

Faith Struggles

II was struggling with my faith. I had had my moment when I realized what Communion was about. When I had felt God's love so intimately that I knew that he loved even me when I was most unlovable. But then I was caught up in the doing and I realized that I was drifting away, that it wasn't fresh anymore. I was active in the church, perhaps too active, too controlling, too involved. I wanted it my way. I realized I was harboring anger where there should be joy. I needed to let go and let Good. A difficult lesson for me. I found my release not in the meetings, not in the doing but at the Altar rail. I was able to kneel in surrender to a God who loved me and told me I didn't have to do it all, he would carry my burdens and he would use it all for good. I moved on and concentrated on my faith and not the actions of others. That was many years ago and while the journey hasn't always been smooth God has used me with all my faults and I have remembered when he saved me from myself.

John Wesley was struggling. The movement was stalled. He had plunged into despondency. Then he went to Aldersgate: "At about quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation, and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." Now this was Wesley's famous conversion but to what? He had always believed in Christianity. But now it was personal. It was not an everlasting experience because John Wesley would have other times of drifting away, not from his faith, but from his assurance.

I am not perfect in my faith, yet time and again God waits to assure me that I am his child and I go on resting in his love.

1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Lord, help us to lay down our unbelief, not in you Lord but in ourselves. May we feel your love afresh and renewed. Be with those who need to reach you and are lost, may we light their path. Be with those who are suffering, our youth who sometimes feel lost and alone, our aged who feel forsaken and lonely, the sick and those who grieve, may they feel your comfort, be with those that enter our doors may they find you in us. Be with our Pastor and our staff as they seek to bring us closer to you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Grace Epperson

References to John Wesley are taken from the book "John Wesley, A Biography" by Stephen Tomkins