

Solution-Focused Faith: Key Teaching Points

THE MAIN IDEAS

Faith focuses on the solution, fear focuses on the problem.

There are two mental Universes, a Universe of faith and abundance; and an alternate Universe of unbelief and problems. We choose which mental universe to dwell in. Both exist simultaneously. Christians should choose to believe in the abundant life.

Don't look at the problem too long, it is like staring into the headlights of an oncoming truck, instead look for the solution and for the way of escape.

Being problem-focused energizes our anxiety and reactivity and leads to an unproductive Fight or Flight reaction.

Being solution-focused draws out our faith, intelligence and creative energy and generates constructive answers for living.

Being solution-focused leads to discovery of our strengths and resources (both natural and spiritual) and then to the mastery of our life.

Solutions flow from a life perspective that shrinks the problem and moves the mountain.

David was solution focused, full of faith and brave. Saul was problem focused, disobedient, paranoid and fearful.

David brought his problems to God for a) a workable real world solution AND b) an emotional resolution AND c) to gain a spiritual perspective

SEEKING SOLUTIONS

Ask the right questions! Not "Why am I poor?" which just makes you angry and resentful, but "How can I create wealth?" which will start you looking in the right direction by faith (Deut 8:18)

Solutions follow expectations. We look for a solution only if we actually expect that a solution will occur. For instance if we expect people to accept the gospel we will find a solution on how to share the gospel with them. If we don't expect people to respond to the gospel we will not have the faith to find the solution and will do pretty much nothing instead.

Being solution-focused means asking discovery questions: What are my strengths? What have I got? What is my dream? What is my plan to achieve, solve or resolve this? Where can I start? How can I pray about his? What does Scripture say? Who can I bring on board? What is the best design?

We need to focus on the outcome that we want, on a clear picture of what we desire, and on especially on what the Holy Spirit causes us to desire. Jesus to the blind man: "What do you want?" - "to see"

Solutions are unique to the person, project, or situation; not one size fits all.

Peter was always testing out Jesus' solutions e.g. walking on water, Judas always played safe and had his own ideas about what should be done

Nehemiah believed that he and God together had a solution for a ruined and burned Jerusalem. Moses, that a solution existed for the Israelites.

Solution-focused people refuse to accept the unacceptable e.g. Gideon and the raiders, David and a blasphemous Goliath

Others see new applications e.g. Paul who saw that even the Gentiles could be saved.

THE SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE

The Bible is very important and is infallible however the Bible is the menu, and not the entire meal. The Bible points us to the solutions that God provides such as salvation, healing, sanctification, spiritual gifts, protection, provision etc. we then have to go and experience those solutions in real life.

People of faith seek solutions from the Spirit, people of fear seek solutions from the flesh, from the world or even from the Devil.

The Cross was a perfect solution, it dealt with the key issues of humanity, brought life, forgiveness and reconciliation, and was 100% from the Spirit. Jesus went to the Cross "for the joy set before Him", He was tightly focused on the victories that would come from salvation! (Hebrews 12:1,2)

Solutions are like dancing with God! He leads!

Be still and know that I am God, wait for God, be open to God, to faith, to the spiritual, to divine intervention, let go and let God, stay in tune with God through prayer, worship and bible study.

Once you believe that God is trustworthy then solutions come easily.

God's solutions are generally first concerned with our salvation, sanctification and glorification, with who we will become, rather than what objects we will own.

God's solutions prepare you for the Heavenly Kingdom. God organizes all things to prepare His people for eternity and His solutions are part and parcel of that over-arching plan.

God's solutions always end up glorifying Jesus.

God's ultimate solutions involve stories that operate over thousands of years but where each character plays an important role. The story of the glory of the Son of God. God's will is not like a solution to an equation but is like a right move on a chess board or right reaction in a story line.

God is content to solve just one thing at a time.

Christianity believes that actual, real solutions to suffering exist and are good and that God wants us to have them. We are not fatalists, and we do not believe the world is an illusion, we do not simply detach ourselves emotionally and think that the problem is now solved because we do not hurt any more.

Worship creates a higher perspective that enables us to think at a level which will solve our problem (Psalm 73)

Worship takes us out of fear, fretting, anxiety and being problem-focused (Psalm 37) and reminds us of God's faithful love (Psalms 23, 91, 103 etc)

Love and wisdom are BOTH part of any excellent solution. Love is made effective via wisdom.

Implementing solutions often requires endurance, godly wisdom and character

Solutions flow from God's wisdom within us, every good and perfect gift is "from above".

Solutions often require a change in the type of wisdom we are using: from carnal wisdom to spiritual wisdom, from worldly wisdom to Christ's wisdom etc. A problem cannot be solved by the same level of thinking which produced it in the first place e.g. corrupt thinking will never make an honest man.

Power never concedes a single thing without a demand. Thus spiritual warfare is going to God to make demands on the Devil, with so much heavenly force that Satan surrenders that thing in your life which he has held captive.

The belief that nothing is impossible with God is foundational to the idea that solutions exist for all known problems.

The belief that all things are possible to him who believes is foundational to the idea that mere human beings may solve all known problems.

Solutions exist for all problems in both the visible and invisible realms. These are found in Christ in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Solutions are opposed by the Devil who wants us to remain ignorant.

Apathy opposes initiative and stops solutions which is why "sloth" is one of the seven deadly sins. Pride, envy, avarice, lust, wrath, and gluttony are similar opponents to true Faith.

You are not obliged to solve everyone's problems, each should carry their own load. (Galatians 6)

Angels are part of God's solution-providing order.

Many solutions depend on inner spiritual wisdom e.g. Daniel, Joseph etc.

Solutions are sometimes delayed by the Devil. The assistance of angels, prayer and fasting may be required. See Daniel 10

Angels may give instructions leading to solutions e.g. Acts 8

Sometimes the solution might just be "grow up"! Infantile behavior perpetuates childish fight-or-flight reactions which have trouble as their inevitable consequence.

The sin and self-centeredness problem is the main problem and the gospel is the solution. It is no use gaining the whole world and losing one's soul.

Empathy and spiritual sensitivity help us to minister God's solutions to others.

Intercession prepares the ground for fruitful solutions to appear.

Solutions come by faith, work through love and become faithful through wisdom and endurance.

Faith and thinking are not opposites. Faith believes and receives the solution, while thinking gives us wisdom in the implementation of that particular solution.

Righteousness sustains a solution while dishonesty destroys them. Integrity is essential to peace.

Gratitude, praise and thanksgiving open our heart to be receptive to God's solutions.

When we habitually implement God's solutions we create a state of being known as SHALOM or God's perpetual peace. This requires our mind being stayed on God, Isaiah 26:3

The Spirit-focused mind is filled with life and peace. Romans 8:4-6

The temporal, earthly solutions are important clues that fully good and eternal solutions await in Heaven. Jesus tells His disciples to heal the sick and then proclaim that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

The law is the wrong solution. It always fails because of the weakness of the flesh.

Works thinking is stinking thinking. Guilt has never, ever arrived at a good solution. The Pharisees created burdens and did not lift a finger

to solve them. we are not to create burdens for others. His commandments are not burdensome Matthew 11:28ff, 1 John..

Grace through faith is the only solution that works, that makes us become fully alive.

A good man makes a good plan that bears good fruit, while a wicked man makes wicked plans that bear evil fruit.

Our solutions determine and reinforce our state of being. A person who is bold, wise and full of faith-filled solutions enlarges their soul. However someone who is cowardly and unbelieving rapidly diminishes their soul.

God wants to glorify His children, and thus to build greatness into our spirits, which is accomplished by making us full of faith and giving us mountain-sized problems which we then solve in cooperation with Him. (Romans 8:28 to end of chapter)

Christianity is not just internal, about being saved and being good, it is also external about Creation and Providence and justice and governance and action in the world that ennobles our spirit and prepares us for Heaven. David's prayers, songs and anointing were insufficient to make him a great King, he also had to kill Goliath, win actual battles, lead men, and survive 14 years of persecution.

Even if the problem is historical the solution is present and at hand. The Cross was a solution in the present for the sin of Adam.

New solutions often appear simultaneously throughout God's Kingdom due to the work of the Spirit.

Solutions depend on theology. If we believe in healing we will see healing, if we think healing is not for today, then we will not see healing.

Solutions are more obvious if we are closer to the Lord because it is then easier for us to hear His voice and receive His wisdom.

WARNINGS

There are wise "solutions" and very unwise "fixes". If only a stupid person would do it, then don't do it.

The Devil's quick fix often arrives just before God's wise solution. Don't do the first thing that pops into your mind unless you check it out first.

A godly solution is value driven e.g. compassion, honor, justice while an ungodly solution does not consider values and is often angry, impulsive, expedient, short-term, or impatient and is driven by emotional satisfaction.

Solutions operate in the present, Moses rod, loaves and fishes etc, fear waits for a perfect future.

Seeking a kind of absolute theoretical grand perfection frequently prevents people from implementing God's simple but workable solution.

Solutions naturally decay into disorder unless effort is expended to keep the solution going.

Evil and deception or falseness are never part of a truly godly solution.

WHAT GOOD SOLUTIONS LOOK LIKE

Solutions call on God and upon His gracious wisdom, and not on our fleshly energies or ego.

Solutions will not be sinful or unbiblical. Always check them out in the Word.

Solutions often involve the use of command prayer and spiritual authority e.g. Jesus speaking to the storm, Moses to the Red Sea etc.

Solutions are generally specific, concrete, and involve vivid, clear, positive pictures of a desirable and peaceful future.

Solutions are spiritually energizing with an energy, power and authority which is from God.

Solutions say "Yes!" to something and are tightly focused on a hopeful, joyous outcome.

Solutions put aside anxiety, sin and despair and put off the old nature, ego and self-centeredness which creates problems by the dozen.

A good solution entrains your mind and will so that you naturally discipline yourself

Solutions do more of what works, and less of that which is not working.

Solutions are seldom dramatic, and are often harmonious, quiet and still, almost common sense, and flow from us being in the right place at the right time and God working in us and through us.

Trust is key to coming up with rapid and affordable solutions. Distrust, suspicion and disunity waste time, energy and resources.

Solutions lead to peace and frequently to reconciliation.

Solutions flow from openness, reasonableness and humility, problems from stubbornness, closed minds, unreasonableness, and pride.

There are solutions within solutions within solutions. So we often need to break the big picture down into smaller solutions and then do them one at a time.

All solutions, no matter how seemingly trivial, are important e.g. fixing the photocopier, so you can print the church bulletin, so a lady reading it can ring the pastor and get help.

Large complex problems often have surprisingly simple solutions, the rampant disease of scurvy in the British navy and the simple solution of lime juice

Godly solutions are stated in vividly positive terms.

Solutions may involve iteration. Doing something over and over again and improving a bit each time around.

Solutions may involve identifying and removing some key obstacles.

Solutions may involve developing new habits and new patterns of living

Procedures, routines and organization create the necessary order for a solution to remain in place over an extended period of time

The difference between a mere idea in your head and a Faith solution is that solutions have action attached to them, they involve a change in behavior.

Solutions often involve the right pathway or procedure and the right person and timing.

While solutions may involve very many steps each step will have a certain elegance and simplicity about it. Tangled complexity is a sure sign that something has gone wrong.

Solutions are beautiful. Everything is beautiful in its proper time.

Solutions may be ignored and rejected e.g. Jesus, the prophets and apostles.

Solutions may involve calling for repentance, and giving exhortation and strong warnings.

Large scale solutions involve building agreement and political will. Unity leads to accomplishment. Genesis 11 etc. Paul exhorts us to be of one mind for the sake of the gospel.

Holy boldness is generally a sign of solution-focused faith.

PEOPLE AND SOLUTIONS

Solutions often involve people in unity "Where two or three are gathered".

You may need to remove divisive, unbelieving, tempting, foolish, angry, inept, negative or draining people from your life before God's solution is possible.

Bringing positive, capable, faith-filled people into the situation can be highly effective and they often empower the solution.

RESOURCES

Website and free e-book on Solution-Focused Faith:

<http://www.globalchristians.org/solution/index.htm>

Prayer and Spiritual Warfare Website:

www.newtestamentprayer.com

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