

## WHO HAS FAITH

Some people think that faith is not for everyone. I have heard people say: “*If I only had faith...*” as though they were helpless. I have heard others say: “*I don't have enough faith...or if only I had more faith...*”. These may be new believers or lazy Christians who have not studied the Bible—or attended church or listened to the Gospel on radio or TV. They are not familiar with the many Bible verses about faith. **Hosea 4:6** says that people perish for the lack of knowledge. Five times the Apostle Paul states God's will when he says: “I would not have you to be ignorant—read it in—**Rom. 1:13; 1 Cor. 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor. 1:1:8; 1 THES. 4:13.**

The question of who has faith is answered in **Rom. 12:3** “*According as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith*”. So why have some people been deceived? Well—the devil is a deceiver and he is humanity's adversary (enemy and troubler)—he deceived Eve in the Garden. But God makes it clear that every human being was born with a measure of faith. Since Jesus conquered Satan, and as believers we are in Christ and He is in us, therefore we can “*resist the devil and he will flee from us*” (**James 4:7**). So who are we going to believe—the devil or God?

If we believe the Bible, we know that we have a measure of faith. So let us begin to use that measure, whether it be big or small. The Bible talks about heaven and hell. We have not seen either place, but we believe the Bible and therefore we believe in what we cannot yet see. Our preference is heaven so we learn in the Bible what we need to do to go there when our life on earth is over. It doesn't require much faith to believe in a heaven we have never seen, and because the thought of hell's torment is frightening—we choose heaven. If neither place exists we are none the worse, but if both places do exist we certainly don't want to spend eternity in hell, and the measure of faith we are born with is enough to choose heaven.

There are Bible examples of people who used little faith and either little or great things were done. In **1 Kings 17** a widow woman had just enough flour and oil during a famine for one more meal, then she expected to slowly starve. But the prophet came to her door and asked for food. When she explained her situation the prophet told her to fix that last meal and share it with him—and there would be meal and oil available until the famine ended. What could she lose? She obeyed and the Lord miraculously multiplied flour and oil until the end of the famine. She used her **measure of faith** and God rewarded her with life instead of starvation. Jesus said in **Matt. 17** that if you have faith the size of a mustard seed you could move a mountain.

There were four lepers outside the gates of Samaria during a siege by an enemy army. They reasoned—if we just sit here we will die of starvation, but if we go to the enemy army they might have mercy on us and feed us—and if they kill us at least death will come swiftly, unlike starvation. They acted in faith and God caused the enemy soldiers to hear the sound of a great army approaching so they left every thing behind and fled. The lepers had a good meal, reported the situation to the guards at Samaria and the entire city was saved. Again, the **measure of faith** was enacted and God did a miracle. Read this story in **2 Kings 7**. Other examples would include: A maid who witnessed to her mistress and Naaman was healed of leprosy—**2 Kings 5**; the woman who dropped a stone on a bad invading king's head and saved a city—**Judges 9**; Rahab, the gentile harlot who hid the Israeli spies, her **measure of faith** spared her family, she married Boas and was the great, great, grandmother of David—**Joshua 2 and Matt 1**; Anna, the widow prophetess whose faith allowed her to see the baby Jesus Messiah—**Luke 2**; the unknown boy whose lunch fed a crowd of 5000—with twelve baskets left over—**John 6**.

You can see from these examples that everyday people exercised their **measure of faith**, and so can you. They didn't know how God would respond, and neither will you. But as you exercise your portion of faith, it will be stronger for the next challenge. This is how **faith increases from faith to faith (Rom. 1:17)** Your faith is related to what you think—I think I can or I don't think I can. It is also related to your knowledge of the Bible and previous faith experiences. Life is a growing process so your faith-experiences will increase as your spiritual life grows. But faith requires action. You can't sit by and do nothing and expect God to do everything for you. It is true that He made everything about your redemption possible and offered salvation as a free gift; but God now expects you to respond by pursuing the knowledge of God and His kingdom. As

you learn, you will believe, and that will require you to speak with faith and hope—and to act accordingly—boldly in faith and obedience to God's guidance. **Mighty Man**— don't limit yourself!

In the exercise of faith there is a principle—you have to work with what you have before God will give you more. To receive the promise the widow had to use what she had: some flour and some oil—interestingly flour is a staple food and oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit; she had to act, she had to obey the prophet. This might be a good time to ask you what your talent or spiritual gifting is, because God uses us according to our talent, gift and experience. Young men and new believers may not know what their gift for service is, and that is where Bible study, church attendance, prayer and the interaction of the Holy Spirit enter the process. God meets us where we are in life. He gently leads us step-by-step, and He *guides us with His own eye (Psalm 32:8)*.

Consider this practical example. You get sick and feel miserable, in fact you may feel like dying to get rid of pain. Then the Dr. tells you there is a remedy and you will live. His word gives you hope and you begin to look forward to being well again. The Dr. gave you something to hope for, so your attitude changed. You began to expect the pain to go away, your strength to return and you can be your good old self again. Substitute the Bible, God's Word, for the Dr. and see what difference it makes. When the right Scripture is quickened you can speak it in faith and God will begin to respond. I have provided a list of faith Scriptures in another lesson. Below I want to give you five groups of faith Scriptures for you to read, study, review and put into use during the course of your life.

- #1 The **law** of faith Rom. 3:27 The **Word** of faith Rom. 10:8 The **Spirit** of faith 2 Cor. 4:13
- #2 The **prayer** of faith Jas. 5:15 The **Work** of faith I Thes. 1:3 The **fight** of faith 1 Tim 6:12
- #3 The **foundation** of faith Heb. 6:1 The **breastplate** of faith 1 Thes. 5:8 The **shield** of faith Eph. 6:16
- #4 Faith a **spiritual fruit** Gal. 5:22 Faith a **spiritual gift** 1 Cor. 12:9 Faith working by **love** Gal. 5:6
- #5 **Rom. 14:23** Whatever is not of faith is sin  
**Hebrews 4:2** The Word of God is unprofitable when not mixed with faith  
**Luke 18:8** Will Jesus find faith when He comes?

These are key Scriptures and I urge you to read and meditate upon them. Faith is one of three great themes that run throughout the Bible—**faith, love and redemption**. The Apostle Paul reduces faith to its simplest terms: *“We walk (and live) by faith not sight (2 Cor. 5:7)*. The context is that we have a temporary role while living on earth. Our real goal is to reach heaven. In the process we have to trust in what we read in the Bible, even though it requires us to believe in (accept as truth) that there is a heaven to gain and a hell to avoid—places we have never seen. We need faith to believe (have confidence) in the resurrection and life after death—that humans are eternal spirits clothed in a body—and although we won't know until we get to heaven, we have confident faith NOW that heaven exists.

I worked with Thomas Wyatt for 11 years before he was called home. He was an Iowa farmer injured by a work horse whose health failed and he was on his death bed. His obituary was ready to print in the local weekly newspaper. His immediate family had gathered. At lunch time he was alone in bed and saw these words move across the ceiling: *“I am the Lord who healeth thee.”* Faith was stirred in his heart and family members were surprised he was alert. He asked to be taken to the dinner table. On his first effort he fell, but insisted on trying again. He recovered, started new churches with street witnessing, was anointed with the gift of healing, began a national radio broadcast, trained and sponsored missionary outreaches and I became one of his co-laborers ministering in America and in many third world countries. I was present when ABC offered blanket nationwide radio coverage on Sundays. Wyatt asked his church to pledge \$5000, the people responded and he had the faith to sign the contract. Thomas Wyatt was a great faith hero. His, ours, was a ministry of faith, love, healing and redemption. Don't limit yourself—**Mighty Man!**

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