

Faith that Pleases 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!”

Exegesis: “**Without faith**, (pistis: persuasion, moral conviction, consistency in the profession of the truthfulness of God) **it is impossible** (a-dunatos: no power) **to please Him:** (euaresteo: to be fully agreeable to, acceptable to, well pleasing to, gratifying to) **for he who comes to God** (proserchomai: approaches, comes near, worships), **must believe** (pisteuo: have the persuasion, conviction and trust) **that He is**, [that He is God, ever-present and alert, able and willing, caring and loving] **and that He is a rewarder** (misthapodotes: remunerator, paymaster) **of them that diligently seek** (ekzeteo: search out, investigate, crave, desire, demand and worship) **Him!**

"Nobody reaches God's presence until he has learned to believe; to believe that God exists and that He will reveal Himself to those that sincerely look for Him"

“Without living by the unseen, it is impossible to get God's approval. For he that cometh to God must believe that He is and He amply rewards them that make Him their quest.”

Why is faith so important? You can't please Him without it. Strong faith is the result of rich fellowship with Father. And...fellowship is not relationship. Think of a man and a woman getting married, they can walk down an aisle, say their vows and are now related to one another. But what if they never speak to each other again. Legally they are in relationship, but there is no fellowship.

Daniel 11:32 (b) “...but they that know their God will be strong and do exploits.”

Some will say, well I know the Bible, so I know God. Not so! You can read a book backwards and forwards and still not know the author. I did that in Middle School - Tom Clute "Prince Tom: Champion Dog" project.

Romans 10 tell us that faith comes from hearing Him speak His Word. FAITH = a firm conviction, producing a full acknowledgment of God's revelation or truth; a personal surrender to Him. FAITH is the product of a relationship.

Why is it so important? Because we can't walk this walk without it. 2 Cor. 5:7 "walk by faith, not by sight".

You can't praise without faith. You can't pray without faith. You can't perform ministry or miracles without faith. Miracles take place in Jesus' name, with power flowing from the invisible world where God is, through the spirit of man, where the center of our being is, through the mind of man (where doubt can arise), and out into the world around us through the spoken word.

Introduction

In short, faith that pleases God is *believing in the reality, faithfulness and truthfulness of God!* Shorter still, faith is *believing God and therefore receiving what He says!* The shortest is, *believing God!* Our Father is trust-worthy, and His word is good!

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that He should lie; nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not make it good?

Salvation is ours by *believing* that He is our Savior! Healing is ours by *believing* that He is the Healer of all our sicknesses and diseases! Prosperity is ours by *believing* that He “cares for our every need” and “will supply our needs according to His riches in glory in Christ!” Healed relationships are ours by *believing* that He is the Healer of the Breaches (If He reconciled the world to Himself through the plan hid in Jesus, He can be trusted to heal our broken family-and-friend ties!)! Security is ours by believing that if He is for us, no one (or thing) will rule against us (He *is* the avenger of the elect!)! The fruit of the Spirit is ours by believing He is our Husbandman! You name it, “all things are possible to those who *believe Him*” and trust Him with all their needs! *Believing Him* instead of *believing Him for things* (A focus on Him vs. a focus on us) is the shortest route to having His fullness and being free from care over the affairs of this life!

In our modern Christian society many people think of faith as a tool, a muscle or “personal power” to be used to materialize blessings or protection or other things from out of the unseen spiritual realm. Their banner is: “*Thy* faith has made thee whole” (Which places their faith, in *their faith*, rather than on God)! For them, faith is *the pathway* by which the things they yearn for travel to them. Faith is a *magnetic force*, latching on to and reeling in “whatsoever” they have their hopes set on (regardless of where the “desire in their heart” began)! It’s a very self-focused, high-maintenance, competitive-Christian lifestyle marked by power buzz words like “command, demand, specify, possess, declare, take, mandate, authority, control, etc. (not exactly the vocabulary of a servant!)” It only differs from the American Captain-of-my-destiny syndrome in that it is highly spiritualized! Though it is an extremely attractive and popular “belief” it is at best the very narrowest use of a divine gift of Father’s grace and at its worst is simply spiritualized greed. [Having been an ardent member of the movement in its formative years, I know whereof I speak!]

But biblical faith is, and should be, much more than a way to tap into Father’s bank of resources! It should be a *way of life* that is pleasing to God, because it places Him at the center of it!

Romans 4:3,11 Abraham *believed God*, and it was counted unto him for righteousness... And he received a seal of the righteousness of the faith... that he might be the father of all them that *believe [God]*... that righteousness might be imputed to them also.”

According to our verses, “faith” in it’s higher, wider, deeper definition is *believing God*. It is believing He will reward us with everything we have need of, if, when, where and how we need it! It is believing that He has an *effortless prosperity* for those who seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33)! We seek Him and He does all the maintenance! We seek Him and He watches over and cares for us with all He has promised in His Word! We seek Him and He provides everything for those who *believe Him* because every promise is “Yes and amen” in Him! Not one of us, commissioned as an ambassador for Christ, who has engaged in the spiritual battle for the souls of men has to be concerned (or distracted) for a moment with what we will wear, what we will eat, where we will live, how we will survive! We are

not "at war" at our own expense (1Corinthians 9:7)... He has promised to supply, enable and equip us for every bit of our work! And believing all that and focusing all our attention and affection on Him is faith that pleases our Father!

By believing God, by believing He has good plans and an abundant life for us, we can cast all our cares on Him and spend our time serving Him! However, when we choose to believe Him *for things* then we have to maintain our focus, time, energy, prayer and "confession" on those things until they manifest. Once that "goal" has been accomplished, there is the next thing and the next and so on and so on... Life becomes consumed with the "rights of acquisition" we have to lay hold of "The good things God has given us richly to enjoy" instead of drawing near to the One who is Good and will give us (plant in us) the desires of our hearts! Life begins to focus on "the abundance of our inventory" instead of trusting the Lord to manifest *abundant life* for us, as He desires! Life is too short for this kind of "walk" [It's hard to seriously consider this level of faith a "walk in the spirit" when at it's best it is self-focused life of acquisitions!]. A lack of peace, contentment and rest characterize this choice of "faith walk!" The short cut, and move into the realm of the Spirit, is to "**BELIEVE HIM**" for all the things necessary to this life and to be free to "be about our Father's business!"

So then, the short definition of faith, which is *believing God*, is the very corner stone, the origin, the indispensable and fundamental basis, of our walk with Him! And if we are willing to *believe God* to provide whatever is necessary, when it is, then we have very little to do to secure our lives and needs and possessions!

 **The short definition of faith is:** _____

 **The best way to enter into His peace, joy, rest, care is:** _____

 **Are you getting the picture now? Yes _____ No _____**

Putting Our Definition to the Test!

In the New Testament, *pistis* is the divinely implanted principle of inward confidence, assurance, trust, and reliance in God and all that He says. The God-kind of faith is the kind of faith in which a person believes in his heart, and then he says with his mouth what he believes in his heart.

If faith is believing God and believing God is faith, then let's run a test to see if it can really be that simple.

Every Believer Has Faith

1 John 5:4 / Mark 11:22-26 / Romans 12:3 – at least a measure of faith

Faith Is Measurable

- 2 Thes 1:3 "faith groweth exceedingly"
- Lk 12:28 / Mt 6:30 / 14:22-31 "little faith"
- Mt 8 GREAT faith - centurion was commended
- Rm 4:19 "weak in faith"
- Rm 4:20 "strong in faith"

- Jm 2:5 "rich in faith"
- Acts 6:5 "full of faith"
- Jm 2:22 "faith made perfect"
- 1 Tim 1:5 "faith unfeigned" = genuine and sincere
- 1 Tim 1:19 "concerning faith have made shipwreck"
- 1 Jn 5:4 "overcometh the world, even our faith"

We are saved by believing God!

Romans 10:9-11 "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and *believe* in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart man *believes* unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation! For the scripture says, "Whosoever *believes on Him* will not be ashamed!"

[Further study: John 3:16,18,36 5:24 6:35,40,47 7:38 11:25, Acts 10:43 Romans 1:16, 4:16, 10:9-11 Galatians 3:22,26 Eph 2:8 1John 5:13]

There is a heart and mouth connection. How did Father create all that He created? Genesis 1:3 => "God said...". In Hebrews 11:3 it tells us that God "framed" the world by His words. If God had to do it this way: believing and confessing, how much more should we?

The heart needs to be aligned w/ the lips (Mt. 15:7-11). Proverbs 16:23, 24 "Heart of the wise teaches his mouth..."

Paul Cho was talking to a neurosurgeon in Korea. The neurosurgeon was explaining that the speech center in the brain exercises dominion over rest of body; said it was a new discovery. Cho says, "Dr. James" knew that a long time ago –the tongue determines the direction and destiny of your life, it's a rudder. Neurosurgeon continues...we've discovered if a person begins to speak failure or weakness it sends out a signal through the nerves telling the body, "Prepare for failure". Or if people say, "I'm old, I'm old"; nerves tell body, "Prepare to die".

Once saved we are called to "live and stand by believing God!"

Romans 1:17 "For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed that is *by faith* from the first to the last, just as it is written, 'The just shall live *by faith!*'"

[Further study: 2Corinthians 5:7 Galatians 3:11 Hebrews 10:38 Romans 11:20 2Corinthians 1:24]

We are justified *and* sanctified by believing God!

Romans 3:26,28,30 "[God sent redemption through Jesus] to demonstrate at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who *has faith* in Him... therefore we conclude that a man is *justified by faith* separate from the works of the law... Since there is one God who will *justify all men through faith!*"

Acts 26:18 "[I am sent and so are you] To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may

receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are *sanctified by faith* in Me!"

[Further study: Romans 3:22 4:5 5:1 Galatians 3:24 5:5 Acts 15:9 Philippians 3:9]

We do great works, overcome darkness and the world by believing God!

John 14:12 "Truthfully, truthfully I say to you, 'He that *believes* on me, the works that I do will he do also; and greater works than these will he do because I go to my Father!"

John 14:44-46 "Jesus cried and said, 'He that *believes* on Me, *believes* not on Me but on Him that sent Me. And He that sees me, sees Him that sent Me. I am come as a light into the world that whoever *believes* in Me should not abide in darkness!"

1John 5:5 "Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that *believes* that Jesus is the Son of God?"

[Further Study: 1Peter 2:6]

Believing God makes us heirs of the kingdom and partakers of the promises made to Abraham, the father of the faithful!

Romans 4:3,11 Abraham *believed God*, and it was counted unto him for righteousness... And he received a seal of the righteousness of the faith... that he might be the father of all them that *believe [God]*... that righteousness might be imputed to them also."

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

James 2:5 "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Has not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

The life of Abraham stands as a testimony to us all that whatever we have need of: Father's presence, provision, healing, forgiveness, defense, comes as we will simply *believe God!* Believing God was his righteousness, his right standing, with God and it's the same for all like him, who believe!

Two kinds of Faith: Thomas and Abraham

1. The Thomas-kind = head-faith (natural faith) John 20:24-29

You have faith in:

- a. a chair
- b. in a recipe
- c. in parents

This kind of faith believes only what it can see, hear, taste, smell or touch. Jesus did not commend this kind of faith.

2. The Abraham-kind = heart-faith Romans 4:16-21

This is the faith that believes in spite of what it sees, in spite of circumstances. This kind of faith calls those things that be not as though they were. It's not calling those things that are as though they were not. Faith does not ignore or deny what's there. It brings into our reality what is already in His reality.

 **Now that I've seen "faith" in action, can my definition of faith be simplified and changed? ___ Yes ___ No**

Getting the Faith of God!

Believing God in all things is the goal! If He has said something, we want to answer "AMEN! I BELIEVE IT!" There are however multitudes of things that come to get in the way of simple childlike faith! Things like circumstances! Things like the enemy! Things like people! Things that come to cast doubt on Father's truthfulness and reliability! Things that come to frustrate us while we wait on the Lord. We must be aware of and on guard against things that come to steal the word from us and destroy our faithfulness!

There are at least five ways to insulate ourselves against things that steal faith and to build up our "believe-ability"!

***Have ears that hear!**

Romans 10:17 "So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God!"

Reading Father's Word is one key to building your faith! As you hear His Word in your heart and it makes its imprint, you'll find it easier and easier to believe Him! Listen to the Bible on tape in your car, it get downs in there without much effort (Ever heard a song twenty years after the time it was popular and you remembered every word? The song is down inside you from repetitious hearing! If a worldly song can make an imprint, think what the Word of God can do, being alive and quick and powerful!)! Hearing the Word preached, testimonies of the great things Father does, all add up to increased believe-ability!

What bread or food is to the body, the Word of God is to the spirit (Mt 4:4). After every meal, Smith Wigglesworth would always push back from the table, get out his Testament and say, "Well, we've fed the body; now let's feed the inward man." F.F. Bosworth said, "Most Christians feed their bodies three hot meals a day, and their spirit one cold snack a week. And they wonder why they're so weak in faith."

Be careful what you "consume". While in Africa, I began to read, "Where There Is No Doctor" out of curiosity on how to deal with illnesses when you don't have access to medical help. As I read about the symptoms, it was amazing how my mind and body immediately started pondering if I had this disease or that sickness. I stopped reading that book for "entertainment".

***Pray regularly in your spiritual language!**

Jude 20 "But you beloved, building up (epoikodomeo: building on, rearing up) yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost..."

No one is exactly sure how praying in the spirit “builds” faith, but the words “building up” means to construct something and they have the aspect of charging something up, like we do a battery. So we know that praying in the Holy Spirit builds and charges a “faith-storage-system.” “How” is just a guess... but let’s ponder this:

1Corinthians 14:2-4 “For he that speaks in an unknown tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God: for no man understands him; howbeit in the spirit he speaks mysteries...He that speaks in an unknown tongue edifies (oikodomeo: builds, strengthens, emboldens his house) himself...

It could well be that drawing near to, and, speaking mysteries with God, that *the things He says* to our spirit man are things that build us up and charge us with an increased ability to believe Him! It could be that *interacting with Father* on that spiritual dimension gives us the build up and charge we need to stand fast! It could be both! The issue is that we obey the Word and “build up” our most holy faith by praying in the Holy Ghost!

***Spend time worshipping!**

If praying in the spirit works for building us up, then worshipping in the spirit will too... And even more, worshipping sets the stage for faith! Worshipping is an expression of BELIEVING GOD IS WHO HE SAYS! There is nothing like a good worship session to iron out a wrinkled atmosphere, to quiet your heart in His presence, and to begin believing all will be well, because He is there! When we draw near to Him, He draws near to us, and in His presence it’s almost impossible to not believe Him!

***Find good friends!**

1 Corinthians 8:1 “Love edifies: oikodomeo: builds up!”

Galatians 5:6 “Faith works by love.”

1Thessalonians 5:11 “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify (oikodomeo: build up) one another, even as also you do.

Proverbs 27:17 Iron sharpens iron.

Friends who encourage friends to stand fast, to hold on, to believe God, to read and study the Word... Friends who challenge us to good things, to continue in well-doing are an invaluable aid to our faith! Find them, cultivate them, encourage them (Do onto them as you would have done unto you) and keep them! Surround yourself with folks of like precious faith!

***Limit some of the things you do!**

1Corinthians 10:23 “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient (contributory; profitable): all things are lawful for me, but all things edify (oikodomeo: build up and charge) not.

Nothing saps our ability to believe God quite like the “little foxes” that come to spoil the vine! Things that steal time from us, things that steal attention, things that fill our ears with words and thoughts having nothing to do with, even detracting from, the Kingdom... If you want to be a “believer” some things are just going to have to take a back seat!

Releasing the Faith of God!

James 2:17, 20, 26 "Faith w/o corresponding actions of obedience is dead".

Faith in God is vertical; works to a needy world is horizontal. Faith creates works; works perfects faith. Our works show the genuineness of what we profess.

Luke 17:5, 6 explains that increase works like a mustard seed - you've got to put it into the dirt - plant it, if you want it to do something. How do I plant it? "You would say..." Say to the seen (the tree/mountain/etc). How does it work?

Mark 4:26-29 And He was saying, "The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil; and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows--how, he himself does not know. "The soil produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head. "But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

Remember the woman with the issue of blood (Mark 5:25-34): she heard, she believed, she said, she acted, she was made whole.

Plant it, water it, God will bring the increase (1 Cor 3:6).

What kinds of things do you see faith being released for in the Bible?

Response To Truth

"I AM A BELIEVER. I'M NOT A DOUBTER. I HAVE A MEASURE OF THE GOD-KIND OF FAITH. I HAVE A MEASURE OF THE KIND OF FAITH THAT CREATED THE WORLDS IN THE BEGINNING. I HAVE A MEASURE OF THE MOUNTAIN-MOVING FAITH."

 **I need to build up my faith ! Of the five ways to build and charge up my faith:**

I am strongest in: _____

I am weakest in: _____

 **I know what I have to do to build myself up: ___ yes ___ no**

(Now that we have a broad definition of faith [and the key to "divine life" which is]: *believing God...* We can look at two main areas of our lives that Father has bountifully provided for which are appropriated by believing Him: **Our Healing and Our Prosperity!**)

Believing God; Believing God, Hopefully, "Yes"; Hopefully, "Yes"; Personal; Personal; Hopefully, "Yes"