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# FAITH IS ACTION



ONE MORE TIME



# ONE MORE TIME!

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*“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto you are also called, and have professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give you charge... that you keep this commandment... until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Tim. 6:12-14).

One of the last things Jesus said to the Church was, *“Hold that fast which you have, that no man take your crown”* (Rev. 3:11). This is a warning that someone will try to take your crown of life. If you let him, the devil will walk all over you. Once you start retreating, you will descend like a snowball in an avalanche. You have to fight to maintain the faith. You’re not going to make it to Heaven unless you fight.

Does this mean you have to

fight to get saved? No, but you will have to fight to stay saved. Getting saved is the easiest part. Having an evangelistic ministry and getting people saved is the easy part. God sends the conviction when His servants preach a convicting message, and many get saved. But *keeping* them saved and making them productive Christians is the hard part. Jesus said in Luke 16:16, *“Since John the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it.”* This Greek word means “to exert energy in order to overcome opposition.”

In Phil. 3:14 Paul said, *“I press toward the mark...”* In the Greek the mark refers to *the goal line*. It doesn’t make any difference if you enter every race in the world, if you

don't get across the finish line. In football you can run 99 yards, but if you don't run that other one yard, you won't make a touch-down. You can hit the baseball and run around all the bases, but if you are tagged out at the home plate, you won't score a run.

Paul said, "I'm going to fight the good fight of faith. I'm going to lay hold on eternal life. I'm not going to let the devil take my crown. I'm not going to lose my ground. *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*"

### **THE CALLING ON HIGH**

The finishing line is just ahead: Press towards the mark for the prize of the calling up on high. God is ready to call us up. This is what Paul meant, "*being called up on high*": He was talking to the Greeks about their Olympic games, and the term *press* means "*to pursue, to run for the mark,*" and in the Greek it's *goal line*. The *prize* is a crown of life that fadeth not away. "*The calling up on high*" occurred when the Olympic game was won. Even in today's Olympics, when the race is done, *they call the winners up on the podium* before all, and they put a gold, silver, or bronze medal around their necks. In those days, they put an ivy wreath around his head.

Paul said that these runners "*strive for the mastery and are temperate in all things. They do it to win a temporal crown, but we do it for a crown that fades not away!*"

Paul strongly reasoned with us that if these contestants would *buffet their bodies and bring them under subjection to win an earthly crown that fades away, and we do it for an incorruptible crown that does not fade away, how much more should we buffet our bodies and bring them into subjection?* (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

I exhort you to read carefully these verses. Paul, in effect, as a minister was saying that *preaching is the easy part!* When God's anointing is on you and you are called to preach, you can preach! You can teach! You can flow in the Spirit! But Paul said the battle comes "*after I've preached*"! When the flesh rose up, he had to put on his spiritual boxing gloves. The Greek literally means "*to fight with the fist, to box.*" The present tense denotes a continual fight: "*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway*" (v. 27).

Christian, sometimes you have to shake yourself and not let the devil put you over the edge by robbing your prayer time, your Bible study, and keeping you out of church. You're so tired before church, but 15 minutes after you stay home, you're full of life, and the devil's got carnal things for you to do. Some people have got just enough salvation to be miserable! They know that they should do more, and they're not doing it. They're afraid to go all the way into

the world, but neither do they go all the way for God. They are in between, and the Holy Spirit is pulling them one way, and the flesh and the devil are pulling them the other way. You have to let go of one of them. Jesus said, *“No man can serve two masters! He will despise one and cleave to the other”* (Matt. 6:24). You can let go of God and for a time get momentary peace; until the devil sets his trap when he gets you empty.

### **SAMSON THE STRONGMAN**

The classic Bible example is Samson. You would think that Samson would have appreciated the unique anointing that was on him. He was the only one in Israel that the Spirit of God fell on so mightily. He was physically invincible by the power of God. Satan couldn't do anything with him.

In Judges 16, Israel's enemies surrounded the city of Gaza where Samson was spending the night. They said, *“We've got him now, and at day break we're going to kill him.”* At midnight God woke Samson up; the city was surrounded, and its gigantic gates were closed. I'm talking about gates that were maybe 40 feet high and weighed tons. He grabbed one in one hand and one in the other hand, and the power of God came on him, and he picked the gates up, put them on his shoulders and walked up a hill in front of that city and planted those gates on top

of the hill before Hebron as a mighty memorial to the almighty delivering power of God!

By God's Spirit he was invincible, *“For it's not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord!”* (Zech. 4:6). It's only the Spirit of God that makes you strong and invincible. *“When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him”* (Isaiah 59:19). But if you leak out, there is no one to lift a standard up.

When Samson called, God heard him, but he was backsliding little by little. You see, you don't leak out of the Spirit all at once, but little by little, and that's the danger. You don't know you're emptying out. To be baptized in the Holy Ghost means to be filled up on the inside and completely enveloped and covered on the outside. But under the O.T., they didn't have

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what we have. They could get *full* of the Spirit, and like David, *their cup could run over*, but they weren't *baptized*.

The difference between a *baptizing* and a *filling* is that when you're filled, you are filled up, and it keeps coming until you are running over with the Spirit. But when you fill up a glass of water, then set it in the sink, put a stopper in the sink, keep the tap on, it's not only full and running over, but *baptized*—absolutely covered with water until all you can see is water.

That's what being in the Spirit is. All you see is the Holy Ghost. You are under the complete control of the Holy Ghost. I remember when I got the Holy Ghost, when I came out of it, I found myself in the middle of the church hollering. I didn't know how I got there. I was under the anointing of God, completely controlled by the Holy Ghost, in the middle of the church hollering with all of my might, "Glory to God! Hallelujah!" I was full, running over, and *baptized!*

But I found out that the dangerous time is when you're full. I like to illustrate it by a seesaw, and the balance pole is the line of demarcation. On one side is being in the Spirit, and on the other side is being in the flesh. When I say "in the flesh", I mean being controlled by the flesh. When he talked about the flesh, Paul usually meant "the old nature": "*For they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" But if the

Spirit of God dwell in you, you're not in the flesh; you're in the Spirit. This means you are controlled by the new nature of the Holy Spirit. When you are in the flesh, you're controlled by the old nature and Satan.

How can you tell, after being all the way full, that you're getting close to being totally leaked out? You're in the middle of the seesaw, and the flesh is calling, and the Spirit is calling, and you're in a battle.

### **THE BATTLE LINE**

Paul said in Gal. 5:17: "*For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are **contrary** the one to the other: so that you **cannot do the things that you would.***" Remember when you were full of the Spirit? You could pray anytime. You couldn't stop praying. You went to bed praying, and your body had to pass out, because your spirit was still praying and singing. When your body finally woke up in the morning, your spirit was still singing. You had a song in the night season and all the day long. There was no battle to read the Bible, and revelation was coming, and joy came. When the battle came, you rolled with the punches. You didn't realize that you were in a test, because the Spirit anesthetized you. In other words, it numbed you to the flesh. The flesh was dead as you were "*reckoning yourself to be **dead indeed unto the flesh and unto sin, but **alive unto*****

**God”** (Rom. 6:11).

This is being broke through in the Spirit till you’re out in heavenly places, till you’re singing and speaking in tongues, *“praying in the Holy Ghost, building yourself up on your most holy faith”* (Jude 20). You are under the complete control of the Holy Ghost, and whatever it takes to get full of the Spirit, it takes to stay full of the Spirit. Everyday you have to kill that old man, the carnal nature. You’ve got to *die daily*, Paul said in 1 Cor. 15:31. You’ve got to *“crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts,”* he admonished in Gal. 5:24. If you do not, the old nature is going to have a resurrection, and you are going to be controlled by the flesh. Being baptized in the Holy Spirit is not a once-for-all-time experience. You have to *renew* the spirit man everyday. *“The inner man is renewed daily,”* Paul said in 2 Cor. 4:7.

In his letter to the Ephesians, he said, *“...Be filled with the Spirit”* (5:18). The Greek verb tense is *present*, which denotes continuous action. In other words: **“Be continually filled with the Spirit!”** When you are filled with the Spirit, there’s no room for the fleshly lusts to operate in your life. Your mind, spirit, desires are controlled by the mind of the Spirit, *and you are minding spiritual things*, Paul said in Romans 8:5. The devil can’t test you with the flesh. You’re too far in the Spirit. You’ve found the secret of Gal. 5:16:

*“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”* You can get to the place you can’t be tempted with the flesh: You’re too far in the Spirit, but the danger comes when you let down.

Samson had all the anointing that anybody could have. You see, God only anoints you to do the thing He called you to do. You don’t have to sin to lose the anointing; just stop doing the thing God called you to do. I could leak out quickly; all I have to do is stop praying, stop reading the Bible, stop studying and stop preaching, and I could backslide. You have to fight to keep this anointing. You can’t let yourself leak out. You can’t let yourself get empty. That’s what the devil’s waiting for, to get you into self will, to get you to let up. He’ll tell you that you’re too tired to pray. *Brother, I’m too tired not to pray!* I’m going to pray if I don’t do anything else, because that’s when my victory and breakthrough come.

### **DON'T BE UNEQUALLY YOKED**

Samson let up. The devil told him to go ahead in that city, because he went with a harlot in that city, and he wasn’t on the job of delivering Israel. The devil set him up, because he knew that Philistine women were Samson’s weakness. It was against the Word of God for him to marry Delilah, because God had clearly commanded Israel that they were not to mix with Gentiles to give their

sons and daughters in marriage (Deut. 7:3).

Some Christians today let the devil set them up to marry unbelievers or those in false doctrine and fall in the trap of the devil. “*Be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers!*” is the command of 2 Cor. 6:14. A Christian is never supposed to marry a sinner. As soon as you marry, you’ve backslid. Three different times Paul made this argument: “*What, know you not that your body is the temple of God? Shall I then take the temple of God and join it to an idol? Or Christ with Belial? Know you not that he that joins himself with a whore, is a whore?*” (See 1 Cor. 3:16, 6:15-20 & 2 Cor. 6:14-18). And when you join yourself to an unbeliever, you are an unbeliever.

Furthermore, you will never win them to Christ. Instead they win you over to the world. I’ve watched it for over 50 years in my church with many young people. I warned them. They said, “I’ll get him saved.” Sister, if you can’t get him saved *before you marry him*, then you’re not going to get him saved after you marry! You’re the one who has compromised God’s Word. Whatever you compromise for, you will lose.

I can hear Satan whispering to Samson, “See, you still have the power with you. It was ok to lay in Delilah’s lap.” He laid there the first time, and God raised him up and anointed him *to destroy the Philistines*, not to lay in their lap, not to

fraternize with them. He laid there again, and Delilah was trying to find the source of his strength. His strength was his consecration. His long hair was a sign of his consecration, his sanctification, his separation unto God’s use.

The Christian’s consecration is a daily renewal. On the one hand, he’s being crucified to the flesh, but on the other hand, he’s being made alive unto God (Rom. 6:11). Even as he is dying daily to the flesh, he is being renewed daily to the life of the Spirit: “*For though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day*” (2 Cor. 4:16). But if you don’t renew the spiritual measure day by day, you will gradually leak out. You can be full of the Spirit, but if you don’t renew that measure one day, you will begin to decline spiritually.

First thing you know, the top of your head begins to show, and you begin to get your own mind instead of the mind of Jesus. You go another day, and now your eyes begin to see things you shouldn’t. But your “shaking yourself” because the Spirit is still there, but what you don’t realize is, you’re leaking out day by day. Next your nose is uncovered, and you start getting your nose in other people’s business. Then you get your mouth into it, and pretty soon you’re half-full and half-covered by the Spirit. You didn’t renew that measure of the Spirit again, and the devil is just

waiting. He's like a fisherman trying to bring in a big marlin. He gives you a little rope, but he's got you hooked. He's going to let you struggle and wear yourself out.

You go another day, and now you have leaked out down to your knees. You lay in Delilah's lap again, and you are weak; you're close to telling your secret, and she's not your friend. The Philistines are on you, but you jump up and the Spirit of God is still there. You say, "Thank God, I can still feel the anointing", but that's what deceives you, because the devil says, "See, you laid in Delilah's lap and you got away with it. You did this little worldly thing, you did this little fleshly thing, and you got by. You've let up reading the Bible; you haven't prayed like you ought to, but you still have the anointing. You don't have to do all that stuff."

Another day goes by, and it's so easy now. It hurt your conscience in the beginning, but it's easy now, because your conscience is becoming defiled, and if not checked, is in danger of becoming seared. It's like when they brand cattle with a branding iron, and they can't feel it. It means God can't trouble you anymore.

Samson thought, "I still have the anointing on me, and I still feel the power shaking me." But he didn't renew his measure, and another day he lay in Delilah's lap. She didn't love Samson, and she doesn't love you. She is a tool of the devil, and

he's trying to steal your anointing and power on your life, and all of the blessings of God, because he's a thief. Jesus said that he comes *to steal and to kill and to destroy you* (Jn. 10:10).

### THE CALL OF THE FLESH

When you begin to leak out spiritually, you go another day, and you're three quarters full; another day, and you're half-full; another day and you're a quarter full; and another day, and you're empty! There you are on the line of demarcation, and the Spirit is calling to you but it's real faint. Now the call of the flesh is stronger, and you are being torn to pieces. You can't go on like this much longer. If somebody with the anointing doesn't come and deliver you, you are in big trouble. Because now when the enemy comes, there is no flood of the Spirit of the Lord to lift up a standard against him. The anointing destroys the yoke, but you've leaked out. There's no anointing to break the yoke. You have gotten down to one Sunday a month going to church, and you have all kinds of excuses. Hell is full of people with excuses.

Finally, like Samson, **you're empty**. The most terrible state for a Christian to be in is *empty*! Samson laid one time too many times in Delilah's lap. He got away with it for awhile, because he had that much Spirit on him. When he came down to his last measure, he probably

thought, “Let me see if I still have the power,” and he laid down in Delilah’s lap, the lap of the world and the flesh, and he foolishly told her his secret. The secret of his power was not his hair. His hair was *the sign* of the secret of his power. It was seven locks, and in the Bible *seven* is the perfect and complete number. God wanted his absolute and perfect consecration, but the minute he laid in Delilah’s lap, he began to break it until he totally lost his consecration to God.

Meanwhile the devil was tearing God’s people to pieces. He wasn’t there as their deliverer. You would have thought that he’d appreciate that anointing, and Paul said that we have this treasure! It’s more a treasure than silver and gold, the anointing! “*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us*” (2 Cor. 4:7).

Saint, Preacher, you can do nothing without the anointing! *The anointing destroys the yoke* (Isa. 10:27). You can say, “In the Name of Jesus” all you want, but without the anointing you can’t do anything. The seven sons of Sceva said, “In the Name of Jesus”, but nothing happened, because the anointing wasn’t there. (Acts 19:13-17)

Samson had gradually lost his consecration, and then the devil took the sign of it away, shaved his hair off, and said, “You’ve lost your consecration. You don’t have any power.” The power is in your consecration,

your being set apart for God as a vessel that He can use to bring deliverance. He couldn’t use Samson while he was laying in Delilah’s lap. He didn’t have a burden for God’s people. All he wanted to do was fulfill his fleshly lust.

She said, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you.” Now, up until that time, if you read the story, it says, “*And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him.*” But now he’s got his own mind, and he jumped up and said, “*I will go out as other times before and shake myself*” (Jud. 16:20).

The devil isn’t afraid of our flesh shaking. (There’s a whole lot of shaking today, but God’s not in some of it.) He’s only afraid when we’re being shook by the Holy Ghost. The Philistines came upon Samson, and he shook himself, but nothing happened. There was no anointing in him; there was no power in himself. It was in the anointing, but the anointing was gone, because he had broken his consecration, and God let him become like a plucked chicken. The tragic thing was, he had deceived himself. The Bible says, “*And he wist (knew) not that the LORD was departed from him*” (vs. 20).

### **THE SHAKER WAS GONE!**

What a thousand Philistines in full armour couldn’t do, Delilah did by his laying in her lap. The enemy couldn’t whip him when he was on the battlefield of the Lord. He was

safer with a jawbone of an ass with a thousand of elite soldiers of Philistines coming to kill him, than he was laying in Delilah's lap without the anointing. The most unprofitable minister on the earth is a minister who has lost his consecration and his anointing and his message.

**Preachers**, I'm going to tell you how you can know when you're leaking out: The first thing you lose is *your burden for souls* and for the people, but you can still go on and be a "professional preacher." Get out there and preach without a burden, just business. But the next thing you lose is *your anointing*. You've learned how to preach, so no one notices at first. Finally, you lose *your message*. You start bringing in a bunch of foolishness, but you know most people are living at that level, and they will go along with you. You entertain the people, but you are not scaring any Philistines. You're not delivering God's people from the enemy.

### **MEASURES OF THE SPIRIT**

John said in John 3:34-35 that the Father loves the Son, *and gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him*. **There are measures of the Spirit**, and according to *your measure*, it will be determined how quickly, if you don't renew it every day, you will leak out. Some have more anointing on their lives, and it takes longer for them to empty, but if they don't renew it, they're going to leak

out. You're in danger when you don't want to read the Bible, when you don't want to pray; it's too hard. You sure don't want to go to church, especially, you don't want to hear preachers like Brother Hardy, because he never tells you good things!

I want to hear from God. "*He that has an ear, let him hear the Word of God,*" Jesus said seven times to the churches in Revelation. If the devil is fighting me to read a chapter, I'll read the whole book. If the devil fights me from praying, I'll stay there at least an hour. If the devil is fighting me from coming to church, I'm going to come to church that much more. *What you and I have to do is fight the devil on the thing he's fighting us on. You have to fight him back.*

Many Christians let one of the devil's biggest tricks bring them down: They are working. They are working their way into Hell, getting all the overtime they can. They end up leaked out, empty, and they still can't pay their bills, because God said, "He that forgets My house and My work, earns a wage and puts it in a bag, and I cut a hole in it."

If some Christians don't shake themselves and get back their spiritual mindset, and pursue for that goal line, and press their way through, the devil's got them. When the Philistines got Samson, the tragic thing was, there was nobody else with the anointing to come *to deliver him*.

It's getting that way now in some places. Not many ministers have the anointing anymore. Their meetings are not geared to souls. They are geared to give a little teaching to tickle the mental, natural mind; not old-time Holy-Ghost revivals; no more Hell-fire messages to stir up conviction. Preachers like me are like dinosaurs. I tell you what, it's kept me for 60 years. I might be a dinosaur, but I've still got the anointing. God hears me, and He still answers my prayer.

The Lord had me pray the prayer, "Let me have a ministry like John the Baptist", that would go up to Herod and say, "You can't have your brother's wife. You are an adulterer." I'm going to call sin, *sin*. I will tell you who really loves you: The minister who will tell you the truth, not flimflam you, use you, abuse you, strip you and rob you. God showed me this in a vision years ago: God's people were like sheep in a dungeon, and the preachers had them shackled, and all they were doing was feeding them enough to keep them alive so they could fleece their wool.

David backslid and laid with Bathsheba. Afterward God convicted him through the prophet Nathan. At first, David didn't realize that he had emptied out of the anointing. This great man of God who had delivered such holy songs had become so blinded that he committed adultery and murder. The prophet had to come, and when the scales

fell from his eyes, David said, "My God, I've been deceived." He wrote the psalm,

*"Search me O God, and know my heart I pray. See if there be any wicked way in me. Wash me with hyssop, and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence. Take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Uphold me with thy free Spirit; then I will teach transgressors thy way, and sinners will be converted unto You"* (Psalm 51).

When Samson had leaked all the way out, and had fallen on the fleshly side of the line of demarcation, the devil reduced him to a beast of burden. That's what the devil wants to do. God knows that if He can keep us full of the Spirit, He will elevate us into the image of Christ. The devil knows that if he can get us leaked out and walking in the lusts of the flesh, he can reduce us to an animal. All you'll live for is to satisfy your unbridled lust and appetites. Let me tell you something: God's a jealous God. You will never get the thing you compromise for. Samson lost Delilah, and he lost the anointing too! But he didn't realize it until it was too late.

When he was fully empty, he said, "I will get up and shake myself as other times." There are some backslidden preachers who really believe that when they get in the pulpit, God's going to anoint them. But the devil says, "I've been

waiting for you. You fell right into the trap,” and he binds them. The devil’s going to make sure you don’t get what you want. Samson couldn’t see Delilah anymore to lust after her; the Philistines burned his eyes out. That was the best thing the devil could have done for Samson! Remember Jesus said to the would-be adulterer: *“If your eye offend thee, pluck it out! It’s better to lose an eye than for your whole body to be cast into Hell!”* (Matt. 5:29).

### **ONE MORE TIME!**

The devil reduced Samson to a beast of burden, teamed him up with an ox to grind out the meal for the Philistines. The maidens would come and laugh at him. Blind, humiliated, ridiculed, Samson began to repent and pray, and as he went round and round that millstone, he consecrated himself: *“God, just one more time let me feel Your Spirit!”* As he renewed his consecration, his hair began to grow. He was blind naturally, but God opened up his spiritual eyes again.

The Philistines had a big feast to offer sacrifice to their god, Dagon. They gathered all the kings and ladies and lords, and for entertainment they brought out this fallen Israelite who had many times defeated them single-handedly in the Name of Jehovah, the great God. In that temple great of Dagon, their fish god, they brought Samson out.

He had to be led by a lad. He was stumbling, but he had his consecration back. He had the anointing back. He had spiritual eyesight. They jeered him, and mocked him. The court jesters made sport of him and kicked him, saying, *“Who’s kicking you Samson?”*

Samson told the lad, “Take me to the middle pillars of the building, that I may lean upon them.” He put his right hand on one of the pillars, and his left hand on the other pillar and lifted up those blind eyes and prayed, **“One more time, God, let me feel Your Spirit!** Strengthen me, and when You bring this victory, just let me die so I won’t live to ever lose it again.”

The power of God like lightning hit Samson, and he dislocated those pillars until the balcony fell killing all of the Philistines. He was like Jesus in his death. He killed more of the devil in his death than he did in his life (Jud. 16:30).

Friend, maybe you’ve leaked out of the Spirit, you’ve lost your prayer anointing. You’ve backslid from where you use to be; maybe you’re not all the way in the world yet, but you’re not where you use to be. The first thing to go is your prayer life and Bible study. Then you don’t go to church like you use to. You need to cry out, “God, open up my spiritual eyes. **One more time, God!** ...*Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with your free spirit.*”