

# Faith

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# Faith

## The Principle of Faith

But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Hebrews 11:6, KJV)

If the drive of your heart is to live a life which is pleasing to God, then you must become a person of faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please Him.

For many people, it is difficult to understand faith. We seem to have an easier time understanding love or hope. However, everyone who has experienced Christ's salvation has already exercised a certain measure of faith. Salvation was available to you since the moment you were born, but it was only by an exercise of faith that you received Christ as your Savior.

Faith may be difficult to understand, but it isn't any more complicated than deciding to believe. In John 15:25, Christ said that people hated Him without cause. If people reject Christ without cause, then we can choose to believe without cause. That's the reality of faith: you believe because you choose to believe, not because you have reason to believe.

Faith is a decision that you must make every day. Every morning when you wake up, you choose to have faith or not to have faith. And if you decide to believe today, then there is no reason why you cannot decide to believe tomorrow.

Your decision to believe should never be based on your feelings, though, because your natural senses will never give you an accurate picture of what God is doing in your life. That is an important concept to grasp because the essence of faith is that you believe even when the very things you are believing for remain unseen. This is confirmed by Hebrews 11:1 (KJV), which tells us, "Now faith is the substance

of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”  
With faith, you believe it when you don’t see it.

## **The Focus of Your Faith**

Let’s look at two Scriptures that illustrate how the principle of faith really works.

Getting into a boat, Jesus crossed over the sea and came to His own city. And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, “Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven.” ...then He said to the paralytic, “Get up, pick up your bed and go home.” And he got up and went home. (Matthew 9:1-7)

In this story, the paralytic did not even need to ask Jesus for a healing. He and the ones carrying him were focused on Christ, and Christ saw their faith and responded. Contrast this with the next story about how the disciples could not cast out a demon.

And when they came to the multitude, a man came up to Him, falling on his knees before Him, and saying, “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic, and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him.” And Jesus answered and said, “O unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me.” And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”

And He said to them, “Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible to you.” (Matthew 17:14-20, NASB © 1977)

Look at the wording of the disciples’ question: “Why could we not cast it out?” They were trying to cast the demon out by their own strength, separate from Jesus. In the first story, the paralytic and his friends didn’t have to pray loudly or work at producing a miracle of healing; they simply focused their faith on Christ. Did the disciples take their faith to Christ in the second story? No. They only asked Him why *they* could not do it.

Now look at the wording of Christ’s response to their question: “Because of the littleness of *your* faith.” I think it is very interesting that Christ answers His disciples in this way, but then goes on to say that in order to move mountains all they would need is faith as a mustard seed, which is absolutely tiny. So really, the littleness of faith that Christ is referring to is not the amount of their faith, but their faith’s lack of strength in and of itself.

Can you, in yourself, heal someone? The answer, of course, is no. Were the disciples any different? The only way that we can cause miracles is by focusing our faith on Christ, just as the paralytic did. True faith is faith in Christ.

## **Root Your Faith in Jesus Christ**

Some translations of the mustard seed Scripture mention its size, but the original Greek text does not explicitly talk about the size of the mustard seed; it just says that we must have faith as a mustard seed. Obviously the size of the seed is important in our understanding of the Scripture,

but that is not the only attribute of a mustard seed that should be explored.

A further understanding of this Scripture is this: a seed never accomplishes anything unless it is planted. So where are you going to plant your mustard seed of faith? In Jesus Christ.

When He healed someone, Jesus often asked, “Do you believe I can heal you?” (Matthew 9:28). He always brought their faith back to Himself. Jesus didn’t just stimulate people’s faith in some generic way; He stimulated their faith in Him. And when people connected with Him, just a little faith caused amazing miracles.

The focus of your faith is to believe in Christ’s power and authority. When you take your faith and focus it on anything other than Christ, nothing will come out of it. Remember, with people it is impossible, but all things are possible with God (Mark 10:27).

I think that most of us relate to faith as the disciples did when they tried to cast out the demon; we attempt to change things on our own, independent of the Lord. However, we need to get the focus of our faith off of ourselves and the situation. We can’t change anything if we are focused on the problem, and we can’t change anything if we are focused on ourselves.

A little seed of faith, rooted in Him, will create a miracle.

## **Faith Touches Him**

Although I have stressed the fact that it is the Lord who works the miracles, and not you in your own faith, it is important to realize that Christ moves when He is touched by the faith of a believer.

Christ rarely performed miracles that were not a response to someone’s faith. Jesus didn’t do many miracles in His hometown of Nazareth. Why? Because the people of His hometown thought He was just the carpenter’s son,

so they didn't have faith in Him. Luke 8 tells a story that illustrates what happens when your faith touches Him.

And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?" And while they were all denying it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You." But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me." When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed. And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." (Luke 8:43-48)

Christ said, "Your faith has made you well." Christ had the ability to heal the woman, but it was her faith that caused the miracle. Christ may have all authority in heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18), but only those who touch Him with faith see the workings of His power.

Imagine the throngs of people who were in the presence of the Lord. But did His power affect their lives? No. It was only this woman, filled with faith, who initiated the manifestation of His power that completely changed her life. I'm sure many people were jostling Him and bumping into Him, but Christ only felt the power leave Him when this woman touched Him with her faith. Christ wasn't even focused on her when the healing happened, yet she was still healed! That's how much your faith in Him causes miracles.

What have you suffered under for twelve years, and what is your faith toward it? Your attitude is most likely

one of despair. You've probably just learned to live with it. But this woman with the hemorrhage had a faith that something could change, so she fought through the crowd just to touch the hem of Christ's garment.

The Lord is able to meet your every need, but it is your faith that draws Him into action. All it takes is a touch!

## **Exercise Your Faith**

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected. (James 2:21-22)

Abraham's faith was perfected in the works that he did in faith. As Abraham exercised his faith by offering Isaac on the altar, the Lord responded with an even greater promise to him and his offspring (Genesis 22:9-18).

Peter exercised his faith when he walked on water (Matthew 14:25-31). Although he started sinking after just a few steps, he actually did it. The rest of the disciples just sat in the boat. I would rather have us, like Peter, fail in an exercise of faith than stand back and do nothing because we've already decided it won't work.

Faith only blossoms in action. You must exercise it and contend for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). The more you exercise your faith, the stronger it gets.

## **Faith Is an Action**

What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and



in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? (James 2:14-16)

For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. (James 2:26)

This is a confronting Scripture. James is telling us that faith cannot be a passive thing; it has to be expressed in action. You can't claim to believe for something if you aren't doing anything about it.

What you do every day is an expression of your faith or your lack of faith. Think about Noah. He acted on his faith in God's Word every day—even while his neighbors mocked him. The whole world was consumed by a flood because God responded to one man who spent 120 years building a boat as an action of faith in God's Word. I don't care if he actually understood God's plan; he just kept being faithful to take action on what he believed, working on that ark every day.

Faith without works is no faith at all. We cannot say we believe in God's Word and not act in obedience to it. Faith is expressed by actions of obedience to God's Word. Unless you are doing the things that are necessary to accomplish His Word, you will never see the fulfillment of the promises of God.

## **Your Struggle With Faith**

We grapple with our faith far more than we need to. Our focus tends to be on the amount of faith that we have, but remember, all we need is faith the size of a mustard seed! Have you ever seen a mustard seed? They are impossibly small—just about one millimeter in diameter. It would take about five mustard seeds to equal the size of

one apple seed! So it seems obvious that the amount of our faith doesn't matter as much as we think it does.

In fact, I think we get distracted by the thought that we might not have enough faith. The truth is that every believer who is passionate about the Lord has a mustard seed of faith, otherwise you couldn't have received salvation in the first place!

Stop wasting time repenting of unbelief and start magnifying your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a downright lie that you don't have faith. If you believe in Jesus Christ, you have faith! Ask the Lord to wash away the lie that says you are unbelieving. If you keep thinking that you don't have enough faith, you will never be effective in your relationship with God.

You already have faith; now exercise it.

## **Faithful to Believe**

Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."  
(John 6:28-29)

The one responsibility we have is to believe the Lord and His Word.

It is interesting to note that in the New Testament, Christians were originally known as "believers." The term "Christian" didn't appear until much later. We need to come back to the understanding that the foundation of our spiritual life is to believe. We have so much to believe in; we have a Bible full of promises! We should not stand around waiting for something to happen. We should press through the unbelief of this age and reach in to touch the Lord. Sweep away everything that would stop you from believing.

God performs miracles because we bring about the

fulfillment of His Word by having a faith that touches Him. Smith Wigglesworth said that to believe "...is to have such confidence in what the Lord said that we take Him at His Word, simply because He said it."<sup>1</sup> The power of faith rests in who He is, not who you are.

Just like the story of the paralytic, in which Jesus saw the faith and immediately healed the man, so shall our experience be. As we bring our need to the Lord in faith, our prayer will be answered before we even ask it (Isaiah 65:24; Matthew 6:8)! The Lord has given us faith, and now it's time to root it in Him.

Say to the Lord, "I have faith, and I know nothing is impossible because I believe in You."

# Scripture References

## The Principle of Faith

John 15:25—

“But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, ‘THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.’”

## Root Your Faith in Jesus Christ

Matthew 9:28—

When He entered the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”

Mark 10:27—

Looking at them, Jesus said, “With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.”

## Faith Touches Him

Matthew 28:18—

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”

## Exercise Your Faith

Genesis 22:9-18—

Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do

nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son. Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.” Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

Matthew 14:25-31 —

And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.” Peter said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” And He said, “Come!” And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”

Jude 1:3—

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

### **Faithful to Believe**

Isaiah 65:24—

“It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.”

Matthew 6:8—

“So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.”

## Endnotes

1. This quote by Smith Wigglesworth was taken from page 58 of Stanley Howard Frodsham's *Smith Wigglesworth: Apostle of Faith*. Copyright © 1948 by Gospel Publishing House.