

Faith

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

We like to sing, “Faith, faith, faith! Just a little bit of faith...” But what is faith? Why faith? How can one receive faith? What is the *object* of faith?

What is Faith?

Webster’s Encyclopedic Dictionary defines “faith” as:

- Trust, confidence
- Complete acceptance of a truth which cannot be demonstrated or proved by the process of logical thought
- A virtue by which a Christian believes in the revealed truths of God

A man of faith is not someone who relies upon his own ability for his salvation from sin and victory in life. A man of faith is someone who hopes and trusts in God and His Word. He considers Jesus his personal Lord and Savior who died and resurrected on his behalf.

Abraham demonstrated faith long before Jesus’ time. He was described as the “father of all them that believe” (Romans 4:9-12). Abraham trusted and obeyed God. He was obedient to the demand by God to sacrifice his son Isaac on Mt. Moriah by burnt offering. Abraham’s obedience was based on his trust. This extraordinary obedience and trust was counted as righteousness for Abraham (Romans 4:3, 9) – that was faith demonstrated . . . and Isaac was rescued from near death.

The writer of Hebrews described faith as “...the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). God is presently invisible to the natural eye. He is a spirit (John 4:24). But He has not left us without evidence of Himself. He has, over the years, manifested Himself in several ways and spoken through His chosen prophets for various purposes (Hebrews 1:1; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

Faith is when we:

1) Believe the Word of God delivered unto us, and 2) become obedient as we change our lives and rely on God, trusting He will take care of us and supply our needs (both physical and spiritual).

Why Faith?

Why is it necessary to have faith? The world today is like a boat in the midst of a severe storm on the high seas. Business, financial, marriage, and family problems worry millions of people. Spiritual, mental, and physical diseases bother many who feel helpless to defend themselves. Everyone going through these troubles knows he needs words of

encouragement from someone, somewhere, who will be able to give him assurance and help.

The Word of God is the best place to look for encouragement, assurance, and direction. It is powerful and creative. It gives knowledge, understanding and wisdom. It enables a person to go through life and overcome his problems. It takes *faith* to believe God's Word has meaningful solutions to life's problems. The truth is that in the face of all these struggles, faith is the one virtue all of us need most. Every area of life depends on faith in God's Word for total victory and ultimate salvation. The Bible says:

- ☞ "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17).
- ☞ "But without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

These Scriptures state that a person without faith can neither overcome in life nor please God. *The Thompson Chain Reference Bible* lists the following as reasons for needing faith:

- ☞ Faith assures success (2 Chronicles 20:20; Mark 11:22-24).
- ☞ Faith is a fundamental duty (John 6:28).
- ☞ Faith is a defensive weapon (Ephesians 6:16; Hebrews 10:22).
- ☞ Faith is essential in prayer (James 1:5-6).
- ☞ Faith justifies the believer (Galatians 3:6; Philippians 3:9).
- ☞ By faith we receive blessings (Matthew 8:13; 17:20).

How Can I Receive Faith?

Romans 10:17 tells us, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Missionary Dale Starks, in his book *Spiritual Growth – 2* says: "Faith comes through familiarity with God's Word." Faith develops through the receiving and application of the Word of God we have read or heard preached. As we experience the unfailing result in the application of the Word of God, we get more excited and encouraged to live by the Word. *Through the Bible Study Series* (Pentecostal Publishing House) tells us, "Faith, however, is not simply believing in the sense of giving passive mental assent to some idea or concept. Faith, *true faith*, is active. It is moving in the direction of God's promises."

Many men of God received more faith as they continually experienced the Word of God:

- ☞ Caleb defeated the Anakims when he believed the promised Word of God (Joshua 14:6-15).
- ☞ Jonathan (1 Samuel 14), David (1 Samuel 17:32-37), and Jehoshaphat (1 Chronicles 20) bravely overcame their enemies because they continually trusted the Word God had spoken to them.
- ☞ To the crew of the wrecked ship Paul said, "*Wherefore sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me*" (Acts 27:25).

The Bible is full of examples such as these; God's Word *always* comes true!

What is the Object of Our Faith?

Has anyone ever asked you, “Do you have faith in prayer?” Being a Christian, you probably answered, “Yes.” But neither prayer nor any other thing should become the object of our faith. What *should* we have faith in? Rev. K. A. Prempeh (former presbyter, National Secretary, and Assistant Superintendent of UPCI-Ghana) testifies:

When I first began my journey on the “Path to Righteousness,” I still believed in the trinity. But one day a pastor of the UPCI came my way and shared the doctrine of the Oneness of the Godhead with me. At first, I was very skeptical, but something within me urged me to ask God in prayer for a revelation of Himself so I would be able to confirm or deny this doctrine.

While earnestly seeking God, I had a very strong vision in which I saw Jesus as the only exalted and Almighty God! I saw Jesus Christ as the everlasting Father, the Creator of the universe.

After this, I began to search the Scriptures for confirmation. While reading, the words seems to jump off the page at me to point to Jesus as the main character the Bible was testifying about. My faith in the *written Word* was transferred to Jesus, the *living Word*. John 1:1 and 1:14 became real to me:

‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.’

Other Scriptures also came alive:

- 📖 ‘Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me’ (John 5:39).
- 📖 ‘And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not’ (John 6:35-36).
- 📖 ‘Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live’ (John 11:25).
- 📖 ‘Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me’ (John 14:6).
- 📖 ‘He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already; because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God’ (John 3:18).

As if that were not enough, Paul sealed my testimony by plainly stating who the *object* of our faith should be – Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2).

How do we receive faith?
 By expecting God to do
 what we know He has said
 in His Word He will do!

Conclusion

To have faith in Jesus Christ, we need two things:

- 1) A *clear understanding and knowledge* of what God’s Word says. This comes through reading and studying it ourselves.
- 2) A *confidence* that God cannot lie.

These two things produce a strong faith that:

- **Sees** the invisible,
- **Believes** the incredible,
- **Receives** the impossible.

We began this lesson with a chorus. How does it end? *“You don’t need a whole lot, just use what you’ve got! Faith, faith, faith, just a little bit of faith!”*



Study Questions

1. In one or two sentences, explain how to receive faith. _____

2. Complete this sentence: “Faith, true faith, is _____. It is _____
_____.”
3. “Neither prayer nor any other thing should become the object of our faith.” Using Rev. K. A. Prempeh’s testimony and Scripture references, explain what we SHOULD have faith in. _____

4. What two (2) things are needed to have faith in Jesus Christ?
1) _____

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- 2) _____
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5. In the face of all life's _____, _____ is the one virtue all of us _____ most.
6. List the six (6) reasons found in *The Thompson Chain Reference Bible* for why we need faith. Give Scripture reference for each.
- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
7. How does Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary define "faith"? _____
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8. In your own words, explain why it is necessary to have faith. _____
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9. List three (3) examples of men who received more faith as they continually experienced the Word of God. Give Scripture reference where each example is found.
- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Additional Notes
