Help to look is provided in the text “Try.” It points out the easiest way to see the truth of faith—to ask ourselves the questions that faith answers and see how we feel about the answers. “Is it possible that we were made for death?” Etc.

Unfortunately, for many the result remains a feeling and this is disconcerting. It is this that I would like to speak to about here.

It seems that people wish they had a more “concrete” experience of God and the truth of faith. But concrete how?

It is hard to imagine how a specific result as one might get from an experiment could tell us something about the origin of the universe in which the experiment took place. (Try to picture what such might be.) No, specific results tell us specific things about the world, not about the world as a whole and where it comes from. The truth about *everything* ought to be a very general sort of perception *and it is*, and this is sometimes confused for a feeling.

How about a miracle on video, or even something that happens in the present? Well, many people say we already have this and we know that we don’t know for sure what is happening or what it is supposed to mean.

How about a made-to-be unmistakable experience of God? But then how do we do what we are here for, and grow into faith?

No, the experience of faith is just right. It is the judgment of our whole spirit looking at reality as a whole, and it is the result of growing up, as we are here to do.

Believe it.

Step #5

“Realize that the only way that faith can help you is if you show yourself that you believe by your actions—by what you do and don’t do, by what you give and give up.”

And the opposite is also true: by what you do and don’t do, you can show yourself you don’t believe.

Now, most people won’t admit to this. If they are doing something that contradicts their faith, they will confess to weakness; or they will make some excuse why this is not wrong (in this case, for people like me, etc.).

In no case will they admit that that “what I am doing shows I don’t really believe. I DO believe,” they will insist but....

Let’s try an example: If you knew, for sure, that walking out your door, rain or shine, to a building down the street, entering this building and staying there for one hour would pay you \$10,000; and you were allowed to collect this money once a week, would you ever NOT?!

Obviously we are talking about church and, among the things we say we believe, is that faithfulness to Church is what God wants, and that “the exercise of faith strengthens it,” so that every time we come to church our faith gets a little stronger and we get a little more clarity, and a little more peace, and joy, and inspiration to love. Moreover, every little bit we grow will become something much greater once we die and God transforms us, and the fruits of this will last *forever*. This, certainly, is worth more than \$10,000.

Not coming to church we are showing ourselves that we’re not sure.

In fact, we are showing ourselves is that we, like many people, confuse believing something—and, in terms of the *vision* which is faith, this means *knowing* something—is true and merely hoping it’s true.

The latter takes nothing. Of course, we hope what faith says is true! Of course, we hope that there is life after this one, that there is a great reason

for everything we go through, that each of us is irreplaceable and no less than anyone else.... Who wouldn't hope that such things are true?

Knowing they are true is something else. It means we have thought about the issues. We have looked at the questions that faith answers and considered the alternative. We have made a decision about what we see. We have put this decision into practice and experienced the life of faith.... And we have, therefore, experienced the superiority of the life of faith and, therefore, we will do anything we can to get more!

Please do understand that it is only by our actions that we show ourselves what we really believe. Please do NOT accept excuses and allow ourselves to go on without thinking through the issues and making a decision. And, if we are talking about something bad that has to stop, or something good that has to start, please understand, faith offers so much more than it asks!

Step #6

Though Step #6 specifically suggests a daily reading of “A Daily Prayer,” what it is really asking is that you do something specific in order to “... keep faith in front of you day after day.”

If, perhaps, this seems a little too simple to be worth anything, please consider these two things:

1) The very idea that just thinking about something can change how we see something that would otherwise bother us.... This is the essence of the idea that faith offers “gifts.” If we really do see the truth, it has to work! And, if what we say we believe is NOT true, what possibly could be our hope, our purpose in life, or the basis of our peace?

2) Repetition IS the mother of learning. Because of how our minds work, this, too, has to work! This means that every day we think about it, every time we look for the truth of it once again, every time we strive to apply it to whatever might be bothering us, our faith is sure to grow. Our faith is sure to grow at least a little, and this will add up. Where might we be 365 days from now?!

What I would really like is that you would go to [The Faith Kit](#) and click around for item that best suits you for this important purpose.

If you need help, read [A Day in the Life](#).

Step #7

“Consider this: Coming to church is the most concrete thing you can do to show yourself that you believe—or that you want to believe.”

And please don't think that other things are just as good.

Sometimes people say “I don't come (much) to church, but I (always) pray at home.” In most cases, they don't. And in most other cases, their “prayer” is nothing more than occasional pleading. It has nothing to do with meditation on the basics and application of the basics to the situations in my life. It has nothing to do with looking into heaven so that I will not be bothered about what I don't have here, remembering that love is the way to glory so that I can find the strength to forgive someone, or continue with some sacrifice for the sake of the right. It has nothing to do with using faith in God's plan to seek perfect peace with the present and also with myself. And it certainly has nothing to do with believing that we were made to be a family, and called to be a Church, which is where God wants me to be so that I will support others and receive support from others.

Sometimes people say “I try to be a nice person; I practice my faith on the street!” Of course, do you really need real faith in order to be nice? Isn't being nice a fairly easy way to stay out of trouble, avoid feeling guilty, or enjoy feeling needed?

Even those who sacrifice greatly for some cause.... Often great ardor for the cause indicates that we *don't* believe the basics. We are desperate to change the world because the world is all there is. Sometimes people want to change the world because they are angry at those who are currently on top.

No, concrete faith calls for concrete action—action that says plainly and on purpose that I believe this.

Take this action and show yourself that you understand. The gifts of faith are sure to follow.

More questions to help you define your faith and yourself

Who Am I?

Not many people in today's world have a very clear idea of who they are. To break through the confusion and get to a real answer to this question, you can use the following formula:

I am the deep and potentially great person that arises from my answer to the following four questions:

Where do I come from?

Where am I going (when I die)?

Why am I here?

(What am I supposed to do with my life?)

Why do things happen

(that affect me that I did not chose)?

Lema

“Lema” means “motto” in Spanish, and the following four are really good ones:

Have you rejected the worship of this world and the illusion that something here is supremely important or that life here lasts forever?

Have you accepted God’s plan for your life whether or not you understand it because you know that God knows more than you do what you need?

Have you decided to love God where you know Him best—in His creation of you and are resolved to live this love in NOT comparing yourself to others or criticizing yourself for anything you cannot change?

Have you decided to live for your destiny day after day, making decisions in favor of a richer life for all forever?