

# Who Through Faith ...

It's crucial that we draw near to God with clean hands, and a pure, true and honest heart, and mind that is free from pollution. This means, our eyes, hearts and minds are purged and cleansed from all evil, including wickedness, malice and sin.

We approach God with purity, sincerity and truth; and complete trust and confidence in His authority and supreme, mighty power, and that He is able to do immeasurably more (superabundantly) in all aspects of our Christian lives!

The Bible tells us to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Are you fixing your eyes on Jesus? Who or what are your eyes fixed on? On the heavenlies and on Jesus who is eternal and immortal, on our love for God and His love for us, and our everlasting spiritual relationship with Him, the source of our true peace, joy and happiness; or the physical things of the world that are temporary and passing away, and do not provide any long lasting peace, happiness, joy or satisfaction . . . . . ?

The answer will determine your future and outcome in the course of your life, and whether you are among the few that are entering the narrow gate that leads to salvation, everlasting life and the Kingdom of God; or the wide gate that many are entering and leads to death and destruction ...

## Scriptural References:

Jeremiah 23:29  
Daniel 3  
Matthew 7:13-14  
Matthew 17:20  
Mark 7:20-23  
Mark 11:22-24  
Romans 1:17  
Romans 3:31  
Romans 10:17  
2 Corinthians 5:7  
Ephesians 2:8  
Ephesians 3:20  
2 Thessalonians 3:3  
Hebrews 4:12-14  
Hebrews 11:1,6  
Hebrews 11:33-34  
Hebrews 12:2  
James 1:21-25  
James 2:14,24  
James 4:7  
James 5:17-18  
1 Peter 1:5  
1 John 2:15-17  
1 John 5:4,14-15,18  
2 John 1:7

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What is the meaning of faith? What kind of faith pleases God? How do we grow in faith? Do you have the faith that can move mountains? The Bible tells us that even the demons believe there is one God and tremble.

Faith is a strong belief in the things that are unseen, which are eternal. The Bible definition is: Hebrews 11:1 - *'Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.'*

There are 2 kinds of faith:

Living faith - We completely believe, trust, hope and have confidence in the existence and supreme power and authority of Almighty God, who is the creator of the universe, the heavens and the earth, sky and sea and all that is in them. God is spirit and omnipotent (has unlimited, supreme authority and power), omnipresent (fills the heavens and the earth - present in all places at all times) and omniscient (is all-knowing - with infinite awareness, understanding, and insight). It is not enough to believe in God's existence. We must demonstrate our faith in God by the way we live our lives, in obedience to His commandments, with total commitment, devotion and dedication.

It takes faith to begin a spiritual relationship with God. Although it may mean that we have a mustard seed of faith to begin with, because we may know so little about the Bible. Jesus said that a mustard seed of faith is all it takes to move a mountain, and nothing is impossible for those who believe. But as we learn more about God and His word, that tiny seed of faith will continue to increase, until it eventually grows into a faith that is as big as a six to twelve foot tree!

Scripture tells us that we are not only to hear the word of God, but actually do what it says, because we are not justified by faith alone. Faith must be accompanied by deeds (action, conduct, behavior, attitude). This is living faith. There must be an evident demonstration of faith in that person's life, by his good deeds. Examples of good deeds include: preaching the true gospel (good news) around the world, distributing Bibles, sending missionaries, feeding and clothing the poor and needy, praying for the oppressed, etc. Scripture says that anyone who doesn't provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Faith also means believing and trusting in God's promises, and that He will fulfill them to us, which we claim in prayer, by quoting scripture and ... *'if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we have asked of Him.'* 1 John 5:14-15.

We don't leave the Bible on the shelf, to collect dust. Instead, the word of God becomes powerful, living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword, and gives us victory in all aspects of our Christian lives, when we take it from the shelf and open, study and understand it, and begin to plant it firmly in our minds and act on the truth. We demonstrate our faith in, and love for God by obeying His commandments, and believing that God's word is truth, and like fire, or a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces and has mighty power in our lives.

Dead faith - is the faith that says "I believe in God," but there is no actual demonstration in one's life, and is compared to *'... a man who looks at his face in the mirror, and after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like'* (James 1:23-24). It is also compared to a body without the spirit, which is dead. This is not the kind of faith that pleases God. For example, when someone says he has faith, but does not help a needy brother. Encouraging words will not be enough to help him, since he will be dying of hunger and/or freezing to death.

Do we really believe God's word enough to act on the truth? We grow in faith by studying God's word. Scripture tells us that Romans 10:17 - *'Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.'*

Faith requires total commitment. It must be built up and developed by daily bible study and prayer, where we ask God to increase and strengthen our faith, and understanding of His word.

As we grow in knowledge and understanding of God's word, so will our faith increase too. When we hear the word of God, we must make sure that we understand it, and persevere in the faith. Also, we pray for discernment and ask God to fill us with the Holy Spirit, so that we may discern between truth and error. For example, true teaching from false teaching; true prophets from false prophets; righteous from the wicked, and so forth. This is crucial, so that we are not led astray by false teachings, that will actually cause someone to fall away from the faith, rather than help him to increase in faith. We always check to see whether a particular sermon or teaching lines up with what scripture says, because there are many antichrists who have gone out into the world to deceive, and we are to watch out that we are not deceived.

Examples of false teachings are: 1) 'once saved always saved.' 2) A false 'grace' that teaches one: To continue in unrepentant sins. That grace gives one a license for immorality, and there are no consequences for disobedience, and that person will still inherit the Kingdom of God. 3) 'Universal salvation.' 4) 'Immortal soul.' 5) Also, other false teachings that deny Jesus has come in the flesh; and deny the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and return of Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords, etc.

The devil encourages believers to doubt, ignore, and turn away from the truth; and turn to false teaching, so that they will revert or go back to their former manner of life. He also tempts believers to focus on the things of this world, instead of focusing on God. Mature believers (advanced in the faith) will know that God is the source of true peace, joy and happiness; and not the physical things of this world. We must completely fix our hearts, eyes and minds on God, and press on toward our spiritual goals.

It is crucial that we submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from us; persevere in the faith, and are among those who believe and are saved; and do not become an apostate, who once came to a knowledge of the truth, but has fallen away from the faith, and is among those who are bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

Through faith in God, we are shielded by His power. The shield of faith is one of the six pieces of armor that will protect us from Satan, his cohorts (demons and human agents), demonic attacks and the whole kingdom of darkness. God is faithful, and will strengthen and protect us from all evil. We must place our complete faith, hope, trust and confidence in Him (*read tract: 'You Can Be Set Free!'*).

True servants of God will preach truth, and not use religion as a means of making profit. They will obey and teach God's commandments (not just preach about Christ). They will give strong warnings for people to repent, and will make known the consequences of rejecting God and the true gospel. They will also rebuke sinners for the purposes of correcting them from the error of their ways, turning them away from their sins and saving them from death.

There are worldly distractions all around us, and obstacles that can interfere in one's faith, but that person requires spiritual focus, commitment, determination and dedication, if he is to continue to remain steadfast in, and true to the faith. The 'Parable of the Sower' illustrates how differently people will respond to the word of God. It is crucial that we do not allow ourselves to be choked by the physical things of this world, including the pleasures, worries and deceitfulness of wealth, that will hinder one from bearing much spiritual fruit.

Hebrews 11 is called the 'faith' chapter, and records the awesome power of God at work in those who had strong faith. Noah, Samuel, Daniel, Moses, Elijah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah - are just a few examples of men of faith. Mighty things were accomplished through faith . . . . Hebrews 11:33-34 - *'who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies ...'*

It takes faith to trust that God will rescue us out of a life and death situation. Daniel is a good example. Despite the decree that was issued, Daniel trusted that God would rescue him out of the lion's den. He remained true to the faith. God rescued Daniel, although He did allow him to be thrown into the lion's den, for the purpose of testing his faith. Daniel was lifted out of the den, without any wounds, physically intact.

King Nebuchadnezzar was furious with rage when Daniel's three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, refused to worship his "gods" or worship the image of gold that he set up, and he threw them into the blazing furnace, which was heated seven times hotter than usual. The three men were tied up and thrown into the fire. They trusted that the true God would rescue them and they escaped the furnace completely unharmed.

God said to Noah that He would put an end to all the people on earth, and that He would rid the earth of violence by destroying the earth, including the wicked. Noah trusted in God, and built an ark according to God's instruction, and Noah and seven others were saved. Noah was saved because of his righteousness. He walked with God, and was blameless among the people at the time.

God answered the prophet Elijah in spectacular ways. For example, Elijah prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops James 5:17-18.

Many other extraordinary things were accomplished through faith. God uses His ordinary servants to accomplish extraordinary miracles.