

Give Me A Sign!

Joe Slater

God has never required trusting obedience without evidence. Biblical faith is not blind faith. Throughout the ages He has shown Himself to be infinitely worthy of our confidence.

In ancient times He used signs (miracles) to confirm His word. Jesus utilized abundant signs during His ministry. Despite such clear proof, His enemies taunted, “*We want to see a sign from You*” (Matthew 12:38). But Jesus, knowing their corrupt hearts, rejected their ploy. He would give them no sign except His resurrection!

God has blessed us today with His completely revealed, confirmed, and recorded word. His inspired apostles worked innumerable signs to verify it. That task being complete, no further proof is needed. Supernatural gifts, therefore, have ceased (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).

Nevertheless, many even today clamor for a sign! A difficult decision confronts us – “Give me a sign, Lord!” We want to know what the future holds – “Lord, send me a sign!”

More often than not, modern sign-seekers assume their subjective feelings are signs from God. “This decision gives me peace, so it must be God’s will.” Such reasoning is backward! We ought to be at peace because we **know** our decision is according to God’s **written will**, not just assume it is God’s will because we feel at peace.

It all goes back to “facts, faith, and feelings.” God’s word establishes the facts. Upon God’s word we base our faith. Knowing that we have trusted and obeyed God’s word should make us feel good. Many, however, have reversed this order: “I feel like this is right; therefore, that’s what I believe; therefore, it must be God’s will.”

We have God’s confirmed will. We need no signs!

A Sympathizing Savior

An old hymn begins, “The Great Physician now is near, the sympathizing Jesus.” When William Hunter penned the lyrics to “The Great Physician,” undoubtedly he had the following passage in mind:

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:14–16).

Sympathy is one of the most important emotions because from it comes understanding, help, and support to those in need. Sympathy is certainly easier to extend when we ourselves have firsthand knowledge of the situation. Hebrews 4:15 explains that Jesus Christ, our High Priest, can sympathize with us when we are faced with temptation. Not only does He have knowledge of those challenges, but He has empathy, having experienced all temptation Himself. From such an inclusive statement we conclude that Jesus faced temptation from all aspects of the world. Yes, that means Jesus was tempted to be dishonest, immoral, and to neglect His service to God. As a young boy, He resisted the temptation to disobey His parents; as a teenager He turned down opportunities to run with the crowd into mischief. As He grew into adulthood, He was tempted to be lazy, break His promises and follow popular culture. He faced it all yet without sin. Jesus was the human that the Lord God created us all to be, but because sin entered the world long ago, we’re unable to live up to that faultless design and that is why we need a sympathizing Savior.

--Jay Launius (Maud, TX)

FOMO

FOMO is an acronym for the “fear of missing out.” Merriam-Webster goes on to describe it as “a fear of not being included in something (such as an interesting or enjoyable activity) that others are experiencing.” FOMO can lead to overly inquisitive behavior, as in a person who always has to know every detail of what is going on around them even if, to put it bluntly, it is none of their business. FOMO can result in being stretched out, trying to keep a finger in every pot, to the extent that being in the moment is seldom experienced. Instead, there is a gnawing feeling of missing out on something better elsewhere.

FOMO may take on the form of discontent. Scripture warns against the love of money and encourages us, instead, to be content with what God has provided, trusting that He will always provide for our needs (Hebrews 13:5; 1 Timothy 6:8; Matthew 6:25-34). Materialistic discontent, the fear that we may be missing out because of our pursuit of spiritual riches, is allayed by what Jesus said to Peter and the rest of the apostles following His conversation with the rich young ruler. Jesus had plainly told them how difficult it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven – difficult, but not impossible so far as God is concerned (Matthew 19:23-26). Then Peter asked, “*Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?*” (v. 27). It was then that Jesus lovingly assured the apostles that in spite of their sacrifices, they would not be missing out. Aside from reigning with Him, Jesus said that “*everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters for father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life*” (vv. 28-29). Fear of missing out on something in this life has caused many to miss out on the joyous blessings of sacrificial giving. Because the things of this world are passing away (1 John 2:17), Jesus calls us to store up for ourselves treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21). FOMO is replaced by genuine contentment as we set our minds on things above (Colossians 3:2) and yield our hearts to Him in obedient trust.

--Glen Elliott (Greenbriar, AR)