

MONDAY MANNA

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MATTERS OF FAITH – AND WHY FAITH MATTERS

By Jim Langley

“Faith” is not a word we often use in the 21st century marketplace, where only things tangible and measurable are prized. However, in one way or another, we all possess and exercise faith. We might define faith as “trust or complete confidence in something or someone.” Many people limit their trust to what they can do on their own, and place little or no faith in others. Where do you place your faith?

Personally, I have found that faith in others, and especially in God, my Heavenly Father, allows me to live life more fully. Finding and nurturing meaningful faith can bring about a paradigm shift in how we approach every day of our complex lives. Life can be so much more rewarding when we allow others to enter into our world.

In our business lives, it is easy to curl up into a ball, like a hedgehog, and not allow others to get close to us. When a hedgehog assumes this defensive posture, it becomes immobile and can go nowhere! I have known many focused executives who live defensively, refusing to allow those around them to invade their domain.

These may gain some level of success but are missing the opportunity to greatly expand their horizons. If they would open up and let others into their space, their business endeavours could become much more productive. They apparently fear the influence of others and wish to receive all the credit for whatever they might accomplish.

However, in reality, teamwork is critical in all we do in life. In Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, King Solomon wrote, *“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up.”*

Then he concludes the thought by observing, *“Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not easily broken”* (Ecclesiastes 4:12). I have adopted this as one of my life verses from the Bible, and over the years have seen our family make it through very challenging times, knowing the Lord is that “third strand” that kept us strong through it all. It was faith – first in God, and then in one another.

There is a right way to live our lives. In Romans 1:17, the apostle Paul proclaimed, *“For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’”* That applies to every aspect of our existence on this planet, including the time we spend in the business and professional world. If we attempt to conduct our lives without letting others and God become part of the equation, sooner or later we will find ourselves being deceived. Worse yet, we will realise we are out of God’s will and failing to pursue His purpose for our lives.

Proverbs 14:8-9 teaches, *“The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception. Fools mock at making amends for sin, but good will is found among the upright.”* Those who cut themselves off from the good people around them, failing to trust in them and appreciate what they can contribute, and also ignoring what God’s Word instructs, are on a road that leads to a dead end.

They are being deceived by the self-centred culture that surrounds them. As Proverbs 27:17 affirms, *“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”* And as Jesus said, *“...apart from Me you can do nothing”* (John 15:5). If we want to experience well-rounded, fulfilling lives, we need to let others into our daily affairs. If we

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want an abundant life, you need to let God into our every thought, allowing Him to take control of our lives. The Lord also said, *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"* (John 10:10).

© 2020 Jim Langley has been writing for more than 30 years while working as a life and health insurance agent. In recent years, his passion has turned to writing about his relationship with God. His goal is to encourage others to draw near to Him as well. A long-time member of CBMC, he started writing "Fourth Quarter Strategies" in 2014.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

When you hear the word "faith," what comes to your mind? What would be your own definition of what it means to have faith?

What does it mean to have faith in God, especially in the world of work? Is this important for you? Why or why not?

What does it mean to have faith in others as we conduct our daily activities and carry out our responsibilities in the business and professional world? How easy is it for you to place your trust in others, rather than attempting to accomplish your goals solely on your own?

How might you be able to exert and demonstrate more faith – both in God and others – in how you conduct your everyday life? Is this something you are even willing to do? Explain your answer.

NOTE: For more about what the Bible says consider the following passages:

Psalms 97:10-12

Proverbs 16:1-3

Isaiah 26:1-4

1 Corinthians 12:12-26

Hebrews 12:1