

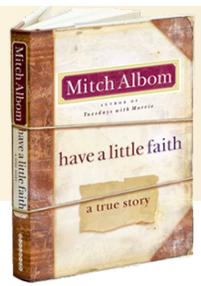


National Council of the
Churches of Christ in the USA

have a little faith

by Mitch Albom

SERMON GUIDE



- Early in his life, Albom began distancing himself from the Reb, a man who seemed more like the all-knowing, Almighty God than any other he knew. Why is it our nature to run away from God and our faith?
- In his testimony, Cass, the one-legged elder, said it was the night he returned to his childhood home in an old Detroit project that he realized he was homeless. How does this compare with Albom's return to his birthplace in suburban Jersey? Do you agree with Albom's conclusion that no one is better or smarter than another, just luckier? How has luck or fate seemingly played a role in your life?
- Leviticus 19:18 states, "You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself." The Reb's "enemy schmenemy" philosophy embodies this commandment. How important is it that people of faith honor this scripture? How can we take steps to help the secular community uphold this value?
- Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us that we are saved by faith, not good works. Henry dedicates his new life to serving God and helping the unfortunate despite being uncertain of what eternity holds for himself. Why does he remain a faithful servant of the lord when he believes he may not be rewarded in Heaven?
- Upon retrieving his file at the synagogue, Albom reflects on the notes and letters he had received from the Reb over the years, but had not bothered to reply to or even acknowledge. He now felt ashamed at having ignored the "sacred community" that still loved and embraced him. Have you ever turned your back on places, people or things only to appreciate their importance in your life later? Is it ever too late to make amends?
- The Reb and Henry are from two different backgrounds and faiths but each is a steadfast "man of God." How did both help Albom grow in his own faith? How has Albom, in return, shaped yours?
- Taking part in community service is a theme throughout *have a little faith*. Why do you think faith-based community services are so important to public needs? How can you get involved with a faith-based service organization in your area? Create a personal action plan with specific goals on how you can help your community.
- In Psalm 23, we are assured that God is always walking beside us. Knowing this, the Reb is able to cope with the most tragic event of his life, the death of his young daughter. However, when his atheist doctor loses a relative, the doctor becomes angry and envious, because he cannot ask God why or consider it God's will. Have you ever been angry with God for something? Do you believe as the Reb does, that it is more comforting to think God listened and said no, rather than to think that God doesn't exist at all?
- Matthew 7:1 tells us, "Do not judge, so that you may not be judged." Albom is skeptical of Henry's sincerity about the lord in their early meetings. Although he later overcomes this and no longer has any doubts regarding Henry's beliefs, why was he so critical in the beginning? Think of a godly leader in your life who came from an untraditional background or has an unorthodox appearance. Does this mean he or she loves God any less than the conventional faith leader?

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