



## FAITH

### INTRODUCTION:

A study of FAITH, Scriptural faith, is imperative for today. The shield of Christianity is faith “*And without faith it is impossible to please God*” (Hebrews 11:6). The Bible also tells us, “*This is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith*” (I John 5:4). We are doomed to failure without faith.

The writer of Hebrews in listing God’s Who’s Who (chapter 11) listed those people in history that were considered pleasing in the eyes of God –MEN AND WOMEN OF FAITH. After listing more than a dozen greats, he concludes that they, “*by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight*” (Hebrews 11:33-34). These all “*gained approval through their faith*” (Hebrews 11:39).

Fred O. Blakely in his book, The Apostles Doctrine, Vol. I, page 23, says of these people: “*Not only is it said that they ‘died in the faith’, but they likewise lived and wrought their glorious works of God by this selfsame power. Faith stood in relation to their lives and service as the mainspring of a spring-powered timepiece to the action of that mechanism. It was the primal source of energy and effort.*”

### I. WHAT IS FAITH?

- A. In the Old Testament, the characteristic word for faith is “\_\_\_\_\_”, and it occurs more than 150 times in the Old Testament.
1. It is used to translate Hebrew words signifying, “to take refuge in”, “to lean on”, “to have confidence in”, “to roll or devolve on”, and “to stay oneself”.

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2. In the New Testament, all words translated “believe”, “believing”, “faith”, and “faithful” come from the same Greek word and usually it refers to having a personal trust in Jesus Christ. There are a couple of exceptions where the word “believe” is used to mean only having a mental assent and not a personal trust but only the context of the Scripture (i.e. John 12:42 & James 2:19) will reveal this.

B. There are several Scriptures that define what Biblical faith is.

Read Hebrews 11:1

1. W.H. Griffith Thomas, in his devotional commentary on Hebrews suggests this rendition: “Faith is described in a two-fold way. It is the foundation of things hoped for, and the conviction (for proof) of things not seen. The word ‘assurance’ or ‘substance’ indicates that faith must have a basis, which is the Word of God. And so the vital question is not ‘Do we believe?’ nor ‘What do we believe?’ but ‘In whom do we believe?’”
2. Everybody believes in someone or something, what or whom do you believe in?

Read Hebrews 11:6

Read I John 5:14

1. Faith is \_\_\_\_\_.

C. Because faith in the New Testament involves a personal trust in God and His Word, there must be a full commitment to doing what God, in His Word says to do. That is why faith cannot be separated from obedience.

Read James 2:26

1. The works mentioned here are the works that make faith complete and show its power.
2. Saving faith is not merely an intellectual assent to some proposition, it is a personal confidence and trust placed in God which takes Him at His Word and motivates us to act upon His commands, realizing that God is faithful to perform what He has promised without ever failing.

## II. HOW DO WE OBTAIN FAITH?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ comes about in the very same way that we would gain a faith in anyone:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ the evidence about the person.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ the evidence about that person.

Read Romans 10:17

1. We have to examine the claims of Jesus and the only way to do that is from His word. But then we must be willing to accept it.

Read John 20:31

1. John was basically saying, “I have written these things because I know them to be true but you must be willing to accept them.”
2. God does not ask us to have a blind faith in Him. He has given us an abundance of evidence from His word in the areas of nature, science, and history but we must be willing to hear that evidence and then accept it.

## III. WHY IS FAITH IMPORTANT?

The importance of faith can not be exaggerated, since it is the foundational principle in the Christian life. Below is a list of reasons and their Scriptures on why faith is so important:

A. Faith makes us pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:6).

- ◆ By faith, our sins are forgiven (Acts 10:43).
- ◆ By faith, our hearts are cleansed (Acts 15:9).
- ◆ By faith, we are justified, that is, we are declared innocent before God (Romans 5:1).
- ◆ By faith, we are sanctified, that is, we are set apart for a special purpose – to live for God (Acts 26:18).
- ◆ By faith, we receive salvation (Ephesians 2:8; I Peter 1:9).
- ◆ Faith brings peace to the heart (John 14:1; Romans 5:1).

Definitions of faith:

Webster's – unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence  
Vine's – a conviction based upon hearing

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