

**WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD (Hebrews 11:6)**

A. ***“The just shall live by faith.”*** This declaration of the Christian’s principle of life is found four times in the Bible:

1. Habakkuk 2:1-5
2. Romans 1:17
3. Galatians 3:10, 11
4. Hebrews 10:38.

In Habakkuk we see the difference between the lives of the unjust and the just. The unjust are puffed up and live by their own self-sufficiency; but the just live by faith – their confidence is in God. To them, faith is more than a philosophy of life; ***it is the very principle of life***. The righteous shall live his whole life by faith.

1. He is **saved** by faith (Acts 16:31); he is **kept** by faith (I Peter 1:5); and he **lives** by faith (Galatians 2:20).
2. His faith shall be **tried** many times, and in many ways (I Peter 1:7), but faith will always be **vindicated**, because it is more than equal to any occasion. Faith knows how to **wait** on the Lord (Isaiah 40:31), and it is always **victorious** (I John 5:4).
3. Faith defies reason; it moves mountains (Matt 17:14-21). Faith does not always face facts; it never gives up (Hebrews 11:32-39). Faith says, “God is working out His perfect will in my life, and I can wait, endure and suffer.” Faith does not make anything easy, but it does make all things possible.

**B. What is faith?**

1. According to the Strong’s Concordance, the Old Testament definition is:

Established; trusty; to build up or support; trustworthiness; to foster, or parent or nurse; to render or be firm; faithful; to trust or believe; to be permanent or quiet; to be true or certain; turn to the right hand – to take the righthand road;

assurance; establish; security, fidelity; stability. In the New Testament the definition is: to have faith (in – trustworthy genuine unadulterated); upon, or with respect to a person or thing, i.e. credit – to entrust one’s spiritual being to Christ; believe, commit, put trust with; persuasion; moral conviction of religious truth; reliance upon Christ for salvation; fidelity; convince, conciliate, to assent, to rely; to agree; obey; have confidence; yield.

**Hebrews 11:1** *“Now faith is the substance (title deed) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”*

2. Your faith is your title deed to eternal life. Just as a title deed is evidence of real estate, so your faith is evidence of your eternal estate in God (**II Cor. 4:18**).

a. Faith is taking God at His Word and asking no questions (**Hebrews 11:6**)

b. Faith is knowing *“All things work together for good to them that love God”* (**Romans 8:28**). Faith does not believe that all things are good, or that all things work well. It does believe that all things (good or bad) work together for good to them that love God.

### C. Faith has two sides.

1. One side has to do with the intellect. It is an intellectual conviction that Jesus Christ is God. The other side has to do with the will. It is a volitional surrender of the will to Jesus Christ as Master and Lord. This is seen when Thomas believed and confessed, *“My Lord and my God”* (**John 20:28**). *“My Lord”*- this was volitional surrender; *“My God”* this was intellectual conviction. Together you have saving faith (**John 20:31**). Saving faith is an intellectual conviction that Jesus is God, and a volitional surrender to Him as Lord (Master) of your life. By faith, the mind trusts in God; the heart responds to the love of God; the will submits to the commands of God; and the life obeys in the service of God.

2. Faith is paradoxical. It goes beyond reason. It believes without understanding “why.” It sings in prison (**Acts 16:25**). It glories in tribulations (**Romans 5:3**). It chooses to suffer (**Hebrews 11:25**). It accepts all things as part of God’s will (**Phil. 1:12**).

You are not born with this faith. It comes by hearing the Word of God (**Romans 10:17**). This is why we are commanded to preach the gospel to every creature, that they may hear and believe (**Romans 10:13-14**).

### D. THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH

THE SHIELD OF FAITH IS A VITAL PART OF THE Christian's armor. You are to put on the whole armor of God (**Ephesians 6:16**) because the Christian life is a warfare, a spiritual conflict. As Paul names the different parts of the Christian's armor, he comes to the shield and emphasizes its importance by saying *"And above all, taking the shield of faith..."*

For with the shield of faith, nothing can hurt you; you are more than conquerors through Christ. (**Romans 8:37**)

**E. The importance of faith is seen in that:**

1. You cannot be saved without faith (**John 3:36**).
2. You cannot live victoriously over the world without faith (**I John 5:4**)
3. You cannot please God without faith (**Heb. 11:6**)
4. You cannot pray without faith (**James 1:6**)
5. You cannot have peace with God without faith (**Romans 5:1**)
6. You cannot have joy without faith (**I Peter 1:8**)
7. You are justified by faith and not by works (**Galatians 2:16**)
8. You are to live by faith (**Gal. 2:20**)
9. You are made righteous by faith (**Romans 10:1-4**)
10. Christ dwells in your heart by faith (**Ephesians 3:17**)
11. The Holy Spirit is received by faith (**Galatians 3:2**)
12. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin (**Romans 14:23**)

**FAITH IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT HONORS GOD, AND GOD ALWAYS HONORS FAITH.**

## F. LITTLE FAITH

**Matthew 14:28-31**, *“28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me. 31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?”*

At this stage in the spiritual growth of Peter, he was a man of “little faith.” However, after Pentecost, he became a spiritual giant. Let us take a good look at his “little faith” and profit from it. Jesus came to his distressed disciples, walking on the water in the midst of a storm. Peter asked to come to Jesus on the water. He must have been thrilled at the thought of doing the impossible, because Jesus said, *“come.”*

1. Peter did the impossible thing: he walked on the water by faith.
2. Next Peter did the conceivable thing: he saw the storm and had a second thought – he doubted. For a moment, he lost sight of Jesus. He may have turned and started back to the boat (See **Luke 9:62**)
3. Now Peter did the natural thing: he feared destruction. Doubt always breeds fear.
4. Then Peter did the expected thing: he began to sink – he failed.
5. Now Peter did the right thing: he prayed, *“Lord, save me.”* Immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him. Once more Peter made contact with Jesus by faith.
6. Again Peter did the impossible thing: he walked on the water with Jesus, to the boat. In this lesson, we see the success and failure of “little faith.”

**Now let us recap the steps that led to failure.**

1. Peter started by faith and walked on the water.
2. Peter saw the storm and had second thoughts that led to doubt.
3. The doubt produced fear that caused him to turn back.
4. This brought Peter failure.

You need a faith that is bigger than the elements that would drag you down to defeat. You can have big mountain moving faith by “prayer and fasting.” (Matt. 17: 14-21) and by feeding your faith on the Word of God (Romans 10:17).