

## **Faith**

### **Part 1**

#### **Introduction**

God has chosen to make faith one of the foundation stones of our relationship with Him. But how much do we truly understand about faith? Where does it come from? How can we increase it when we need more? What does God want to accomplish in our lives through faith? In this study, we hope to answer these and other questions you may have about this vital subject.

#### **Our Study**

##### **What Faith Is**

Our first step in learning about faith is to be sure we know what it means. For an understandable definition of faith, we'll use The Amplified Bible. Here's how it describes faith: "The leaning of your entire human personality on Him [God] in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom and goodness." (It also defines "believe," which is closely related to "faith," as having "an absolute personal reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior.") Perhaps an even simpler definition of biblical faith or belief might be, "The absolute conviction that God keeps his promises." Let's see what else the Bible tells us about the meaning of faith.

##### **The Scripture: Hebrews 11:1**

*"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."*

1. How is faith defined in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_  
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It's important that our world is composed of two spheres, the seen and the unseen. Unbelievers, for the most part, are convinced that something isn't real unless they can experience it through their senses-- their eyes, ears, taste, etc. They demand physical evidence before they will believe. This was as true in Jesus' time as it is today.

##### **The Scripture: John 2:18**

*"Then the Jews demanded of Him, 'What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority?'"*

2. What did the Pharisees and teachers want? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Even while Jesus suffered in agony on the cross, His mockers continued to demand a sign.

### **The Scripture: Mark 15:31, 32**

*"The chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. 'He saved others,' they said, 'but He can't save Himself! Let this Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.'"*

3. What did the mockers demand before they would believe? \_\_\_\_\_

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Non-believers will always demand to see visible proof before they will believe. However, the Bible teaches us that just because something can't be seen doesn't mean that it doesn't exist. Faith demands that we believe before we see.

### **The Importance Of Faith**

Is our faith really so important to God? Listen to what the writer of Hebrews says.

### **The Scripture: Hebrews 11:6**

*"Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him."*

4. What must we have to please God? \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:7**

Faith is such an essential part of our spiritual life that Paul could say, *"We live by faith, not by sight."*

5. How are we to live? \_\_\_\_\_

What does it mean to live by faith? Sometimes we read scripture without really understanding it. That's why some of the modern translations are so helpful. Here is how The Living Bible translates the idea of "living by faith."

### **The Scripture: Romans 1:17 (TLB)**

*"As the Scripture says it, 'The man who finds life will find it through trusting God.'"*

6. How do we find life? \_\_\_\_\_

Life, real life, eternal life, comes by our trusting God. It is by a simple act of faith that we come to the Lord in the first place. And when we take that small step of faith, God gives us rare and priceless gifts essential to our walk with Him.

### **Gifts That Accompany Faith**

### **The Scripture: Romans 10:9,10 (TAB)**

*"If you acknowledge and confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and in your heart believe (adhere to, trust in and rely on the truth) that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart a person believes (adheres to, trusts in and relies on Christ) and so is justified (declared righteous, acceptable to God), and with the mouth he confesses--declares openly and speaks out freely his faith--and confirms [his] salvation."*

7. What are some of the priceless gifts God gives us when we accept Him as Savior and Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

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**The Scripture: Romans 5:1, 2**

*"Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand."*

8. What else does faith do? \_\_\_\_\_

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**The Scripture: Acts 15:9**

*"He [God] purified their hearts by faith."*

9. What does God do through faith? \_\_\_\_\_

**The Scripture: Acts 26:17,18**

*When the Apostle Paul was converted, the Lord told him: "I am sending you to them to open [the Gentiles'] eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so they receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified (purified) by faith in Me."*

10. What is one way we are sanctified (purified)? \_\_\_\_\_

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**The Scripture: Ephesians 3:12**

*"In Him and through faith in Him we may approach God with freedom and confidence (boldly)."*

11. Why may we approach God with freedom and confidence? \_\_\_\_\_

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**The Scripture: Galatians 3:26**

*"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."*

12. What is our relationship with God through faith? \_\_\_\_\_

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God gives us all of these priceless gifts at salvation in response to our simple act of faith. But this is only the beginning. Let's look at an amazing scripture in Galatians.

**God's Promises Received Through Faith**

**The Scripture: Galatians 3:22**

*"Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe."*

13. What else do believers receive through faith? \_\_\_\_\_

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What was promised—in other words, the promises of God. How do we receive everything God has promised? Through faith. Yes, faith is the key that unlocks the door to God's promises and puts them in our hands.

### **Where Faith Comes From**

This brings us to an important question. How do we receive faith in the first place?

#### **The Scripture: Romans 12:3**

*"Think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you."*

14. Where does our faith come from? \_\_\_\_\_

15. What has God given each of us? \_\_\_\_\_

God gives each of us a measure, a portion, of faith. What we do with it is up to us.

### **Different Degrees of Faith**

The Bible speaks of different degrees of faith. Describe the levels of faith given in the following scriptures.

#### **The Scriptures: Mark 4:40, Matthew 8:26, Luke 7:9, Acts 6:5**

*"Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" "He replied, 'You of little faith, why are you so afraid?'" "When Jesus heard this, He was amazed at him and...He said, 'I have not found anyone with such great faith even in Israel.'" "They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit."*

16. What levels of faith are mentioned in these scriptures? \_\_\_\_\_

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We've said God gives each of us a measure of faith. But he expects us to grow in that faith. How do we go from little faith to being full of faith? To help us take the first step toward moving to greater faith, we're going to look at two versions of the same event.

### **How We Receive More Faith**

#### **The Scripture: Matthew 17:14-20**

*"A man approached Jesus and knelt before Him, 'Lord, have mercy on my son,' he said. 'He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him'....Jesus rebuked the demon and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment. Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, 'Why couldn't we drive it out?' He replied, 'Because you have so little faith.'"*

**The Scripture: Mark 9:21-25**

*"Jesus asked the boy's father, 'How long has he been like this?' 'From childhood,' he answered... 'But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.' 'If you can?' said Jesus. 'Everything is possible to him who believes.' Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, 'I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief.'"*

17. What did the man want from Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

18. What had he already done? \_\_\_\_\_

19. What did Jesus tell the father? \_\_\_\_\_

20. What was the father's response? \_\_\_\_\_

21. What did Jesus do? \_\_\_\_\_

22. What was the disciples' question to Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

23. What was Jesus' answer? \_\_\_\_\_

The father and the disciples were forced to realize that they had little faith. But in both cases, they took a necessary step to increase that little faith. They went to Jesus. If we want more faith, we can do the same--ask Jesus to help our unbelief--in other words--to give us more faith. But asking Jesus is only the first step we can take.

In Part 2, we'll look at other ways to increase our faith and continue our study on this important subject.

## The Answers

1. Being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see
2. A miraculous sign
3. They had to see first.
4. Faith
5. By faith
6. By trusting God
7. We are saved, justified, declared righteous, made acceptable to God.
8. Gives us peace with God
9. Purifies our hearts
10. Through faith in God
11. Because of our faith in Him
12. We are his sons.
13. What was promised
14. From God
15. A measure of faith
16. No faith, little faith, great faith, being full of faith
17. To have mercy on his son
18. Asked the disciples to heal him
19. "Everything is possible to him who believes."
20. "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief."
21. He healed the boy.
22. "Why couldn't we drive it (the demon) out?"
23. "Because you had so little faith."

I have borrowed some of the ideas in this study from the Aglow Publication, *How to Increase Your Faith* by Steve Ost.

All scripture quotations in this publication are from the Holy Bible, New International Version  
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