

## **Stages of Faith**

### **Literal**

#### **Day 1: Embracing Growth in Faith**

***Reading: Hebrews 5:12-14, 6:1-3***

Just as children grow and develop, our faith journey requires continuous growth. Today's passage reminds us that spiritual maturity comes through practice and challenging ourselves. Reflect on your current faith stage. Are you content with "milk," or are you ready for "solid food"? Consider how you might step out of your comfort zone spiritually this week. Perhaps attend a different style of worship service, engage in a theological discussion with someone who holds different views, or explore a spiritual discipline you've never tried before. Remember, growth often feels uncomfortable, but it's essential for deepening our relationship with God.

#### **Day 2: The Danger of "We've Always Done It This Way"**

***Reading: Mark 2:21-22***

Jesus used the metaphors of new cloth on old garments and new wine in old wineskins to illustrate the importance of being open to new ways of thinking and practicing faith. Reflect on areas in your spiritual life where you might be resistant to change. Are there traditions or practices you cling to simply because they're familiar? Ask God to reveal any "old wineskins" in your life that might be preventing you from fully experiencing His new work. Consider how you can approach your faith with fresh eyes and an open heart today.

#### **Day 3: Trusting God's Promises in Impossible Situations**

***Reading: Genesis 18:1-15***

Abraham and Sarah's story reminds us that God's promises often defy human logic. Like them, we sometimes try to "help" God fulfill His promises in our own way. Reflect on a situation in your life that seems impossible. How might you be tempted to take matters into your own hands? Instead of relying on conventional wisdom or "the way things have always been done," challenge yourself to trust in God's timing and methods, no matter how unlikely they may seem. Pray for the faith to believe that with God, all things are possible.

#### **Day 4: Embracing Diversity in the Body of Christ**

***Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27***

The Church is beautifully diverse, with many expressions of faith and worship around the world. Paul's metaphor of the body reminds us that this diversity is not only good but necessary. Reflect on how you view Christians who worship or practice their faith differently from you. Are there expressions of faith you've dismissed or criticized? Ask God to broaden your perspective and help you appreciate the richness of His global Church. Consider researching a Christian tradition different from your own and finding something to appreciate about it.

#### **Day 5: Growing Through Discomfort**

***Reading: James 1:2-4***

Just as physical exercise often involves discomfort for the sake of growth, our spiritual lives sometimes require us to embrace challenges. James encourages us to view trials as opportunities for growth. Think about a recent spiritual challenge you've faced. How has it tested your faith? What lessons or growth have come from it? Rather than avoiding spiritual discomfort, ask God for the strength to lean into it, trusting that He is using it to develop your perseverance and maturity. Consider sharing your experience with a trusted friend or mentor, encouraging one another in faith.