

THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH

- I. Definition and description.
 - A. Faith is the conviction to believe in something.
 - B. Complete faith is to believe without doubt. Jam.1:6
 - C. It is a system of thinking dependent upon one's trust or confidence in that which they believe.
 - D. Faith is said to be weak or "little" that lacks confidence (Mat.8:26 cp.Rom.4:19) or lacking necessary insight for belief (Rom.14:1,2 cf.vs.23).
 - E. It is the most basic system of perception believing based on the authority to which one adheres. Cp.Mar.9:42; "...*these little ones who believe...*"
 - F. Faith is common to all mankind since all men believe what they perceive as reality or truth. Cp.Mat.3:9: "*And do not suppose (think, perceive, believe) that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'...*" While their faith is erroneous perceiving their salvation, it reflects their belief.
 - G. Faith is supported by but remains distinguished from the two other primary systems of perception:
 - 1. Rationalism: Belief by logical deductive or inductive reasoning. "I think, therefore I am". Rationalism alone ultimately rejects the supernatural as it can not be explained by reason. Rationalism is limited as it is dependant on one's I.Q. and easily influenced by human viewpoint. Pro.14:12; Rom.2:3, *rationalism apart from truth is hypocritical.*
 - 2. Empiricism: That learned by observation using the five senses. This system is also greatly limited as truth can not be arrived at shy of one being there or seen to observe it. Ex. Thomas, Joh.20:24-25; Cp.2Cor.4:18
 - F. The Bible defines faith as "...*the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*". Heb. 11:1
 - G. Biblical faith does not by default indicate that one necessarily has "blind faith". Any rational member of the human race can objectively look at Biblical data and see that it is logical making perfect sense beginning with the existence of God, His perfections, the creation account, the need for salvation, etc.
 - H. The rationalist does not support the supernatural and empiricism rejects the Biblical account as it was written thousands of years ago and none of us were around at the time to physically experience any of what reportedly went on.
 - I. The rational and empirical systems of perception, without faith, limits mankind to be content to know pretty much nothing, since the great majority of knowledge one learns in his lifetime is by means of faith in the authority of the person teaching him, whatever the subject may be.
 - J. Biblical faith looks to the ultimate authority of God behind its communication. 2Pet.1:20-21
 - K. Faith is a non-meritorious system of perception in that it requires no work on the part of the one believing.
 - L. Biblical faith is therefore compatible with grace and the only system accessible to all men.
 - 1. Ph₁ salvation. Rom.4:16; Eph. 2:8- 9
 - 2. Ph₂ salvation. 2Cor.5:7; 1Tim. 1:3-4

- M. Biblical faith functions apart from rationalism and empiricism. One's I.Q. is not a factor. It is volition, not mentality that is the issue. Hab.2:4; Luk.10:21; 12:11,12; Joh.14:26; 1Cor.1:26-29; 1Tim.2:3,4 - ἐπίγνωσις; 2Tim.2:7
- N. The efficacy of faith resides in its object. Mat.24:23-26; Joh.6:29; Act.4:12; 16:31; 1Cor.2:5; 15:14,17; 1Joh.4:1.
- O. Faith is classified as a basic doctrine. Heb.6:1

II. Vocabulary

A. Greek:

1. πιστεύω – pisteuo; verb; used 241x; to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust; to believe; have faith in. This transitive verb (takes a subject and an object) is used in the NT for the act of believing. Mat.8:13; Jam.2:23
2. πίστις – pistis; noun; used 243x; faith. This feminine noun may be used one of two ways:
 - a. Active faith with the believing based on the reliability of the one communicating the information. Mat.8:10; 9:2
 - b. A synonym for Bible Doctrine called "*the faith*". Act.6:7; 13:8; Jud.1:3

B. Hebrew:

1. אָמַן - aman; verb; used 138x; to confirm, support, believe, have faith.
2. אֱמוּנָה - emunah; noun; used 49x; firmness, steadfastness, fidelity, faithful, faith.

III. Five uses of faith in the Bible.

- A. Misplaced faith: The majority of the human race (both unbelievers/believers) places their faith in something other than God's word. 2The.2:8-11; 1Joh.4:1
- B. Active faith further sub-categorized as:
 1. Saving Faith or Ph₁ salvation. 1Joh.5:1
 2. Inhale Faith or the belief in accepting BD (Ph₂) as true at the point of hearing. Heb.4:2
 3. Exhale Faith or the acting upon the faith in application, a.k.a. works. Jam.1:23-25; 2:14,17-18
- C. Passive faith where BD is the Object of Faith a.k.a. "the Christian faith". Act.6:7; 13:8; 14:22; 16:5; 1Cor.16:13; 2Cor.13:5; Gal.1:23; 6:10; Eph.4:5; Phi.1:25,27; Col.1:23; 1The.3:10; 1Tim.1:2; 3:9; 4:1,6; 5:8; 6:10,12,21; 2Tim.3:8; Tit.1:13; Heb.12:2; Jud.1:3,20; Rev.2:13

IV. Observations concerning saving faith (SAJG/Ph₁ salvation).

- A. Christ is the object. Joh.1:12; 3:16; 6:40
- B. The amount of faith necessary is compared to a grain of mustard seed (Mat.17:20) and as such can be described as more faith than no faith at all.
- C. It is called "obedience". Joh.3:36
- D. It always results in the imputation of righteousness (+R) a.k.a. Ph₁ justification. Rom.1:17; 4:3-6
- E. Abraham is the pattern of saving faith. Rom.4:3 cf.Gen.15:6
- F. It results in the imputation of eternal life. Joh.5:24
- G. It secures eternal life in a resurrection body. Joh.6:39-40
- H. Ph₁ gospel supplies the content. Act.15:7

- I.** It is by faith and faith alone in Jesus Christ. Act.16:30-31
- J.** It is totally apart from works, but by grace. Rom.3:27-2
- K.** Salvation for OT saints was the same as those of the NT and today. Isa.28:16
- L.** It knows no cultural or racial barriers. Mat.21:32; Joh.4:39-42; Act.8:27ff; 13:6-12
'proconsul...a man of intelligence'; 14:1
- M.** It results in son-ship. Joh.1:12; Gal.3:26
- N.** It will not lead to disappointment. 1Pet.2:6
- O.** It is the basis for our victory over the cosmos. 1Joh.5:1-5
- P.** The negative volition of the many will not and can not neutralize the positive volition of the few. Mat.22:14; Rom.3:3,4

V. Observations concerning Ph₂ faith.

- A.** BD is the object of Ph₂ faith and is passively called “the faith” in the Scriptures. Act.6:7; 13:8; 14:22
- B.** Active faith in Ph₂ has a two-fold application in the experience of the believer and may be compared to the act of breathing.
 - 1.** Inhale Faith: Faith at the point of initial perception. Rom.10:17; Jam.2:19,20 cf. 1:23-25
 - 2.** Exhale Faith: Faith at the point of applying what was initially believed. Jam.2:14-26
- C.** We are expected to grow in faith both actively and objectively i.e., we take in more of “the faith” but also our faith/assurance in God’s word will grow stronger. 2The.1:3, “...because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows greater” ; cf. Luk.17:5, 6; Rom. 14:1
- D.** The mustard seed analogy teaches about faith. Faith starts small, but over time grows bigger and stronger. Your faith will be increased with the intake of B.D. and the endurance you get from testing. Mat.17:15-20
- E.** That is to say that as the believer grows spiritually he will have a greater confidence and assurance in God’s word.
- F.** Few believers pursue Ph₂ faith to maturity. 1Cor.9:24-27; Rev. 2:10
- G.** Faith is a manifestation of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:22 – πίστις
- H.** Jesus praised or rebuked based on the presence or absence of faith.
 - 1.** Those who received praise include:
 - a.** The centurion. Mat.8:5-10; Luk.7:1-10
 - b.** The Syrophenician/Canaanite Woman. Mat.15:21-28; Mar.7:24-30
 - 2.** Those who received rebuke:
 - a.** The Apostles (and other disciples): Though they clearly had +V, the apostles were often lacking in faith during Jesus’ ministry. This is a lesson for us all. Though some people may have a hard time putting their faith in certain Doctrines, so long as they are exposing themselves to the truth and seeking to move forward spiritually, they can not be dismissed as being –V. Mat.8:24-27; 16:6-12; Luk.12:22-28
 - b.** The people of Jesus’ generation. Mat.12:38-42
 - c.** Peter. Mat.14:25-33
- I.** Our faith is tested. Jam.1:3
- J.** Our faith is rewarded. 1Pet.1:7
- K.** Abraham is also the pattern for Ph₂ faith. Jam.2:21-23

- L. Faith and Love (where love is used metaphorically for the FHS): Faith and Love are paired together in exhortations throughout the NT as impersonal love can not be accomplished shy of the believer believing and applying BD. The following are some observations concerning these two essential fruits of the CWL.
 1. The believer who has faith without love is “nothing” in the Christian way of life (*Application of BD out of Fellowship is human good*). 1Cor.13:2,13
 2. Faith works through love. Gal.5:6
 3. Faith and love are mentioned hand and hand in reference to the works of the Ephesian, Colossian, Thessalonian and Thyatiranian saints. Eph.1:15; 6:23; Col.1:4; 1The.1:3; 3:6; Rev. 2:19
 4. Faith and Love together protect the believer from injury by the enemy. 1The.5:8
 5. Faith and love are both goals of instruction. 1Tim.1:5
 6. The believer who is stronger in faith should not cause the weaker believer to stumble, but should demonstrate grace. Rom.14:1,22,23
- M. Faith and Divine Good Production:
 1. Faith minus works is a dead faith. The believer can have all kinds of Doctrine resident in his soul. However, if he is not willing to apply it, he is said to have a “dead faith”. Jam.2:14,17,26
 2. God evaluates the local church in this regard. 1The.1:3; 2The.1:11– “*work of faith*”; Rev.2:19; 3:1,2; 3:8,15
- N. Prayer and Faith:
 1. Faith is a key to answered prayer. Mat.21:22
 2. We are to pray for Bible Doctrine as the muscle of faith without doubting via inhale and exhale faith. Jam.1:5-6

VI. Observations concerning faith and Ph₃.

- A. Few are oriented eschatologically. Luk.18:8
- B. We are to faith-rest our eternal future. Gal.5:5
- C. Faith will no longer be an issue in Ph₃. 1Cor.13:12,13

VII. The faith-rest life – *See Doctrine of Faith-Rest:*

- A. Faith-rest, by definition, is resting from one’s own labors (human viewpoint answers to problems accomplished via the energy of the flesh) and expressing faith in God’s Word as it pertains to the situation at hand. Heb.4:1-16
- B. Faith-rest is a technique by which divine promises (BD in the soul) are applied to the experiences of daily life by the +V believer.
- C. The believer under testing thinks of the BD that applies to the situation at hand. He then applies the divine viewpoint answer to the situation rather than the human viewpoint one.
- D. When the believer applies at this level, he is said to enter faith-rest.
- E. The faith-rest of others is a source of encouragement. Rom.1:12; Col.1:3-4; 2:5; 1The.3:7; Philm.5

VIII. Additional observations concerning faith.

- A. The righteous shall live by faith in both a Ph₁ and ₂ contexts. Hab.2:4 cf. Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38

- B.** The adjusted believer is said to “keep the faith” where as the believer in reversionism is said to suffer shipwreck in regard to his faith. 2Tim. 4:7 cf. 1Tim.1:19
- C.** Without Faith, it is impossible to please God. Heb.11:6
- D.** It is only through faith that we can preserve our souls from shame at the Bema. Heb.10:39
- E.** Spiritual heroes are examples of faith. Heb.11:1-39; 1Tim.4:12 cp. 2Tim.3:10; Rev.13:10
- F.** We are therefore to imitate the faith of +V believers. Heb.6:12; 13:7

*“Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him;
but the righteous will live by his faith.”*

Hab.2:4

*"And 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 seek Him.”*

Heb.11:6