

Faith, Feelings, and the Fine Art of Waiting on God

(Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18 & Luke 9:28-36)

Introduction: "God, Are We There Yet?"

We've all had those moments. You pray, you wait, and then... **nothing happens.** It's like taking a road trip with God as your driver, and He refuses to tell you how long the trip is going to take.

"Are we there yet, Lord?"

Silence.

"At least give me an ETA?" (Expected to Arrive)

More silence.

This is exactly where we find Abraham in **Genesis 15** and the apostles in **Luke 9**—waiting, doubting, and wondering if God's promises are really as solid as He says.

Part 1: Abraham and the "Are You Sure, God?" Moment

Genesis 15 gives us one of the most iconic moments in salvation history. God promises Abraham (*still called Abram at this point*) that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars.

Now, at this point, Abraham is an **old man with no kids**. So naturally, his response is, *"Um, Lord, I don't mean to be rude, but... how is this going to work?"*

And God, being God, doesn't give him a detailed PowerPoint presentation with dates and milestones. Instead, He simply **repeats the promise** and seals it with a covenant ritual.

But notice: **before the blessing comes the waiting.** Abraham falls into a deep sleep, and "a deep, terrifying darkness enveloped him" (Gen 15:12).

Lesson: Sometimes, before God's promises are fulfilled, He allows us to sit in darkness—**not to punish us, but to purify our faith.**

Church Fathers on Abraham's Faith Test

1. **St. Augustine:** "Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe." (*Sermon 43, 1-3*) - Translation: *Hang in there, Abraham.*

2. **St. John Chrysostom:** "God promised a son to Abraham and made him wait; in the waiting, Abraham's trust was tested and strengthened." - So if God makes you wait, **it's a workout for your soul.**

Part 2: The Apostles and Their "Mountaintop Experience"

Now, let's jump to the **New Testament.**

Jesus takes **Peter, James, and John** up a mountain, and suddenly, BOOM! He's shining like a **divine flashlight.** Moses and Elijah show up, and Peter—being Peter—panics and blurts out, "*Lord, it's good we're here! Let's build some tents!*"

Translation: "*Let's just stay here forever and avoid all suffering, okay?*"

But what happens? **They must come down.** After this glorious moment, they return to the messy, complicated world below.

Church Fathers on the Transfiguration

1. **St. Gregory Nazianzus:** "The Lord was transfigured, but only as much as they could bear." (*Oration 38*) - In other words, **God gives us glimpses of glory, but we still have work to do.**
2. **St. Leo the Great:** "The principal aim of the Transfiguration was to remove the scandal of the Cross from the hearts of the disciples." - Translation: *Peter, James, and John needed this experience because they were going to see Jesus suffer later. This was their prep talk.*

Controversial Issue: "Faith vs. Feelings" in the Modern World

Many Catholics Leave the Church Because It "Doesn't Feel Good"

In today's culture, many Catholics drift away from the Church because their **faith was built on feelings instead of commitment.**

Common excuses:

- ◆ "I don't feel anything when I pray."
- ◆ "Mass is boring; I'd rather scroll through social media."
- ◆ "I feel happier at a party or drinking with friends than sitting in church."
- ◆ "I just don't feel connected to God anymore."

But **faith isn't about chasing emotional highs**—it's about staying faithful even when the feelings disappear.

This is what **Abraham experienced** in his waiting. This is what **Peter experienced** when he had to come down from the mountain.

If Peter had left Jesus when the Transfiguration was over, he would have missed the Resurrection!

Real-Life Example: The “Feelings Trap” of Social Media and Instant Gratification

Many young Catholics **leave** the Church, not because they found better theology elsewhere, but because **they found a more entertaining distraction.**

Social media, binge-watching, partying, and even addiction to alcohol or materialism offer **instant gratification.**

Faith, on the other hand, requires **patience.** It requires showing up for Mass **even when you don’t feel like it.**

St. Teresa of Calcutta’s Example

Mother Teresa experienced *decades* of spiritual dryness. She wrote in her private letters that she sometimes felt **completely abandoned by God.**

And yet, she **kept serving the poor, kept praying, kept trusting.**

Why? Because **she knew that faithfulness matters more than feelings.**

As she said: *“Faithfulness, not success, is what God asks of us.”*

How to Strengthen Your Faith When Feelings Fade

1. **Accept That God Is Not an “Experience Machine”** – He’s not a vending machine for good feelings. If your faith is based on feelings, it will collapse when life gets tough.
2. **Don’t Expect Constant “Spiritual Highs”** – The apostles came down from the mountain! You won’t always feel God emotionally, but that doesn’t mean He’s absent.
3. **Make a Commitment to Prayer and the Sacraments** – Even when it feels dry, stay committed to daily prayer, Mass, and Confession.
4. **Limit Your “Instant Gratification” Activities** – If you feel more “alive” scrolling TikTok than receiving the Eucharist, it’s time to examine your priorities.

5. **Recognize That God's Timing is Not Ours** - Abraham's promise took years to be fulfilled. Stay patient.


Conclusion: "Keep Climbing the Mountain!"

Faith is not about always **feeling great**. It's about **trusting God when you don't understand**—like Abraham did, like Peter eventually learned to do, and like so many saints have done throughout history.

So, the next time you think, *"I'd rather be entertained than go to Mass,"* remember:

 **The world offers distractions, but only God offers meaning.**


 **Faith is built in the waiting.**


 **Don't stay on the mountaintop—bring your faith into the real world.**

And when you finally see the fruits of your faith, you'll look back and say, *"Ohhh, that's why He made me wait!"*

Now go forth and trust in God—with **joy and patience!**

St. Augustine, pray for us! St. Teresa of Calcutta, pray for us!

 **Final Thought:** If Abraham and Peter had social media, their posts would look like this:

 **Abraham's Twitter Post:** *"Still no kids. Just counting stars. #FaithChallenge #TrustHisTiming"*

 **Peter's Twitter Post:** *"Jesus just glowed like the sun. I wanna stay here forever. #MountaintopMoments"*