

FAITH DEFINED

According to Cruden's Complete Concordance: ***Faith** is a dependence on the veracity (honesty) of another; a firm belief or trust in a person, thing, doctrine, or statement; and one is said to keep the faith when he performs a promise made to another. **Historical Christian faith** is a belief in the truthfulness and accuracy of the Scriptural narrative and teachings of the Bible (**James 2:17,24**). **Saving faith** is the acceptance by intellect, affection, and (personal) will, of God's favor extended to man through Christ. This faith produces a sincere obedience in the life and conversation. The firm foundation of faith is the essential supreme perfection of God: His unerring knowledge, immutable truth, infinite goodness, and almighty power. By this faith, we are said to be justified (**Romans 5:1**) not formally, as if it were our righteousness before God (but sincerely as we accept Christ's righteousness freely given to us). It is called the faith through which we are saved (**Ephesians 2:8**).*

***Saving Faith is**, as it were, a condition on our part whereby we come to be partakers of the blessings of the new covenant. It is a faith which works by love (**Galatians 5:6**). It is not an idle, inactive grace, but shows itself by producing in us love to God and our neighbor. **Faith, in Scripture**, is also taken for the truth and faithfulness of God (**Romans 3:3**). **Faith is also** used for the doctrine of the Gospel, which is the object of faith (**Acts 24:24 and Galatians 1:23**).*

The Bible definition for faith is found in **Heb. 11:1**: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”. Many promises and provisions of God, especially eternal life after physical death, are future. We must **believe** in God's honesty (the integrity of the Holy Scriptures) and **hope** until those future promises become a reality. We must exercise **faith (believe)** in what cannot yet be seen until we can see it, feel it, experience it. The evidence of our faith is the assurance in our hearts that is quickened by the **Holy Spirit**. And that is real! We are cautioned that without that kind of faith we cannot please God! (**Heb. 11:6**) Don't panic! God doesn't expect a young person or new Christian to do mighty miracles the day after they become a believer. A parent doesn't believe an infant will split wood, sweep the floor or drive a truck; neither does God expect a Christian to do exploits before he has grown in knowledge, understanding and has experiences with little faith to grow, or stretch, his faith for bigger challenges. Following are key **Faith** Scriptures to help you on life's journey.

ROM. 12:3 **God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.** Everyone was born with the capacity to believe for salvation when the Gospel is heard and understood; to believe that God will answer prayer; to believe that God has birthed us with a divine destiny and the skills needed to fulfill that destiny; and the faith to obey any assignments God may give us. As we obey, our faith is confirmed and the measure of our faith is increased. (See **Luke 17:5** below).

Rom 10:17 **Faith comes by hearing** and hearing by the (**rhema**) **Word of God**. **rhema** is a word in the Bible that is personally quickened by the H.S. to an individual. Faith is quickened to believe for salvation when we hear (or read) **John 3:16** or **Rom. 10:9,10**; when we read or hear the many “do's” and “don'ts” found in the Bible; when the Holy Spirit warns us not to do certain things, or urges us to do certain things. When reading the Bible or listening to Bible studies and the Holy Spirit quickens our hearts, that is letting us know that this is a personal **rhema Word** for us to respond to.

Eph. 2:8 **For by grace are you saved through faith.** To a young person or new convert, this means that we can't be saved by anything we do other than simply **believe** (exercise faith that salvation is a free gift—**Romans 6:23**) because of the grace of God (His love and concern). We can't earn salvation (forgiveness of sin)—but since we are born again (a renewed person) we are expected to submit to the Lordship of Jesus and obey the moral principles found in the **Bible**.

Luke 17:5 **The Apostles said to the Lord: “increase our faith.”** Jesus answered them in **Luke 17:6** “**If you have faith as a mustard seed**, you can say to this mulberry tree: “*be thou uprooted and planted in the sea and it would obey.*” Jesus demonstrated this **limitless faith** when He multiplied the bread and fish to feed 5000 men plus women and children; when He calmed the sea and when he raised Lazarus from the dead. The disciples also did great miracles as recorded in the **Book of Acts** and **N.T. Epistles**. Miracles are being done today in response to unshakable faith. I have heard about many great miracles in the last 50 years. I was miraculously saved from death two times that I know of, and a number of people have been spared death through my prayers. I have experienced faith at work in my life, but my faith is still growing. Let us look at some more faith Scriptures.

Rom. 1:17 The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith (in the Gospel); as it is written: “The just shall live by faith.” (See also **Heb. 10:38**.) This means that as we mature in Bible truth, and exercise our measure of faith, our measure of faith increases for larger challenges—thus we live by, and learn to trust God for our needs as we become more familiar with Bible truth. The Book of Hebrews recalls many of the great examples of men and women who exercised various levels of faith to do wonderful things—people like Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Elijah and Elisha...and the list goes on and on to include the heroes of faith since the birth of the Church until the present. Until Jesus comes again God will be looking for men and women whom He can work through, who are experiencing “from little faith to larger faith” in reaping the harvest.

Rom 3:28 Believers are **justified by faith**. Justify means to excuse or vindicate: spiritually, to make or declare righteous. God justifies—or declares believers to be righteous because he/she has faith in redemption through Jesus Christ’s shed blood—not because of any good works they might do. In **Romans 4** Paul uses the example of Abraham (“For if Abraham was justified by works he has something to boast about, **but not before God**.” For the Scripture says: “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness” He also uses David for an example (**v. 6**) “David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works.” (See more examples in **Hebrews 11**.)

Heb. 11:6 **Without faith it is impossible to please God.** (See Bible definition of faith above) In addition, God has magnified His Word above His name (**Psalms 138:2**), in other words, to maintain the image of a God with honor, integrity, flawless character and a name to be respected and obeyed—He will not fail to keep His word with humanity. Fulfilling His promises means more to God than having a name which demands honor and respect. Therefore, what God has said, He will do. When He says to humanity that “without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him”, you can stake your life on the fact that God and His Word can be trusted. Your hope for fulfilled promises before you can see them is all the evidence you need. Again, the examples of Abraham and the many listed in **Hebrews 11** prove to one and all that God’s Word can be trusted, and faith put in those principles and promises will be rewarded. Let not any man or devil deceive you on this premise!

Therefore—:

Rom. 12:6 Let us prophesy **according to our faith**—and serve God in any capacity or gift with the same same measure of faith that we have.

2 Cor. 5:7 For we **walk by faith** and not by sight. Exercising faith should be our way of handling the tough times and overcoming the serious challenges that come our way.

Gal. 5:6 **Faith works through love** for God, righteousness, neighbors, needy people. God is love (**1 John 4:8,16**).

James 5:15 And the **prayer of faith** will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up.

Eph. 6:16 Use the **shield of faith** to quench all the fiery darts (lies, condemnations, deceptions) of the wicked one. Meditate on the key passages above and—when you understand what faith is and how it works—become a **mighty man** of faith and action!

“For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them”—
Ephesians 2: 8—10.

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