

FAITH

As described in Hebrews 11:1 “... *faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*” How would you convince someone to worship a God that he or she cannot see or assure someone in hardship that there will soon be comfort? It is only by faith.

MEASURE OF FAITH REQUIRED

Although faith cannot be seen, the measure of faith we are required to have is about the size of a mustard seed. Small indeed but it can move a ‘mountain’.

Matthew 17:20 - And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Evident in this statement: “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” - Romans 12:3

HOW TO DEVELOP FAITH

Pray for it - Faith is a spiritual gift, hence a person seeking to have it must long to possess it. We can deduce that from 1 Corinthians 12:9 – “*To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;*” Then verse 31 reads – “*But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.*” Therefore pray for it. See 1 Thessalonians 3:10 – “*Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?*”

Seek the Word - To acquire faith, you must listen to and receive the word of God with meekness. Read Romans 10:17- “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” See also Acts 4:4 – “*But many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to about five thousand.*”

Meditate on examples in the scriptures which may be relevant to your situation. Remember, David approached Goliath only in the name of God; the smaller man prevailed (1 Samuel 17:45). When there was no weapon, Jonathan and his armour bearer prevailed against an army (1 Samuel 14:6-7, 8-20).

Always put in mind that “**The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.**” – Proverbs 18:10 & Psalm 61.3 See also Psalm 119:99.

HOW IMPORTANT IS FAITH?

Christ put ‘faith’ in the same category as judgement and mercy. Matthew 23:23 - “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”

Also, “... without faith it is **impossible to please God**, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” - Hebrews 11:6

LITTLE FAITH

Examples of what Christ called Little Faith:

Matthew 8:26 -And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

Matthew 6:30 - Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Matthew 14:31 - And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Matthew 16:8 - Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

GREAT FAITH

Examples of what Christ classed as Great Faith:

Matthew 8:10 - When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

Matthew 15:28 - Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Luke 5:18-20 - And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

WHEN YOU HAVE FAITH ADD ...

Having just faith is not enough, the scriptures recommend adding charity.

1 Corinthians 13:13 - And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

2 Corinthians 8:7 - Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

1 Thessalonians 3:6 - But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:

1 Timothy 1:5 - Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

Look at 2 Peter 1:5-8 also.

FACTORS THAT CAN WORK AGAINST FAITH

Fear: Peter started well when he was walking on water but once he exercised fear, he began to sink – Matthew 14:25-31.

Doubt: See Matthew 21:21 - Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

Expectation: - Look at the example of Naaman in 2 Kings 5:5-14 essentially (11-12).

Remember this: *“Do whatever he tells you.”* – John 2:5. Do not lean on your own understanding.

Delay by evil forces: Read Daniel 10:12-13.

PEOPLE WITH FAITH

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego – Daniel 3 | The Synophoenic woman – Mark 7:26.

The Centurion – Matthew 8:8-10 | Blind Bartimaeus – Mark 10:51.

Acts 6:8 - And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. See also Hebrew 11 for examples of men and women who had faith.

WHAT FAITH CAN DO FOR A CHURCH

A congregation will increase as the faith of the worshipers increase. There will be more answered prayers and testimonies. God's mercies and works cannot be hidden.

Acts 11:24 - For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

Acts 16:5 - And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

FAITH BREEDS CONFIDENCE

1 Thessalonians 1:8 - For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything.

1 John 5:14 - And this is the **confidence** that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.

LACK OF FAITH HINDERS WORK

Imagine an aircraft hovering without anywhere to land. Power moves through faith whether it be power of accomplishment, victory, healing or success. When faith is lacking, little is achieved.

Matthew 13:58 – *“And he did not many mighty works there because of their **unbelief.**”*

1 Timothy 1:19 - Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

YOU ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

Galatians 2: 15-16 - "We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles know that a person is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Ephesians 2:8 - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

FAITH FOUND IN THREE GENERATIONS

2 Timothy 1:5 – “I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lo'is and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you.”