

FAITH

The righteous shall live his whole life by faith. He is saved by faith and he will now live by faith. In the scriptures this declaration "...The just shall live by faith," is found four times. (**Hab 2:4; Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38**) Hence you can see this life principle is essential for the saved to understand. A Christian will live either by faith or sight. This world has trained you to live by sight, but our Father wants you to live by faith. The Israelites had a difficult time living for God after they came out of Egypt because they had been trained by the Egyptians! Much of your life will be spent undoing what the world has already sown in you. Things you naturally assume are right must now be carefully examined in the light of the faith and the truth found in God's Holy Word. (**Isa 55:8-9**)

I. WHAT IS FAITH?

DEFN: (God's) "Faith": "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (**Heb 11:1** – Memory Verse)

DEFN: (Webster's) "Faith": (1) Unquestioning belief in God. (2) Complete trust, confidence or reliance in something or in the integrity of someone. (3) Loyalty; allegiance to some person. (4) A firm belief in something for which there is no visible proof.

- ❑ **Heb 11:1-6** - By faith the elders obtained a good report.

II. FAITH IS BASED ON KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD

- ❑ **Rom 10:13-17** – (Memory Verses) The Word is necessary as a basis of salvation. When you come to Christ, you must accept that the claims of God's Word are true.

NOTE: Faith is not blind as some say, but must be placed in something. For example, when you get on a plane, you have faith that it will fly. So it is with saving faith. Faith is based on promises given by God who "...is not a man that he should lie." (**Num 23:19**) His Word will remain forever. (**Isa 40:8**)

NOTE: In addition to getting saved, all that you will now do in life must be done by faith in God's Word. (**Col 2:6-7**).

- ❑ **Rom 4:16-24** - Abraham believed God against all earthly hope and fathered a child in his old age. He was blessed because he did not stagger at God's promises.
- ❑ **Heb 4:1-2** - If the Word is not mixed with faith, it is of no profit.
- ❑ **2 Pet 1:1-10** - Faith lays the foundation of Jesus Christ in a life. (**1 Cor 3:11**) Then all other spiritual virtues are built thereon.

NOTE: The Bible teaches that the proper order is: fact, faith, and feeling. The fact, which is God's Word, should lead. Then faith follows keeping its eye on fact. Feeling comes last with its eye on faith. If feeling is switched with faith or fact in position, the whole process becomes shaky and will lead to doubts and fears. Many people, who walk by feeling, want a sign first to gain assurance before they will believe, but this is contrary to God's order. Faith must depend on Christ's faithfulness to His promises alone and not on sight or self. Feeling will come as a result of obedience of faith to the Word. (**John 14:21** – Memory Verse)

III. FAITH IS NECESSARY TO PLEASE GOD

- ❑ **Heb 11:5-6** - Enoch pleased God by faith, and so must you.
- ❑ **Rom 4:1-5** - Faith is what pleases God, not works. Those who do works in order to gain merit with God are weak in the faith and do not please Him.
- ❑ **Matt 14:28-32** - Peter was able to walk on water, by faith, as long as he kept his eyes on Jesus. Likewise, when you keep your eyes on Jesus and off your circumstances, you won't sink.

IV. FAITH MUST WORK BY LOVE

- ❑ **Gal 5:6,13-16** - True faith works by love. Only works done in "...the faith that worketh by love" will God accept. Therefore by love serve one another. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (**Rom 13:10**)
- ❑ **1 Cor 13:2** - Mountain-moving faith without charity is profitless.

NOTE: All you do in life and ministry must be done by faith through the motive of love. Any work, such as soul winning, tithing, preaching, etc., must be by faith in love or it is vain, empty, and worthless. It is a "dead work" and ultimately profitless for you in eternal realms.

- ❑ **2 Pet 1:1-10; 1 Tim 1:5** (Intentionally Repeated) – One of the goals of the Lord is to bring a man to walk by faith in true charity. In love you will lay your life down for your brethren. (**John 15:13**) You will not be able to lay down your life in all areas until you can believe the Lord will honor His Word and lift you up. (**1 John 3:16**)

NOTE: For example, you will not be able to give sacrificially to the poor in charity (**1 John 3:17**) until you have added to your faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. All this must be added to your faith in order to be fruitful. "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off..." (**1 Pet 1:9a**)

V. FAITH CAN BE INCREASED

- ❑ **Luke 17:5-10** - By prayer, ask God to increase your faith.
- ❑ **Gal 5:22** - Faith is a fruit of the Spirit. As you walk in the Spirit and yield to Him, faith increases in you.
- ❑ **Rom 10:17** - Faith comes by hearing and reading God's Word.
- ❑ **Matt 13:31-32** - The seed of faith needs nourished.

NOTE: The mustard seed is the smallest of all herb seeds but, when nourished properly, it grows into a large tree and is the greatest among herbs. Your faith may be small but, by feasting on the Word of God, it has the potential to become great.

- ❑ **Heb 11:1-40; Heb 13:7** - Faith increases by observing examples of faith in God's Word and in life.

NOTE: Read biographies of great Christians. Be careful! Men have a tendency to present a one-sided, glorified picture of great men. This results in a lopsided view of their true heart and the reason of God's blessing on their lives. God always gives a balanced view in His Word of man's weaknesses and strengths.

VI. YOUR FAITH WILL BE TRIED

- ❑ **Jam 1:2-8** - The trying of your faith works patience.
- ❑ **1 Pet 1:5-7** - You are kept by faith and tried by fire to prove your faith. Remember that it is your faith that is being tried by fire and not you. Your faith will be unto His praise and glory in the end.

NOTE: A believer advances through adversity in this Christian walk. The adversity is a result of God's plan to conform us to the image of Christ. (**Psa 138:7-8**) Christian America is weak because there is little suffering in the lives of Christians. The church of Laodicea was weak because it was materially wealthy and in need of nothing (**Rev 3:14-22**). Christ challenged them to buy from Him gold tried by fire, which is a picture of their faith being perfected through trials. Those who suffer learn to cease from sin in their lives. (**1 Pet 4:1**)

- ❑ **Heb 10:32-39** - You might experience the spoiling of your goods like many other brothers. "The just shall live by faith."
- ❑ **2 Tim 3:12** - All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
- ❑ **Phi 1:29** - As a saint, you are called to suffer.
- ❑ **Heb 5:8** - Even Jesus learned obedience through the things that He suffered.

- ❑ **Matt 13:18-23** - In the parable of the sower, all the ground received the same sunlight and rain. The ground was being tested to see if the seed could grow effectively. This is a picture of the trying of a believer's faith. In the case of the stony ground, the sun was pictured as a hot, heavy trial because of the Word. The sun comes to test whether genuine faith is present and to perfect that which is lacking in a believer's life. In this case, the sun burned out the seed and no fruit was brought to perfection. In the case of the weedy ground, the weeds and thorns choked the seed because worldliness, riches, and the cares of this life overcame him that received the Word. But in the case of the "good ground", the seed was forced to drive its roots deeper into the soil for more nourishment, thus making the plant stronger and more stable.

NOTE: Building faith is like building muscles. In weight lifting, before a muscle is built stronger it must first be torn down. As the muscle experiences too great of a load it slightly tears. This results in a tingling, burning sensation in the muscle called a "burn". The body then repairs and builds the muscle back stronger by adding more fibers. You need your spiritual muscles exercised to the limit to cause a "burn" in your life to become stronger for the Lord (**Heb 5:14**). Remember, the Lord is the one who "loads the bar" slightly past your limit. He designs the trials perfectly for you. He will not tempt you above that which you are able to bear (**1 Cor 10:13**). Trust His handiwork and increase in faith.

VII. THE BENEFITS OF FAITH

A. YOU ARE SAVED THROUGH FAITH.

- ❑ **Luke 7:50** - Faith saves you if you truly believe.
- ❑ **John 6:47** - True faith believes completely on Jesus.

NOTE: Faith in any other savior than Christ will not save. (**Acts 4:12**) Likewise, faith in any other gospel, than that which is revealed in the New Testament, will not save. (**Gal 1:8-9**)

- ❑ **John 20:29-31** - Faith is believing without seeing.
- ❑ **Eph 2:8-9** - Faith saves, not works.
- ❑ **Rom 3:27-28** - Faith justifies, not works.
- ❑ **Gal 3:26** - You are a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ.
- ❑ **Rom 5:1-2** - By faith you are no longer an enemy of God.
- ❑ **1 Pet 1:7-9** (Intentionally Repeated) - You will receive, at the end of your faith, the salvation of your soul.

NOTE: Perseverance is the obvious evidence of grace and true faith. Those who "permanently" fall away demonstrate that their faith was not placed in Christ but in someone else or something else.

B. FAITH BRINGS PEACE, JOY, REST & CONFIDENCE.

- ❑ **Isa 26:3** - Trusting brings peace.
- ❑ **Phi 4:6-7** - Don't be anxious or worried. In faith, a believer should pray about everything and leave all things in the Lord's hands. This produces a peace and a security that passes the understanding of your circumstances.
- ❑ **1 Pet 1:7-8** - Faith brings joy unspeakable and full of glory.
- ❑ **Heb 4:1-3,10** – You enter into rest through faith in His Word.
- ❑ **Eph 3:12** - You have access by faith with confidence.
- ❑ **Heb 4:16** - By faith you can enter into His presence with confidence.
- ❑ **Pro 3:5-6** - He will direct your path.
- ❑ **Pro 3:26** - He will be your confidence.

C. FAITH GIVES VICTORY OVER THE WORLD.

- ❑ **1 John 5:4** - True faith overcomes the world.
- ❑ **Eph 6:16** - Faith will quench the fiery darts of the wicked.
- ❑ **Acts 26:18** - Faith in Christ brings sanctification, which is the opening of your eyes to the light and the ability to move away from evil.
- ❑ **Eph 2:1-10** – Through faith we walk victoriously in the plan that is ordained in Christ Jesus and are delivered from this present evil world (**Gal 1:4**).

D. FAITH MOVES MOUNTAINS.

- ❑ **Matt 17:20-21; Mark 11:22-24** - Faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains.
- ❑ **Luke 17:6** - Faith can move a tree.
- ❑ **Matt 21:21** - Faith, without doubt, can accomplish great things.
- ❑ **Mark 9:23** - All things are possible to those who believe.

CONCLUSION:

Therefore, “have faith in God” and be not overcome with doubts and fears. Be confident “...that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (**Phi 1:6**) “...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” (**2 Tim 1:12**) When you don't understand His plan, and you can't see His footsteps, then just trust His heart that He's ordering your way aright. (**Psa 37:23-24**). He will never leave you nor forsake you (**Heb 13:5**).