

# A Life Of PRAISE!

By Dr. Steve McVey

**Nothing** so quickly steals away joy in the Christian's life as a performance based mentality. The lifestyle of a Christian is intended to be an overflow of our relationship to Jesus Christ, not a religious struggle to please God by improving our behavior.

Embrace the following facts by faith and your life will become one of enthusiastic praise, not empty performance.

**1. God loves and accepts us just the way we are!** It isn't necessary for our behavior to change in order for God to accept us. Psalm

103:11 says that God's loving-kindness toward those who fear Him is as high as the heavens are above the earth!

**2. God doesn't judge us the way people judge each other.** "You thought I was just like you," God said in Psalm 50:21. But He isn't like us. His love for us isn't because of how wonderful we are, but because of how wonderful He is! Every sin of the Christian has been judged at the cross. Now "there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

**3. God will guide our lives as long as we live and**

**nothing will ever change that fact.** He says, "I am your God, forever and ever; I will guide you until death" (Psalm 48:4). If His guidance in our lives ever ended, then He wouldn't be our God "forever and ever," but He promises that He is!

These are just a few of the promises of God in His word concerning His love and concern for us. The bottom line in moving from a life of performance to a life of praise is to believe Him. You can know this for sure – God is with you (Ps. 56:9) and will never forget you! (See Isaiah 49:14-15) Simply trust Him and then praise the Lord!



Hi, I'm Steve McVey, President of Grace Walk Ministries, and we are thrilled that you have let us send you these proven, biblical principles that will help you restore the joy in your life as a Christian. Grace Walk is a teaching and training ministry which exists for the purpose of sharing the life of Jesus Christ with others. Our mission is to help Christians discover the freedom of their new life in Christ. To this end, we use conferences, mission trips, Bible studies, books, newsletters, CD and DVD Studies and my weekly Sunday Preaching message broadcast via our website.

Again, thank you so much for this opportunity to serve you. There's lots more in store at our website. Be sure to visit us there at [www.gracewalk.org](http://www.gracewalk.org). We hope you'll drop by for a visit and that you'll tell a friend about us.

In Him,

*flip over for another article by Steve*



## Faith Isn't Thinking Positive Thoughts - by Steve McVey

Danny and I were talking one day about how depressed the real estate market has been all over the United States for the past few years. The subject has great importance to him because Danny works for a mortgage company. "Management at our company has already laid off about a third of our employees," he told me.

"Are you concerned about your job?" I asked him.

"No," he answered. "I'm believing God for my job. He knows that our oldest son, Dave, is in college now and Ted will start in the fall. If I've ever needed a steady income, it's now. They're telling us at work that we're fighting to stay afloat, but I think everything will be okay."

"I hope so," I answered. "I don't hope. I'm believing in faith," he responded with mild

irritation in his voice.

I immediately knew I had unintentionally said something wrong. I know Danny well enough to understand that his view of faith requires that he affirm with gusto that things will turn out the way he wants. From his perspective, to acknowledge that an outcome any different is even a remote possibility translates to a lack of faith. Faith means believing it will happen the way we're praying it will happen. It's that simple to him.

Danny is an example of somebody who thinks he has faith based on how I've described that people often misunderstand it. In actuality, that's not what faith is at all. Faith isn't thinking positive thoughts about a situation until you finally convince yourself that it will work out the way you want. When the three Hebrew children were threatened with being thrown into the fiery furnace because they refused to bow down to the idol of King Nebuchadnezzar, their response was one of great faith. They said, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up" (Daniel 3:17-18).

The faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego was in their God, regardless of what the outcome of their circumstances might ultimately prove to be. They said, "Our God is going to deliver us, one way or the other. It may be that He delivers us from the fire or He may deliver us through the fire, but either way we are going to trust Him." These three weren't rebuking flames or making loud confessions that they wouldn't go into the fire. They were simply looking to God and trusting in Him.

The fact is that, like many others already have, Danny could lose His job. If he did lose it, though, that wouldn't mean his faith failed him or that God let him down. It would simply be the way His heavenly Father was working in Danny's life to move him ahead in carrying out the divine plan He has for him.

I'm not suggesting that there aren't times when we can believe with confidence that things will turn out the way we are hoping. There are some things that we know without a doubt are God's will because of His word to us. I'm discussing here the times when we can't be sure what His will is because He has been silent on the matter. At times like that, we can't try to use what we may call faith as a way to force God's hand and get Him to do what we want.

To confidently walk in God's will for your life, the only thing you need to do is trust Him. Faith is nothing more or nothing less than looking at things through the lens of confidence in God and His word. The answer, then, to feelings of weak faith is simply to focus on the truths we know about our God. Do you feel like you have weak faith? Then remind yourself of who God is and on the fact that He is always reliable. That's true no matter how things may look at the time life seems unstable. You don't have to feel great confidence about what the results of your circumstances will be. You only need to cast yourself in total abandon on the One who will determine those results and rest in Him, waiting for Him to do what He will do even though you can't make any sense of it at the time.