



PREPARING TO STAND

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“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” SW 3-21-05

“How to exercise faith should be made very plain.” —*Education*, page 253

“Four Steps to Great Faith” and “Jacob's Faith, for Jacob's Time of Trouble” by Jim Buller

Since “faith” is such a key element in the Bible’s teaching, it is probably safe to say that all the stories in the Bible are an illustration of faith. These stories either tell about someone who lived by faith, or someone who was not faithful—and then we get to see the results! There seems to be a definite pattern in the Bible’s stories. This pattern is easily seen in Luke 7:2-10—the story of the Centurion with a sick servant.

“And a certain centurion’s servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was worthy, ‘for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.’ Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, ‘Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, “Go,” and he goes; and to another, “Come,” and he comes; and to my servant, “Do this,” and he does it.’ When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, ‘I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!’ And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.”

The centurion didn’t just have “faith,” he had “great faith!” So what is this “great faith?” And how can we also have “great faith?” To begin with, what is the first thing we notice about the centurion?—his servant is sick. He recognized a need. This *is* significant, because Laodicea, symbolic of the church in the last days, does not

recognize its need. (See Revelation 3:17). If we would have “great faith,” the first thing we must do is *Recognize Our Need*.

The second thing, or “step” as we will call it, is what the centurion did about his need—he took it to Jesus. But, it is also important to notice three points about his attitude as he comes to Jesus. ① He says, “I am not worthy” —he is humble. ② The centurion’s statement about his relationship to authority also shows that he is submissive. ③ We notice that the centurion trusts in Jesus compassion and care. He trusts that Jesus will do what needs to be done. Therefore the second step, is to *Take Our Need to Jesus*, with an attitude of humble, submissive, trust.

The centurion asking Jesus to just “say the word,” shows us the third step. Although centurion may not have known much about Jesus, he recognized one thing—when Jesus said something, it happened! There was *power* in Jesus’ Word. This reminds us of the old memory verse, “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, ... For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalm 33:6,9. The centurion was confident that if Jesus said the Word, his servant would be healed. The third step then, is to *Obtain the Word of God regarding our Situation*.

After the messengers obtained the Word. They “returning to the house,” and found the servant well.” So the fourth step is to *Act in Harmony with the Word*.

To review, the “Four Steps to Great Faith” are:

1. Recognize Our Need
2. Take Our Need To Jesus
—with an attitude of humble submissive trust
3. Obtain The Word Of God Regarding Our Situation
—understanding the creative power of God's Word
4. Act In Harmony With The Word

These four steps are also easily recognized in the story of Naaman the leper, in 2 Kings 5:1-19. Naaman’s story is an even better example of the importance of the fourth step, Acting in Harmony with the Word, than the story we have just looked at. Naaman recognized his need—he had leprosy! He took his need to the Lord—via the prophet Elisha. He obtained the Word—go wash in the Jordan river seven times. However, the thought of washing in the muddy Jordan River made him angry, and he was reluctant to Act in Harmony with the Word. But then, as he calmed down and listened to his servant's advice, he went to the river, washed, and was healed.

Both of these stories teach us that God is interested in much more than just working miracles. He uses the opportunity created by our needs to teach us important lessons. Lessons that will make us better people in the long run. For example, Naaman needed lessons in humility, and in the need to wash—even if in a muddy river, because leprosy is frequently associated with a lack of personal cleanliness.

To those of us who are weary and frustrated, trying to meet our own needs, Jesus gives the invitation, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30.

As you recognize needs in your life, take them to Jesus in humble, submissive, trust. Recognize the power of His Word, and find out what the Bible has to say about the situation you are in. Claim His promises, fulfill any conditions, and trust in Him to make it happen. Say like the psalmist, “I will cry out to God Most High, to God who performs all things for me.” Psalm 57:2. Bring your life into harmony with the Word and cooperate with what God is trying to do with your life. God wants to provide for all our needs in a way that will be best, not only for us, but for everything around us. “You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.” Psalm 145:16. “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:19. But we have our part to play by cooperating with His plan.

As we live by faith, following these Four Steps, we are sometimes brought into trying circumstances. Jacob’s experience, in Genesis chapters 31 through 33, is an excellent illustration of this. It also shows us what our experience will be like during the Time of Trouble.

In the first part of Genesis 31, Jacob’s brothers-in-law complain that he has become wealthy at their expense, and Laban, his father-in-law, is not being favorable toward him any more. Jacob needs to know what he should do—he *recognizes his need*. Although it is not specifically mentioned here in Genesis, it is safe to conclude that Jacob did *take his need to God*, especially when we realize who Jacob has become at this point in his life, which *is* evident from what he does later in the story. God then tells him, “Return to the land of your fathers and to you kindred, and I will be with you.”—he *obtains the Word of God regarding the situation*. So, after making the necessary plans and preparations, Jacob and his family set out for Canaan—he *acts according to the Word*. Jacob *is* living by faith.

However, we find an interesting complication as we read on in the story. As a result of living by faith—following the Four Steps—Jacob runs into trouble. When he arrives in Canaan, messengers report that Esau is “coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.” Esau, Jacob’s twin brother, is evidently still angry about the loss of His birthright through Jacob’s trickery. (See Genesis 27). At that time, Jacob had to flee for his life, and it seems that Esau is still bent on revenge and intends to attack Jacob’s caravan.

Can you imagine the temptations Satan must have hurled at Jacob at this point? He probably reminded him of his past mistakes, and reviewed the recent events with comments like, “You trusted God, did you? You tried this “living by faith?” Hey, just look at all the trouble it’s gotten you into! And now your loved ones are in danger too!”

Isn’t this is similar to the way he tempts us? When we first think about following Jesus he tries to discourage us by saying, “If you give your life to God, be sure to think about what He’s going to have you do—and the things He won’t let you do! Do you realize all the problems, anxieties and lack of fulfillment you are going to have?” Then later on, as we encounter difficult situations, he comes along insinuating, “This is all the result of following Jesus. You’re experiencing what it’s really like to ‘live by faith.’ You had better give up on following God, and just get what you can out of life.”

But, did Jacob give in to the Devil’s suggestions? No! He continued to live by faith, taking this *new need* to the Lord. Notice his attitude, and how he claimed God’s promises as he prayed. “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the

Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will deal well with you:' I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. For you said. 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"

Jacob comes to God with the same attitude of humble, submissive trust, as the centurion did. Jacob admits that he is not worthy of God's help, yet he reminds God that this situation is the result of following *His* leading, and that *He* had promised to "deal well" with him.

That night, as Jacob goes out alone to pray, a "Man" appears, and the two of them wrestle through the night. At day-break He touches Jacob's hip socket, causing it to go out of joint, and in spite of the pain, Jacob realizes that this "Man" is a Heavenly Messenger. As the Messenger tries to leave, Jacob hangs on, saying, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" God blessed Jacob there, and with God's assurance and blessing, he now can face Esau.

That night God also changed Esau's heart. The next day, "Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept." The brothers are reunited. Esau is no longer resentful, and they part in peace.

In our own experience, as a result of living by faith and acting on the Word of God, we sometimes find ourselves in difficult situations. Satan tempts us to give up, claiming that living God's way, by faith, has caused these impossible problems. However, these trials are actually a test of our faith, and they are calculated to result in spiritual endurance and steadfastness. (See James 1:2,3.) May we be like Jacob and *continue to live by faith*, taking the new needs of our difficult situations and impossible problems to God, saying "I will not let You go unless You bless *me!*"

Jeremiah 30:5-7 describes a troublous time ahead. Verse 7 says: "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it." During the Time of Trouble, as a result of following His Word, God's people will find themselves in a great crisis. They will not be able to buy or sell, and eventually it will be decreed that they should be killed. (See Revelation 13.) It is called "The time of Jacob's trouble" to remind us of Jacob's experience.

Like Jacob, God has promised to be with us and deliver us. He allows trials to come our way so we will have the opportunity to learn we *can* trust in His blessings. Through the experiences we have now, He wants us to gain the assurance of His presence, and of His deliverance during difficulties. By learning now to habitually live by faith, we will be able to endure the trials of the Time of Trouble. We *may* make Jacob's experience our own, and develop a faith that can say, regardless of the circumstance, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

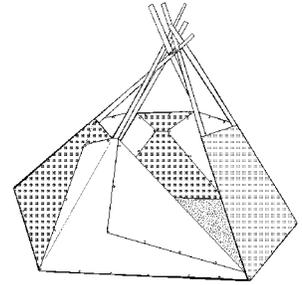
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Tarp Shelters for Groups part 2: A Tarp Tipi

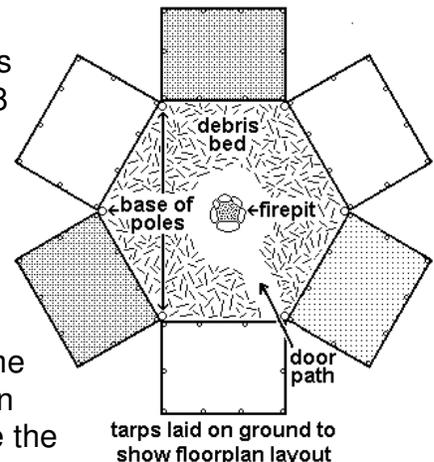
Shelter options on overnight wilderness trips are increased if each person in the group carries a 6 X 8 ft. "poly" or coated nylon tarp, and 40 to 50 feet /15 to 20 meters of natural fiber twine. If you are taller, or a parent with small children, you may want to carry an 8 X 10 ft. tarp. Weighing only about a pound, these items are easy to carry and can provide a weather-proof shelter with a lot less time and energy than if you have to build entirely with natural materials. When making any tarp shelter, remember, you *must make the shelter's frame to fit the tarp(s)*. Don't just put up some type of frame, and then try to get the tarp(s) to fit on it.



With a good debris bed, and the possibility of having a fire inside, a tarp tipi may be one of the warmest, most weather proof, and over-all convenient group shelter you can make —especially in cooler weather. You will need four to seven tarps, and an equal number of 12 to 15 ft./4 to 5 m. poles, which would be gathered on location. A four tarp shelter with a fire inside will be quite cramped for four people, but it can be made to work. Shelters larger than seven tarps can also be built, but they will be harder to heat efficiently, and it may be more difficult to make them weather-proof.

As mentioned, make the shelter frame to fit the tarps, so don't try to make the floor plan circular. It is practically impossible to get the straight lower edge of the tarps to "seal off" along the ground around a circle to prevent cold air from flowing into the shelter. Instead, make the floor in the shape of a square, a pentagon, a hexagon or a heptagon, depending on the number of tarps to be used. The lower ends of the poles will go in the "corners," and the tarps will be straight and flat against the ground between them.

Instructions here are for a six-tarp shelter for six or seven people, using 6 X 8 ft. tarps. Begin by laying the tarps out on the ground in a hexagon shape. Notice that the 6 X 8 ft. tarps are all laid out with one of the "longer," or 8 ft. side marking the edge of the shelter. (When using 8 X 10 ft. tarps, place one of the "shorter," or 8 ft edges along the ground at the edge of the shelter. This also allows the "longer," or 10 ft. length to provide more coverage at the top of the shelter making it more weather-proof —leave a smoke-hole.) Since the tarps may not all be exactly the same size, note the position of each tarp, and mark each corner on the ground. Then move the tarps out of the way to minimize the risk of stepping them and poking holes.



Use the three strongest poles to make a tripod, placing the lower ends of the poles in every-other corner. Then, place three more poles in the other corners and lean them into the tripod to finish the frame. Cut off any sharp branches that may poke holes in you or the tarps. Tie the corners of the tarps together at the base of the poles, and adjust the position of the poles so the tarps are tight and straight between them. Then raise the tarps against the poles, and tie them in place. Be sure to leave the upper corner of one tarp for a door flap —probably on the East or South side of the shelter. Bring in debris for bedding around the inside of the wall, and make a small fire-pit in the center if desired.