

How can I overcome a crisis of faith?

The term *crisis of faith* usually refers to the point at which a person feels that he or she can no longer serve God or follow Christ. A person going through a crisis of faith is tempted to turn away from all he or she had believed in. When we feel we are facing a crisis of faith, there are some questions we should ask ourselves:

1. *What did I have faith in?* The idea of “faith” has become trendy, and some use the word as a way to indicate how deep and spiritual they are. But faith is only as good as its object. You can have faith in a bridge, but if that bridge is built of rotting timber and constructed by a class of fourth-graders, it is not wise to cross it. So spiritual faith is only as good as its foundation.

We can have what we call a “crisis of faith” when the thing we believed in lets us down. But many times, what we called “faith” was only a misplaced trust in a god we invented. Was our trust in God—or in the notion that we would never experience trouble of a certain type? Was the Lord the object of our faith—or a friend or family member who failed us? If we have placed our faith in anything other than the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, we are guaranteed disappointment ([John 3:36](#)).

2. *What caused this crisis of faith?* Often, a crisis of faith is the result of a tragedy. The death of someone close, a betrayal by a spiritual mentor, a broken relationship, or some other type of devastating loss can cause us to question whether God is even paying attention. Sometimes, at the end of a series of emotional blows, we find ourselves at a crisis point. It is good to identify what got us there, to better understand the nature of our disappointment and know where the real wound lies.

3. *What do I believe I deserve and did not get?* At the root of most faith crises is this fact: something should have happened one way, and it happened another way. When we live life with a lot of “should’s,” we are setting ourselves up for disappointment. For example, “I should have received an A on that test.” “He should love me after all I’ve done for him.” “God should have healed my child.” At the core of those statements is the unspoken assumption that we know more than God does. We determine what “should” happen, and God owes it to us to conform reality to our expectations.

Most Christians who have walked with God for any length of time have experienced at least one crisis of faith. Elijah experienced such a crisis when Queen Jezebel threatened to kill him. On the run for his life, Elijah “came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. ‘I have had enough, LORD,’ he said. ‘Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors’” ([1 Kings 19:4](#)). Here was a godly man struggling with depression and beginning to lose the vision of why he was serving God.

A. W. Tozer wrote, “It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply.” Sometimes, we respond to that hurt with having a crisis of faith. But what feels to us like the end is often the beginning of a new chapter in our lives. A crisis of faith is sometimes necessary to shatter our childish illusions about God and discover who He really is.

A crisis of faith can bring us to the point of such desperation that we are willing to do things God’s way, no matter the cost. To overcome a crisis of faith, we must surrender entirely to God’s plan for us. To give God instructions about how our lives should go is to eventually suffer a crisis of faith when He does not follow our instructions. We may discover in our “dark night of the soul” that we had not given Him the wholehearted devotion He requires ([Mark 12:29–30](#)).

To overcome a crisis of faith, we must repent of any sin in our lives. Repentance is the doorway to freedom, so Satan and our flesh fight it. In our struggles, we will often do everything but repent. We

will cry, complain, grovel, and condemn ourselves—but God asks for none of that. Jesus warned the church at Ephesus that, even though they were still keeping up appearances, their hearts had grown cold toward Him: “Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place” ([Revelation 2:5](#)).

In overcoming a crisis of faith, we must lay our hearts bare before the Lord, pour out our souls, and surrender afresh to His will for our lives ([Galatians 2:20](#)). We must cast down any idols we have erected in our hearts and abolish any worldly thoughts we have entertained in our minds ([2 Corinthians 10:5](#)). Then, by faith, we ask for the fruit that can be ours again: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control ([Galatians 5:22–23](#)).

The psalmists faced life events that could have resulted in a crisis of faith for them ([Psalm 10:1–11](#); [13:1–4](#); [22:1–18](#)). They wrote about those times and were not afraid to be honest with God about their emotional struggles. In overcoming a spiritual crisis, we can pray this psalm back to the Lord, whether or not we “feel it” in the moment: “Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me; Lord, be my help. You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. Lord my God, I will praise you forever” ([Psalm 30:10–12](#)).