

The Basics of Faith

I. Introduction

A. Without faith there is no hope or love.

1 Corinthians 13:13 So these three things continue forever: faith, hope, and love. And the greatest of these is love.

B. Faith is the first step toward God. Faith is the final step in pleasing Him.

Hebrews 11:6 Without faith no one can please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that he is real and that he rewards those who truly want to find him.

C. Faith is a New Testament word that appears 274 times in 231 verses.

II. Faith Discovered

A. God is the only source of true faith.

B. True, pure, holy, precious faith that

- is not mixed with anything else
- is not dressed up to look like something else
- does not have any "if", "and", or "but" attached
- has nothing false or hypocritical in it

is God's never changing goal for His church and every member in it.

C. All faith is from God.

D. Not only is God the source of our faith, but He must also be the object of that faith. Faith comes from God and must return to Him.

E. The believer who focuses faith directly to God will discover that faith in God involves faith in God's promises and faith in God's power, and faith in God's provision.

F. Faith is not fact; it goes before fact.

III. Faith Defined

A. Hebrews 11:1 Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it.

B. The Bible also speaks of faith as a fruit of the Spirit and faith as a gift of the Spirit.

C. Faith is the key to our entire relationship with God.

1. We ...have faith and are saved. (Hebrews 10:39).
2. by faith our ...sins can be forgiven... (Acts 26:18)
3. "...made right with God..." by faith (Galatians 2:16)
4. "God's power protects you through your faith..." (1 Peter 1:5)
5. All the blessings of God are entered into through the doorway of faith.

Romans 5:1-2 Since we have been made right with God by our faith, we have peace with God. This happened through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² who through our faith has brought us into that blessing of God's grace that we now enjoy. And we are happy because of the hope we have of sharing God's glory.

IV. Accepting Faith

- A. This Bible requirement—faith—is a gift of God.
- B. Israel did not need anything they didn't already have from the day they left Egypt until the day they entered the Promised Land—nothing except faith.
- C. When we are “religiously busy” we can fool ourselves into believing that we are acting in faith.

V. Increasing our Faith

- A. Faith draws nourishment from the soil of the Word of God. Faith converts that nourishment to usable energy, and then sends that energy to the every part of our lives.
- B. We can receive faith, but we cannot produce faith.
 - 1. We cannot be farmers of faith.
 - 2. Faith does not grow. It is received fully developed.
 - 3. If we need more faith, we return to the source (God).
 - 4. We don't plant what little faith we have and expect it to put down roots, sprout, and produce a crop of fresh faith.
- C. We cannot enlarge our faith by our own efforts or by our emotional activity. But we can add Christian blessings to it.

2 Peter 1:1 From Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ. To you who have received a faith as valuable as ours, because our God and Savior Jesus Christ does what is right.

2 Peter 1:5-8 Because you have these blessings, do your best to add these things to your lives: to your faith, add goodness; and to your goodness, add knowledge; ⁶ and to your knowledge, add self-control; and to your self-control, add patience; and to your patience, add service for God; ⁷ and to your service for God, add kindness for your brothers and sisters in Christ; and to this kindness, add love. ⁸ If all these things are in you and are growing, they will help you to be useful and productive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- D. None of these wonderful characteristics can ever substitute for faith.
- E. The Bible says: " ... Do not think you are better than you are. You must decide what you really are by the amount of faith God has given you." (Romans 12:3).

VI. Faith Released

- A. Faith is a divine energy, not a religious one.
- B. Christ's faith was powerful and valuable.
- C. The entire ministry of Jesus released faith to needy people. When they acted on that faith, the results were immediate.
- D. The word faith is more often used as a verb (an action) than as a noun (an idea).

VII. Faith Focused

- A. Faith is not measured by its strength. It is measured by what it does.
- B. When we change the focus of our faith from being focused on God to being focused on anything else, we often think and exercise faith FOR something rather than faith IN something.
- C. God's fundamental purpose in giving us faith was to make us depend on God, and realize that we are not independent from Him.
- D. Faith in who God is will always involve faith in God's promises. We cannot separate God and His Word.
- E. Faith is the power that enables us to believe that God's promises are true. Faith also helps us to realize God's promises and fulfill the promises in our lives.
- F. "...those who are right with God will live by faith." (Habakkuk 2:4).
 - 1. Faith, therefore, becomes more than a power; it is a focus.
 - 2. Faith is far more than a way for us to receive gifts.
 - 3. Faith is a calling – we respond to God.
 - 4. We live, not lust, by faith.
 - 5. Faith is far more a walk than a work; it is a way of living.

VIII. Faith Activated

- A. It is common to say that Hebrews 11 is the faith chapter of the Bible. It really is far more about men and women who received faith and used that faith in a remarkable way.
- B. We learn from them that there is only one divine faith, but it can be shown in many ways.
- C. Nowhere in the entire Bible will you find such a summary of faith at work as you find in Hebrews 11.
- D. Living by faith does not mean doing without; it means **DOING HIS WILL**.