

**Seven Ways to Stronger Faith, or How
“Troubles become trifles where faith is strong.” (Billy Graham)**

1. **“Fear Factor”** Remind yourself that *faith replaces fear*. A good place to begin building faith is around our individual fears and doubts, and one which we all share is the fear of witnessing and the doubt that we can make a difference. Jesus commands us to make Disciples (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19) so we must be able to! Pray directly about what causes fear, recalling that “perfect love drives out fear” (1 John 4:18).
2. **“Building a Database”** Effective witnessing must demonstrate life-changing faith, faith which results in blessings in our lives. This begins with *knowing what God promises and watching Him deliver!* The only way to know his promises is to **spend time in the Word**. There are 31 chapters in Proverbs; read the chapter which corresponds to the calendar date every day. Look at the guides for reading on the back of this page, or choose another (not hard to find if you look). Scripture memory is important as well (see the Bible Memory list for a starter program on promises). Keeping a prayer journal and reviewing it regularly to see how God has been faithful is also important.
3. **“Weather Report”** Hebrews 12:1 says that we are surrounded by “a great cloud of witnesses.” Where is this cloud? It is in the community of believers, most obviously when gathered in worship (Hebrews 10:25) whose lives give evidence of things we can’t otherwise see. Make participation in the life of a church a priority! Look for the evidence of faith around you, and be a spiritual “meteorologist” and encourage those whose faith seems strong (Heb 3:13; 1 Thes 5:11).
4. **“Just Do It”** Using scripture and prayer as your guide, **make a choice** to walk away from the things in this world that you are using to calm or indulge your fears and doubts, while choosing to move toward greater trust in God, while keeping your mind set on the “life with a view to future hope” (Jeremiah 29:11) that God promises those who chose to live by Kingdom standards. The future is the only place it’s not possible to fail! Just DO IT!
5. **“A Marathon, Not A Sprint”** There are people who can run (like when chased by a bear) and there are runners. Runners have made running a lifestyle. Life-changing faith doesn’t happen overnight, nor does it lodge permanently in our lives. We must constantly strive toward faithful obedience. Regular prayer and spiritual disciplines such as fasting must work into your life as **habits, not events**. Surrender some control of your life to Christ daily, and strive not to be a “believer,” but a “follower of Christ.”
6. **“Operation Obedience”** Blessing arises from **obedience** to God over and above selfish indulgence (doing things my way). Two areas for obedience:
 - a. **General:** The Bible is packed with instructions for daily living; choose something to become more obedient in! In addition to prayer and scripture reading, two areas that apply to all of us are acts of humble service (John 15:12-13) and financial giving (2 Corinthians 9:6-12, Malachi 3:10).
 - b. **Particular:** In time, through prayer and searching the scriptures, God will reveal to you opportunities for you to serve that are unique to you. These are the “works prepared in advance” (Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 1:6) for us. Get busy!
7. **“House of Mirrors”** Mirrors reflect, showing us what we don’t normally see. Look into your life: Has your faith grown? Have you been witnessing? If so, give God the glory and praise him for the blessings! Blessings from faithful obedience should never be taken for granted. If not, why not? Have you asked God to help you grow in wisdom and faithfulness (James 1:5)? Also, **check for humility** – the willingness to use your resources solely to benefit others – which is central to Christ-likeness.