

Faith

“Without faith it is impossible to please
God.”

Lexington Christian Fellowship

<http://www.lcfellowship.com/>

Faith toward God

This study will discuss:

1. What is faith?
2. The foundation for faith
3. Receiving salvation through faith
4. What our faith is in
5. Living by faith
6. What faith produces

"Without faith it is impossible to please God, for everyone that comes to Him must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him," Heb. 11:6.

The life of a Christian is based solely in his trust of God. The difference between Christianity and every other religion is that "faith factor." All other religions teach that if you work hard enough, you will attain to their idea of heaven. Christianity teaches that we receive our admittance to God by putting our faith in Him.

This is the strength of being a Christian, trusting in God rather than in our own abilities. This faith is the source of good works. Working hard does not produce Christ-likeness in our lives; Christ in our hearts by faith produces His nature in us.

More specifically, we believe that the work Jesus did on the cross is what purchased our salvation. We cannot add to that in any way. He has done it, we believe it.

1. What is Faith?

Faith is knowing, without any doubt, that what you are believing will happen. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen,” Heb. 11:1.

Scriptural definition

- Faith is the substance of things hoped for.
The Greek word translated *substance* means a substance which is real, a foundation, a substructure, a placing under.”
- Hope is different from faith (hope is directed toward the future and is primarily in the heart, while faith is in the present). Mk. 11:24
- Faith is the evidence of things not yet seen.
The Greek word translated *evidence* means “a proof, a conviction, that by which a thing is tested or proved; a courtroom term dealing with evidence presented in a case.”
- This faith which is offered as evidence is based in the Word of God. Rom. 10:17
- You cannot see faith, but you know it is there. Rom. 4:17-20; Jn. 20:25-29, 11:40

Reference definition

- Strong’s Concordance— Persuasion, i.e., credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially reliance upon Christ for salvation.
- Webster’s— Unquestioning belief; unquestioning belief in God, religion, etc.; complete trust, confidence, or reliance, as children usually have faith in their parents.

Questions

1. Write a scriptural definition of faith.

2. Write a definition of faith from a reference book.

2. The Foundation for Faith

Faith cannot be based on the philosophy of man, or what a person thinks in his mind. It must be based on the Word of God. "Now faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," Rom. 10:17.

The Bible's integrity

The Word of God is something solid to put your faith in.

- God cannot lie. Heb. 6:18; Tit. 1:2
- He will not break His promises. Ps. 89:34; Nu. 23:19
- God's Word is settled forever. Ps. 119:89; Matt. 24:35, 4:4

The Bible's authority

- The Bible is the Word of God.
- Men of God spoke and wrote it. Lk. 1:3-4; Rev. 1:1-2; Ex. 34:27
- They spoke and wrote it by the inspiration of God. II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:21; Rev. 1:1-3

The Bible's examples

- Hearing the Word of God brings faith. Rom. 10:17; Lk. 8:15; Jn. 20:30-31
- Examples of this fact include:
 - Abraham. Heb. 11:8
 - David. 1 Sam. 22:3-5; Ps. 119:30
 - New Testament believers. Acts 4:4

Questions

1. Why can the Bible be trusted?

2. Give a Biblical explanation of how hearing the word brings faith.

3. Faith Receives God's Gift of Salvation

Faith is the channel through which we receive what God has already given to us. The word *grace* means gift. "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," Eph. 2:8.

Some definitions

- Strong's— Graciousness (as gratifying) of manner or act.
- Vine's— On the part of the bestower, the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds.
- Webster's— In theology, the unmerited love and favor of God toward man; divine influence acting in man to make him pure and morally strong.
- Working definition— "The unmerited favor of God."

Salvation by grace

It is through faith that we receive salvation by grace. *Through* means "the channel of an act," and *by* means "the cause."

- God has extended grace for salvation. Acts 15:11; Rom. 11:6
- That grace is the gift of Christ dying on the cross. Rom. 3:24, 5:9, 5:15
- God has extended that grace to all men. Tit. 2:11

Questions

1. What is grace?

2. What is the difference between “through” and “by”?

4. Faith in What?

Salvation is by putting your faith in what God has done as it is revealed in the Bible. “But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved,” Rom. 10:8-9. The Bible says that we are saved by believing in Jesus.

Works are futile

You cannot get saved by works.

- You cannot do anything in the flesh to get saved. Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16
- All of our endeavors amount to nothing. Isa. 64:6
- Abraham is an example of faith over works. It wasn’t by works. Rom. 4:13. It was by faith. Gen. 15:6.

Trust is essential

You must trust God for your salvation.

- The Word tells us God will save us by faith. II Tim. 3:15; Rom. 10:8; Heb. 2:4
- Christ is already our righteousness. Phil. 3:8-9; Rom. 10:3-4
- If we will just believe in Christ, we will be saved. Rom. 10:9-11; Jn. 20:31, 3:15, 5:24

The blood shows grace

The grace (or gift) that brought salvation was Jesus dying on the cross and being resurrected.

- The sacrifice on the cross purchased our salvation. Eph. 1:19-20
- The blood paid for our sins, and we put our faith in it. Rom. 3:24-25; I Pet. 1:18-19
- So faith for salvation is simply believing that we are forgiven and saved through Jesus’ shedding of blood.

Questions

1. What part do works play in salvation?

2. What part does trust play in salvation?

3. What is the significance of the blood?

5. Living by Faith

After you are saved through faith in the cross, you must live by faith. "Now the just shall live by faith. But if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him," Heb. 10:38

Trusting

We cannot do anything in the flesh; we must trust God in everything.

- It is sin to do something without faith. Rom. 14:23
- We cannot please God outside of faith. Heb. 11:6

Releasing

Victory in your life is through faith in God's provision. This faith releases one from the attraction of the world.

- Our faith makes us overcomers. 1 Jn. 5:4
- Examples of overcomers by faith:

Three Hebrew captives. Dan. 3:13-18

Caleb. Josh. 14:5-12

Paul. Acts 27:25

Many others. Heb. 11:1-40

Resisting

- Faith is the substance that resists the Devil. 1 Pet. 5:9
- Satan's attacks are aimed to destroy faith. Lk. 22:32
- Faith is maintained by the word of our testimony. Rev. 12:11

Activating

- Faith works by love. Gal. 5:6
- This faith assures success. II Chron. 20:20
- Faith is a fundamental duty. Jn. 6:20-29
- It is essential in prayer. Jm. 1:5-6
- We locate His promises in the Word.
- The conditions attached to the promise must be met.
- Actively claim the promise for the glory of God, that He might be exalted, and not for our own lists. Jm. 4:3

Questions

1. Describe the four aspects of faith described in this section.

6. Faith Produces

Faith will produce good works in your life. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also," Jm. 2:26.

Obedience

Faith produces obedience.

- This is for the glory of His name. Rom. 1:5
- Abraham is our example. Heb. 11:8-10

Good works

Faith produces good works.

- Faith without works is dead. Jm. 2:20
- That which is of faith brings forth true life. Isa. 26:3; Ps. 125:1
- After having repented from a life of dead works (Heb. 6:1), (sin), we put our faith in God which brings a life of good works. Jm. 1:27; Col. 1:9-10

Questions

1. What is the purpose of obedience?

2. What does faith produce?

7. Point of Decision

Faith is the channel we use to receive the gift (or grace) that God has already given us. As we hear the Word of the Gospel telling us that Jesus died for our sins, we receive it by faith. That grace we received goes on to cause us to live a life of faith which in turn produces good works, victory over sin, and answers to prayer. As faith takes our eyes off this present world and causes us to focus on things above our dependency will rest more and more in Him.