



**Sunday February 10, 2019**

**Faith**

**Part-1 : An Introduction**

We begin this series by covering a few basic truths concerning faith.

### **Faith Connects Us To God**

**Hebrews 11:6**

**But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**

God is Spirit. We are spirit-beings but dwelling in a natural body and spending most of our time engaging the natural world in which we live. We use our mind, logic and reason for many things that we do day-to-day. Typically, we do not relate to God through our body or mind, but in the spirit. Our spirit communes with God who is Spirit. We worship Him in spirit and truth. Faith in God is absolutely essential for us to step out of the natural realm and connect with God who is Spirit. We must believe that He is, that He exists and that He will reward us as we diligently seek Him. We must believe in Him if we are to relate to Him, receive from Him, experience Him and receive His working in us and through our lives. Hence faith connects us with God and enable us to live beyond the limitations of the natural realm.

### **Faith Is Required To Please God**

**Hebrews 11:6**

**But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**

When we walk in faith we please the heart of God. As believers in Christ we have been made righteous and we are accepted in the Beloved. We are justified and accepted in God's eyes. This in itself is a wonderful place to be. Yet to be well pleasing or fully pleasing to God, to bring delight and pleasure to His heart we must live by faith. The word 'please' in Hebrews 11:6 is 'euaresteō' in Greek (Strong's G2100) and means to gratify entirely, to please well. It comes from a word similar to the word 'well pleased' (Greek 'eudokeō', Strong's G2106) which the Father spoke of Jesus. God is well pleased with, takes pleasure in, and is favorably inclined towards the one who walks in faith.



## Faith Is In The Person of Jesus Christ

### Hebrews 12:2

looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### Mark 11:22

So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God.

Faith that the Bible teaches us is different from what the world thinks is 'faith'. We are not indulging in something that is make believe, where we are trying to convince ourselves of something. We are not indulging in mental gymnastics. We are not indulging in mind over matter. Our faith is not in our mental strength or attainment of some higher knowledge or special revelation.

Bible faith is faith, belief, trust, reliance, dependence and confidence in the God of the Bible. It is in the Person of Jesus Himself. The Lord Jesus is the Author, the Source, the Originator, the Beginner of this faith. Jesus is the Perfector of this faith, the Completer, the One who brings it into its fullness. The word 'author' in the Greek is 'archēgos' (Strong's G747) and means the chief leader, author, captain, prince, one who takes the lead in anything and thus sets the example, a predecessor in a matter, a pioneer. The word 'finisher' in the Greek is 'teleiōtēs' (Strong's G5051) and refers to the completer and consummator. It refers to Jesus as the One who has Himself raised faith to its perfection and so set before us the highest example of faith. So the faith that we are talking about is the faith that is in Jesus, comes from Jesus, is because of Jesus and pursues the example set by Jesus Himself.

In Mark 11:22 the Lord Jesus told us to "*Have faith in God*", or as the Literal Translation of the Holy Bible and Modern King James Version render it: "*Have faith of God*". Bible faith is the God-kind of faith. It is faith that God breathes and inspires in our hearts and hence is firmly rooted and grounded in the very nature and character of God. This God-kind of faith is inspired in our hearts by His Word and by His own Spirit.

## Faith Is Based On Relationship

### James 2:23

And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS ACCOUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS." And he was called the friend of God.

Bible faith is based on a personal relationship with God.



Those of us who teach God's Word on this subject have often used examples and analogies such as: faith is like a switch, faith is making a transaction, sow your seed-faith, act your faith, etc. While these analogies serve to convey a specific insight, they sometimes leave the impression that faith is something mechanical, something we work at to get a result apart from a relationship with God Himself. However we must understand that the 'mechanics' of Mark 11:23 were intended to be exercised within the injunction of Mark 11:22.

Abraham believed God, was imputed righteousness and grew in a relationship with God, as a friend of God. That word friend is 'philos' in Greek means someone friendly, an associate, a companion, one who is familiar. This was Abraham's relationship with God and the basis for his walk of faith and becoming the father of faith. Hence our walk of faith takes place in the context of a deep, intimate, personal friendship with God. Knowing Him, enables us to know His nature, His character, His heart, and this forms a solid foundation for our faith. We know Him through His Word and by the revelation His Spirit brings to our hearts.

## **Faith Is Of The Heart**

### **Romans 10:10**

**For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

As we have emphasized earlier, Bible faith is not a 'mind game'. Bible faith is of the heart. With the heart man believes resulting in an outcome. Faith is of the heart. This is important, because you can have faith even when your mind does not fully understand or even when your mind may be faced with unanswered questions. You can have faith in your heart even when there are questions in your mind. As individuals we do not have answers to all the questions that can be asked about God, about the issues that we face and so on. Yet we can still believe.

### **2 Corinthians 5:7**

**For we walk by faith, not by sight.**

Faith often deals with things that are beyond understanding, beyond reason and beyond the realm of the five senses. When we talk about faith we are dealing with what is spiritual. Faith is of the heart - it is spiritual.

## **God Calls Us To Live By Faith**



**Romans 1:17** (See also Habakkuk 2:4; also quoted in Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38)

**For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."**

God's people are called to a life of faith. We are to live and walk - that is to do all we do in everyday life - by faith or out of, from or with faith in God. The preposition 'by' in the Greek denotes origin or source. So everything we do must originate, be inspired, must spring out of our faith in God. As the apostle Paul stated in Galatians 2:20 *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."* So the self is dead. Things we do should no longer originate from self. But Christ lives in us. So everything we think, say and do spring out of faith in the One who Himself indwells us, who loves us and has given His all for us.

So faith is a way of life, for us. This is how we normally live, or always live. We do everything by faith and based on faith in God. As Romans 14:22-23 points out, in all matters, including the food we eat, choices and decisions we make, we do it before God, with faith in God *"...for whatever is not from faith is sin."* (vs 23).

## **What Faith Is**

**Hebrews 11:1**

**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**

**Hebrews 11:1 (AMPC)**

**Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].**

The word 'substance' in the Greek is 'hupostasis' (Strong's G5287) and refers to a support; ground work; confidence; subsistence; reality; essence. It was used in those times to refer to title deeds.

The word 'evidence' in the Greek is 'elengchos' (Strong's G1650) and means conviction or proof.

Faith is the assurance, confidence, the title deed, the "proof of ownership" of things hoped for, or things expected (expectations). Faith is the solid reason for great expectations.

Faith is the evidence, conviction, the "proof of existence" of things not seen



In the New Testament, the word 'faith' is a noun, and 'believe' is a verb. Both come from the same root word. Faith (noun) 'pistis' (Strong's G4102) means persuasion, confidence, conviction, reliance and constancy (faithfulness or staying in faith). Believe (verb) 'pisteuō' (Strong's G4100) means to be persuaded, to place confidence in. So they essentially mean the same thing and will be used interchangeably. Believing is the act of having faith.

Biblical faith is different from intellectual knowledge or "mental assent". Knowing precedes believing. You need to know so that you can believe. However, knowing something is not the same as believing it. You may know something very well, but may not really believe it. The real test whether you believe in what you know is if you are willing to act according to faith in it, even in the face of contradicting information.

### **How Faith is Conceived And Nurtured**

#### **Romans 10:17**

**So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

As we hear the Word of God and allow it to enter into our spirit it generates faith. It produces a reason for inner assurance, a strong basis and a solid foundation for inner convictions. The Word of God is the basis for faith.

Our first priority is to pay attention to the Bible, the Scriptures, the written Word of God. The continual reading, hearing, meditating in God's Word helps birth and nurture faith in our hearts.

In addition to the written Word, is God's specific word that He speaks to us through His Spirit. This can come to us through the inner witness of the Spirit in our spirits, through dreams, prophecies, gifts of the Spirit, angels and other ways that God speaks to us personally and specifically. That specific word also births faith in our hearts to follow God in a given situation. As an example consider the word brought to the apostle Paul while journeying by ship to Rome when they ran into rough weather conditions. Paul believed the word that was brought to him. Faith was birthed in his heart about a certain outcome according to what God had spoken.

#### **Acts 27:23-25**

**23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve,  
24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'  
25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.**



## **Faith in the Word is Faith in God**

### **Matthew 8:8,10**

**8 The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.**

**10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"**

The Roman Centurion knew so well that the authority a person carried was also carried in the word the person spoke. The word spoken is as strong as the person who spoke it. So all he requested was for Jesus to speak the word. That's all he desired. Jesus called this 'great faith'. Great faith is faith that is fully satisfied with the Word and recognizes that God's Word is as strong, powerful and completely reliable, as the One who spoke it.

Faith in the Word of God is faith in the God of the Word.

We cannot separate God from His Word because the Word is an expression of God Himself. The Word and God are one because His Word expresses all that He is. We cannot claim to believe God if we do not believe His Word.

When we believe His Word we have faith in the Person of Christ Himself (Acts 20:21; 24:24; 26:18), faith in the name of Jesus (Acts 3:16) and faith in the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:4,5).

## **Faith Is Like A Muscle - It Grows As It Is Exercised**

### **Romans 12:3**

**For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.**

### **2 Thessalonians 1:3**

**We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,**

The apostle Paul commends the Thessalonians that their faith is growing exceedingly. We all start with the measure of faith, but this can grow. Faith grows as we feed it, nurture it and exercise it. You feed your faith with the Word of God. You nurture your faith by growing in other areas of your Christian walk, by being around people of faith, and by listening to testimonies of faith. You exercise your faith by walking daily in faith.



## Several Factors Influence Faith

**Galatians 5:6:**

**For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.**

**2 Peter 1:5-8**

**5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,**

**6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,**

**7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.**

**8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Faith does not work in isolation. Faith works through love. In our Christian lives, we are encouraged to add virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly-kindness and love to our faith. So for faith to come to maturity and be exercised properly, we need to also grow in these other areas the Bible speaks of.

## Faith Causes the Power of God and His Word to be Released

**2 Thessalonians 1:11**

**Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,**

When we work our faith, God fulfills or completes our work of faith with His power. God's power goes into operation, when we work our faith.

**Luke 1:45**

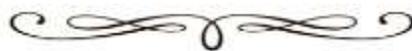
**Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."**

**Hebrews 4:2**

**For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.**

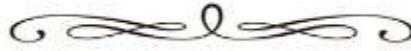
For us to experience the fulfillment of His promises, God requires us to exercise personal faith in Him. Our faith in God causes the inherent power of God's Word to be released in our lives, making His promises a manifested reality.

MINISTRY TIME  
SALVATION CALL





## LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**Sunday February 10, 2019**

**Faith**

**Part-1 : An Introduction**

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

### **Preparation**

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at [apcwo.org/sermons](http://apcwo.org/sermons) . Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

### **Welcome**

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

### **LISTEN to God's Word**

Read the following Scripture passages: *Hebrews 11:1,6; Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Romans 10:10*

### **INVESTIGATE God's Word Together**

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

*1) Discuss the Bible definition given in Hebrews 11:1.*

*2) Discuss what it means to "live by faith" - that everything we say and do originates out of our faith in God?*

*3) Discuss the fact that Bible faith is of the heart. You can have faith in your heart, even when there are questions (doubts) in your mind. What does this mean?*

If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.



**FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey**

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

**ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another**

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

*1, families to be protected and strengthened*

*2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*

*3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.*

Close by thanking God together.