

Footprints of Faith



... inspiring stories that
will motivate you to trust God

By Pastor Steve King

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George Washington

An 1856 history book once used in Maryland public schools, tells a story about one of our nation's founding fathers. When George Washington was 23, he led 1,300 British troops in the French and Indian War. His forces were ambushed and 714 of Washington's men lost their lives – 86 were officers. Only one officer remained on horseback unscratched – George Washington. After the defeat, he wrote a letter to his mother and brother in which he said:

"I had four bullet holes in my coat, but I was never hit. I brushed my hair and bullet fragments came out, but I was untouched."

Fifteen years later, he revisited the battle site. Word of his visit reached the Indian chief who had led his tribe in that battle against Washington. He told him:

Sir, I personally shot at you seventeen times. I told my men to shoot at you because we knew you were a leader. We could not kill you and I wanted to meet the man that God refused to let die in battle.

Were angels protecting the father of our country?

Read Hebrews 1:14; 13:2; John 20:12 and Isaiah 63:7-9.

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Uniqueness of Jesus

Picture for a moment the most godly, spiritual person you know. Perhaps it's your pastor, your father, your husband, or a friend. Now, assume this person gives you the following speech.

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go and make disciples of me among all people and baptize them in my name. And I will be with you to the end of the age!”

How would you respond? You would want to do one of two things: erupt in laughter or call the men in white suits and have them committed! Only with Jesus can we also choose to fall down, humble ourselves, and worship the God-man who has made these radical claims.

Never forget the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. He has no close rivals.

Source: Morley, The Rest of Your Life, page 245

Read John 5:18-47

Truck Chase

What would you do if someone was riding your bumper and would not back off? A lady noticed a huge truck tailgating her. She sped up – so did the truck. She switched lanes, so did the driver. She exited, the truck followed. In a panic she rushed into a gas station and ran for help.

The truck driver jumped from his cab, pulled open her door, and grabbed a man hidden in her back seat with a knife. The woman was running from the wrong person. People run from God the same way. Is God riding the bumper of your life? Jesus said He came to seek and save people and to give us an abundant life.

Read John Chapter 9 and notice the blind man's progressive knowledge and understanding of Jesus. God gave him more light as he responded in faith to the light he had.

Read John 9:11, 1, 25, 30-33, 38.

Indian Chief

How far would you go to save the life of your mother? An Indian tribe survived by raising chickens. The chief discovered someone had been stealing them. He made the penalty 100 lashes with a whip, meaning death. Justice had to be served. Weeks later, he found the crook, his own mother. Before the whole village he tied his mother to the flogging post and took the whip in his hand. But at the last moment, he handed the whip to a stunned brave. The chief then stretched his own body over his mother's and commanded: "start whipping!" The chief died in his mother's place. As the chief satisfied his justice by paying for his mother's crime, and showed his love by dying in her place, so Jesus Christ did the same for you on the cross.

Read Romans 5:1-11; 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Isaiah 53

Gifted People

A revealing study of 413 famous and exceptionally gifted people exposed a common thread which ran through their lives. The most outstanding fact was that almost all of them, 392, had to overcome very difficult obstacles to become who they were. Attitude made the difference.

Enterprise, Alabama, has a monument to the Bollweevil erected in 1919. In 1895, the insect destroyed the county's major crop, cotton. Afterwards farmers began to plant peanuts and their prosperity far exceeded their best days growing cotton. The obstacle became an opportunity.

How's your attitude? Jesus Christ the master attitude adjuster said, "If you are truly my disciples you will abide in my word, and you shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." (*John 8:31-32*). Soak up His word today and reap the benefits.

Source: Maxwell, Becoming a Person of Influence, pages 150-151.

Read John 8:31-32 and Philippians 2

Encouragement

An experiment was conducted years ago to measure people's capacity to endure pain. Psychologists measured how long a barefooted person could stand in a bucket of ice water.

They found that one factor made it possible for some people to stand in the water twice as long as others. Can you guess what that factor was? It was encouragement.

Are you an encourager? The Bible says in Revelation 12:10 that Satan appears at the throne of God and constantly accuses God's children. But it also says in Romans 8:34 that Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God constantly praying for us. Whom do you identify with the most? Satan the accuser or Christ the intercessor?

Source: Maxwell, Becoming a Person of Influence, page 47

Read Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:24 and Revelation 12:10.

Skyscraper

Have you ever felt that on the outside you are standing tall but on the inside about to collapse? Large cracks suddenly appeared on the 42nd floor of a New York skyscraper. The building engineer went six floors underground and found the problem. He discovered a security guard had removed bricks each day for six years. His theft showed up in the cracks on the 42nd floor. If cracks appear in the walls of your life, check your foundation first. The building of your life won't stand without a solid foundation. Jesus Christ said if you hear my words and act on them, you're like a wise man who built his house on the rock; no storm can take it down.

Read Matthew 7:24-28 and notice how your response to God's word determines your stability in life.

Elephant Trainers

Do you have habits you want to break? Elephant trainers in India tie a baby elephant's leg to a tree. The animal tugs and pulls until its leg is raw and its spirit is broken, never pulling at the chain again. That's why a huge elephant can be held in place by simply attaching a rope around its leg. The elephant believes he can't be set free from it.

Are you tied to chains of habits? Jesus Christ can set you free. He said "if you abide in My Word you shall know the truth and the truth will set you free." The truth in the Bible sets you free, but falsehood puts you in bondage. You can experience freedom from habits and find new power through faith in Jesus Christ.

Read 2 Corinthians 10:1-5 and John 8:31-32.

George Mueller

George Mueller cared for ten thousand orphans over sixty years relying only on faith and prayer. He never asked for money, though he regularly asked for more orphans. One morning with no food on hand he seated the orphans around the breakfast table and prayed. Just then, a knock came at the door. A baker told him, "I was awakened at 2:00 a.m. and felt I should bake some bread for you."

Within minutes came another knock. A milkman said, "My milk wagon just broke down in front of your place. I must get rid of these cans of milk." Mueller meticulously recorded thousands of similar instances in his journals. To what did he attribute God's continual provisions? He always satisfied himself that he was doing God's will before he started a project. Then he stood on the promises of the Bible and continued to ask God for help in prayer. Let's follow Mueller's pattern.

Source: Morley, [The Rest of Your Life](#), pages 209-210.

Read James 5:16-18 and Acts 12:1-17.

Lincoln and Slave

Abraham Lincoln was appalled at the selling of human beings when he visited a slave auction. His compassion for a young woman on the block moved him to offer the highest bid on her. When he took title of her, she sarcastically asked “What are you gonna do with me?” He responded “I’m going to set you free.” “Free to do whatever I want to do?” “Yes, free to do whatever you want to do.” “Free to go where I want to go?” “Yes, free to go where you want to do.” “Then I’m going with you,” she said with a smile. The Bible says we are slaves to sin. But Jesus Christ took our place on the slave block and then He paid the price with His blood to set us free. He not only forgives us, but declares us righteous in the sight of God and sends us the Holy Spirit to empower us. That makes me want to follow Him wherever He goes – how about you?

Source: Yancy, What’s So Amazing About Grace?

Read Romans 5:8; 8:31 and 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

Ring the Bell

Have you ever played the amusement park game where you swing a huge hammer and try to make the ball shoot up to ring the bell? I’ve watched strong young men swing with all their might without coming close. That’s what people do who try to work their way to God. They attend church, give money, and do charity, and never get close to ringing the bell of God.

The Bible clearly tells us no amount of effort on our part is enough. Jesus said “You must be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect!” So what are we supposed to do? The answer is found in the Bible, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that is not from yourself, it is a gift of God lest anyone should boast.” Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ, relying on His payment for your sins and His resurrected life to change you? Why not do it now?

Read Ephesians 2:1-10 and notice our state outside of Christ (2:1-3), what God did to change us (2:4-7), how God’s grace is the source (2:8-9), and how we are given a new life purpose (2:10).

Mississippi Steamer

Terrified passengers clung to the railing of a Mississippi steamer as it rushed through a thick fog. The upset customers formed a delegation and went to the upper deck to confront the crazy captain! But when they arrived on the upper deck, they were surprised to discover from the captain's perch, all was clear. He could see over the low-lying fog. He knew the river extremely well, they were safe. Have you ever felt like sending a delegation to confront God, like he was rushing you through a thick fog and needed to slow down? Remember He sees all and has your best interest at heart. Trust Him!

Read Psalm 34 and Isaiah 40.

Blondin

French acrobat Charles Blondin refused to be intimidated even though every minute 12 million cubic feet of water thundered 180 feet over the edge of Niagara Falls. In 1859, Blondin crossed the entire width of the falls on a tightrope. He crossed again pushing a wheelbarrow and again blindfolded and once more on stilts! But his most incredible feat was crossing the falls while carrying a man on his back.

The man simply rested on Blondin, who did all the work. His faith paid off, he arrived safely on the other side. Jesus Christ invites you to trust Him. He alone can carry you over the falls of God's wrath because He paid for all your sins when He died in your place. He alone can carry you over the splashing torrent of death and safely to the other side because He rose from the dead. Trust Him, He's done all the work.

Source: Maxwell, Becoming a Person of Influence, page 61

Read Proverbs 3:5-6 and John 3:16-36.

Mama

I was 3,100 miles from home when I called the hospital. My devout Christian grandmother, Mama, was on her deathbed. Her last words to me were “Steve, the next time I see you will be in heaven.” That encounter made the resurrection of Christ supremely valuable to me. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me shall live even if he dies.” (*John 11:25*)

Read John 14:1-3; Philippians 1:21-23; Hebrews 12:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8 and Acts 7:59

Box of Gold

Early one cold morning a man walked along the sidewalk by his high-rise apartment. Suddenly, from out of nowhere, he was hit on the shoulder by a heavy object and knocked to the ground. He sat up, checked his bruised arm, and looked around. He saw a thickly shaped shoe box lying near him. He took the box to his apartment and discovered it was full of gold bars and coins! The Bible says that for the believer in Christ, every trial is a box containing a treasure. “Consider it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces . . . endurance . . . that you might be perfect and complete lacking in nothing.” Trust God and turn your trials into treasures!

Source: Smalley/Trent, *The Gift of Honor*, Page 52.

Read James 2:1-4 and Romans 8:28-29. Notice the benefits “faith testing” from James, chapter 1 and the determination of God to make us like Christ from Romans, chapter 8.

Parasite

A Christian businessman, on a cross-country flight engaged his seat-mate in a Christ centered conversation. His companion declared, “I am a Christian. I love Jesus Christ with all of my heart.” But when asked, “what church do you attend?” He said, “Well, Sunday is my only day off, and I don’t believe in institutionalized religion, and besides, I can worship God in nature!”

The Christian man then asked him, “Would you want to live in a city without any churches?” “Of course not!” was his immediate response. “Then with all due respect, you are a parasite. You want all the benefits of the church without the responsibilities.” “I honestly never thought of it that way before.” He retorted, “I’ll be in church next Sunday.”

Read Ephesians, chapter 3; Acts 2 and Hebrews 10:24-25.

Ronnie Howard

My first cousin Ronnie Howard and I worked together one summer. A winsome Christian co-worker led him to faith in Jesus Christ. In the fall, Ronnie went to Vietnam. He was killed just a few days before his tour ended. When I stared down at his broken body in the casket, I was overwhelmed with gratefulness that he had trusted Christ. The power of the love of Christ changed both of us. Jesus said “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

Read John 11

Osama Bin Laden

The January 11, 1999 issue of Time magazine reported on Osama bin Laden – an alleged mastermind of attacks on two U.S. Embassies, and Nkem Chukwu who recently gave birth to octuplets. Both are devout believers in God. Time quotes Bin Laden, “God knows that we have been pleased at the killing of American soldiers. Hostility toward America is a religious duty.” The devout Christian mother of eight refused to abort saying “I wasn’t even going to give it a second thought.” Two devout believers – one rejoicing in death, the other celebrating life. The difference? What they base their faith in God on. The basis on your faith really does matter!

Read Hebrews 4:12; Jude 3 and Revelation 22:18-19.

DeSoto

In 1539, the Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto landed on the coast of Florida with hundreds of his men. He traveled through what is now the Southeastern part of the United States and then discovered the Mississippi River. But just after landing on the Florida coast, he sent a small party back to the ships to set them ablaze. He wanted to make clear there was no turning back. When the sea finally swallowed the last smoldering plank, he turned to his dazed men and said “Gentlemen, you are home!”

Have you burned your ships yet in following Christ or have you kept open the option of turning back? I’m fed up with and bored with a Christianity that hasn’t burned its boats! How about you?

Source: Morley, The Rest of Your Life, page 1

Read Luke 14:25-35

Niagara Falls

When French explorers discovered Niagara Falls, they were fascinated with the Indian beliefs about the Falls. They watched as annually they floated a young virgin over the Falls to sacrifice to the supposed snake god coiled at the Falls' base. Years later the Falls became a tourist center and the honeymoon capitol of the world. In the 20th century electrical engineers harnessed the Falls' power and supplied electricity to a vast area.

People's attitudes toward the Holy Spirit parallel the history of attitudes toward Niagara Falls. Some see the Holy Spirit as mystical, like the Indians with their snake god. Others appreciate the Holy Spirit, like a tourist. Few know how to harness the power of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives.

Source: Elmer Towns, What the Faith Is All About, page 223.

Read Ephesians 5:18-21 and Romans Chapter 8..

Sand Castle

Two children, a boy and a girl, played on a beach one sunny day. They spent hours building an elaborate sand castle by the water's edge. It had gates, towers and a moat. Just as they were nearly finished, a wave reduced it to a heap of wet sand. You would expect the children to cry in disappointment – instead they laughed, joined hands, and ran up the beach and started all over again. The children teach us a lesson. You can build your sand castle and complicated structure, but one day a wave will destroy it. But what will last? Relationships – that's what really matters. That is what keeps us going!

Read Ephesians 4:1-3 and 1 Peter 3:8-9

Paco

Ernest Hemingway tells a story of a Spanish father who sought reconciliation with his runaway son. He placed an add in the newspaper which read, “Paco meet me at Hotel Montana noon, Tuesday.”

Paco is a common name in Spain and when the father went to the hotel, he found 80 young men named Paco waiting for their fathers! Jesus Christ knows you by name – He’s sent you a message, “Come Home!” Jesus said, “Come unto me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.” Jesus said, “I came that you might have life and have it more abundantly.”

Source: Yancy, What’s So Amazing About Grace, Page 37-38.

Read Matthew 11:28-30 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-21.

Ed Everett – Abraham Lincoln

The crowd roared its approval after Ed Everett’s one hour and fifty-seven minute speech to dedicate Gettysburg cemetery. It was November 19, 1863, and Everett, a former congressman and governor knew his craft. Voice tone, dramatic gestures, and eloquent pauses held his listeners spellbound. President Abraham Lincoln followed with a few brief comments. He felt his speech was ill prepared and told Secretary Steward just before he spoke, “they won’t like it.” His voice was high pitched and he never moved his feet or gestured with his hands.

At the conclusion of his two-minute address, a Philadelphia Press Reporter whispered “Is that all?” Comparisons are odious, few remember Ed Everett but we all know Lincoln and his Gettysburg Address. Stop comparing. Be content to do your best for the glory of God.

Source: Swindoll, The Quest for Character, page 119

Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-5 and notice the four “courts.” We all are examined by others, human court, self, and the Lord.

Ten Commandments

Many people believe that following an ethical code such as the Ten Commandments is all that God requires. But God did not give the Ten Commandments to save us but to show us we need a Savior. Romans 3:20 says, “through the law comes the knowledge of sin.” The Ten Commandments are like a mirror; they cannot remove the dirt of sin in our lives, only expose it. They are like a thermometer; which indicates we have a fever but can’t heal us. We can no more change our sinful nature than putting a new pump over a well of poisoned water will produce fresh water! We need a Savior who can pay for our sins and give us a new nature. Jesus Christ alone qualifies. He never sinned yet died to pay for our sin. He rose from the dead and wants to live His life in you. Why not trust Him as your Savior today?

Source: Cherrydale Baptist Church, NewComers Class Notes, page 3.

Read Romans 3; James 2 and 1 Timothy 1:8-11

\$8.54

Tom’s drive to accomplish kept him away from home most of the time. He gave his family emotional leftovers. When he was not working, he was resting to work. He rarely took time to play with his son, he didn’t feel it was accomplishing anything. One rare Saturday off Tom sat reading the paper, when his son walked up. The boy stood silently as Tom tried to ignore him. Finally, Tom said to his son “What do you want?” His son smiled and held out a handful of bills and change. “Here Dad, this is all the money I have, \$8.54 and it’s all yours if you’ll stay home and play with me today.” Tom got a wake up call that day, and changed his priorities before it was too late.

Source: Smalley, The Two Sides of Love, page 37

Read Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:31 and Deuteronomy 6:4-7

NO! NO! NO!

George shouted at his wife “I hate you! I won’t take it anymore! No! No! No!” Months later, he woke in the night to strange sounds coming from his son’s room. He walked to the room and heard his two-year-old softly repeating the words, “I hate you, I won’t take it anymore. No! No! No!” George realized he had passed on his anger and unforgiveness to the next generation. The shock changed his attitude. He began to work on healing his marriage and family. He learned and applied Biblical principles that have transformed his marriage and healed his son’s heart.

Source: Yancy, *“What’s So Amazing About Grace”*, page 120

Read Exodus 20:4-6; Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:21

I Skipped School

As a teenager, I skipped school one day with a friend to do some stunts in the used car my father had recently helped me buy. On a country road I destroyed the engine and pushed the car in a ditch to make it appear like an accident. I then went back to school and lied. I told everyone, including the police, that someone had stolen my car. After the auto was found, my generous father put a new engine in it and gave it back to me.

Years rolled by and I never confessed my lie. Finally, in desperation to ease the pain of my conscience I confessed my deed to dad. He responded by putting his arm around me and saying, “Son, I knew the whole time and I forgive you.” My dad’s forgiveness built a path for the love of Christ to march into my heart. Whatever you have done, come clean with Jesus Christ and He will forgive you. He knows what you have done and loves you anyway.

Read Luke 15.

High Diver

In 1967, a Christian at the University of Cincinnati met a young man training for the Olympics as a high diver. He shared the Gospel of Christ many times with his athlete friend without results. One night the future Olympian called him for a list of Bible verses related to salvation but did not want to talk further. That same night about 11 p.m. he went to the University pool to practice dives. As he climbed the platform he was convicted of his sin and need of Christ. He stood on the high dive, raised his arms for balance, and noticed his shadow on the moonlit wall, the shape of a cross. He immediately sat down on the diving board and trusted Christ as his Savior.

At that moment an attendant turned on the lights and revealed an empty pool drained for repairs. The cross saved the diver's life and soul. Have you trusted Christ to save yours?

Read John 6:37, 44, 65 and Ephesians 2:8-9.

Do It Anyway

Christianity is not doing your best, trying to be like Jesus and making vows and promises, but choosing to allow Jesus Christ to live His life through you. It's yielding to Him no matter what. People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered – love them anyway. If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives - do good anyway.

People favor underdogs but follow only hot dogs – fight for the few underdogs anyway. People really need help but may attack you if you help them – help them anyway. The good you do today, may perhaps be forgotten tomorrow – do good anyway. Give the world the best that you have and you will get kicked in the teeth – give them the best that you have anyway. Jesus Christ knows all about you – He loves you anyway. Yield your life to Him.

Source: Maxwell, Becoming a person of Influence, page 107

Read Galatians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:58 and James 5:7-8.

Love and Action

Jeff leads a Love and Action Ministry to AIDS patients. At five o'clock one Friday a regular client, Jimmy, called in desperation. "I'm really sick Jeff. I've got a fever. Please help me." Jeff promised to come, even though it meant long hours and postponing a night with his friends. He struggled with resentment and anger as he drove to Jimmy's apartment. The stench of vomit repelled him as he walked in. He wiped Jimmy's forehead and began to scrub the putrid floor. Another AIDS patient named Russ arrived and Jeff proceeded to clean the vomit from around the base of his chair. Russ shouted, "I understand. I understand who Jesus is, He is like you Jeff." Jeff wept and hugged Russ and led him to Christ that night.

Source: Leadership Magazine, winter '99, page 77, to illustrate Servanthood.

Read John 13:34 and Matthew 25:31-47

Unconscious

John Maxwell spoke at the dedication of a church he had pastored 25 years before. He met a man in a wheelchair who had been a teenager when Maxwell was his pastor. He had been in an accident that left him in a coma. Maxwell visited him in the hospital many times. One night he shared the Gospel of Christ with the man, as he lay unconscious in his bed. Soon after Maxwell moved and never heard what happened to the man until years later.

"Do you remember coming to the hospital and talking to me 25 years ago?" "I sure do," Maxwell responded. "So do I," the man said, "I remember the day as clear as can be. I wasn't able to answer you but I heard every word you said. That's the day I became a believer in Jesus Christ." Never underestimate the power of the Gospel or the response of those you share it with.

Source: Maxwell, Becoming a Person of Influence, page 164

Read Luke 19:10; John 6:44 and Ephesians 2:3-5.

Wash Your Hands

In the 1840's, Vienna housed a famous medical center. But on the maternity ward one out of every six women died. When a young doctor ordered that all doctors and students wash their hands after performing autopsies on the dead women and before making examinations on the living women, the mortality rate plunged to one in 84. Later, when 11 of the 12 women on the maternity ward died, the doctor instructed everyone to wash hands between each examination of well patients and performing autopsies on dead patients, the mortality rate dropped even more.

People who refuse to forgive those who wrong them spread germs of bitterness to all the people they touch, like doctors with dirty hands. Let's stop the infection!

Source: Patrick Morley, The Rest of Your Life, page 41

Read Hebrews 12:15 and Matthew 18:21-35

Gordon Wilson

In 1987, an IRA bomb buried devout Christian Gordon Wilson and his daughter Maria under five feet of rubble. Maria's last words to her father were "Daddy, I love you very much." Wilson proclaimed from his hospital bed, "I lost my daughter, but I bear no grudge. I shall pray tonight and every night that God will forgive them." Wilson went on to lead a crusade for Protestant-Catholic reconciliation. He met with the IRA and personally forgave them and asked them to stop the fighting. When he died in 1995, the Irish Republic, Northern Ireland and all of Great Britain honored this forgiving Christian.

As Christians we are either like bug spray - blasting those who wound us with the sting of unforgiveness or like air freshner - bringing the aroma of Christ's love and forgiveness to each circumstance. Let the aroma of God's grace flow through you today.

Source: Yancy, What's So Amazing About Grace?, page 117-118.

Read Ephesians 4:29 and 1 Peter 3:8-9