

The Logic of Love

Chapter 11: Feeling Faithful versus Choosing Faith

*The weak indulge in resolutions, but the strong act.
Life is but a day's work—do it well.*

-The Urantia Book

Faith as a feeling and faith as a choice are two entirely separate entities. Feelings may or may not come as a response to that thing called reality. When we watch a movie, for example, we suspend disbelief and emotionally live in the story. We can have deep feelings about it, even though we understand that what we're responding to is not real. This is in contrast to faith, where we are acting on beliefs which we relate to as reflections of reality.

Sometimes our emotions are a combination of reality and self-created fiction. For instance, many of us have made and broken the traditional New Year's resolution. We nurtured the resolution during December. We visualized how our lives could be better and how we would make it happen. With a couple drinks in us at the New Year's party, our resolve blossomed into vivid visions of personal transformation and renewal.

Perhaps the resolution was to exercise regularly, and the endorphins produced from jogging provided us a nice "runner's high" during the month of January. There was some reality to the resolution. But then, February came—a sobering month—and rationalization became the new drug of choice. The commitment we once had to exercise four days a week got replaced by the excuse that a few extra pounds during the winter helps keep a body warm.

Then, we wonder: how is it that the feeling was so strong, so real, so compelling, yet the follow through is so lame, so self-defeating, so embarrassing? So when the holiday season comes the following year, we keep our mouths shut. Our friends start spouting off their inspired New Year's resolutions, and we just smile and say, "Go for it, baby!" But inside we feel the conflict of two competing, yet equally deplorable, attitudes: "They'll eat their words," and "If they stick with it, there must be something wrong with me."

What are the underlying issues that keep us from following through with our commitment to be the best we can be? It's a good question to ponder, however, it is beyond the scope of this discussion. The point here is that, if there is a God, he is all too aware of the difference between our resolutions and our follow through. If we expect to experience a miracle simply because we feel so strongly or pray so hard, because we hurt so much or feel so connected, then all we have really done is create an excuse for giving up on faith. If we are to have faith, then it must come with the trust that God is not hiding, but rather taking cognizance of the depth of our faith and respecting the Freewill Love Factor.

If we try to measure our faith by the depth of our emotions, we are headed for trouble. Emotions ebb and flow even when the facts remain the same. When we visit a friend in the hospital after an accident, we can be crying one minute and laughing the next. The emotional

tide related to faith in God flows back and forth just the same. However, when the *choice* to be faithful becomes a supreme assertion of thought because it is seen as the most reasonable approach to living our most cherished value (love), we have adopted a stabilizing methodology for approaching the decision to be faithful.

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