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# Faith: Knowing Who You Can Trust

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

## Faith: Knowing Who You Can Trust

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“Now without faith it is impossible to please him, for the one who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” —Hebrews 11:6

Faith is personal reliance on a God known to be trustworthy.

During the terrible days of the Blitz during World War II, a father, holding his small son by the hand, ran from a building that had been struck by a bomb. In the front yard was a shell hole. Seeking shelter as quickly as possible, the father jumped into the hole and held up his arms for his son to follow. Terrified, yet hearing his father's voice telling him to jump, the boy replied, “I can't see you!”

The father, looking up against the sky tinted red by the burning buildings, called to the silhouette of his son, “But I can see you ... jump!” The boy jumped ... because he trusted his father. The Christian faith enables us to face life or meet death, not because we can see, but with the certainty that we are seen; not that we know all the answers, but that we are known.

We are emotional creatures by nature. Different personalities respond to God in different ways. One person may have a high emotional experience, while another may be calm and reserved. Faith is another word for trust and in many ways, trust is an emotion. Your faith must be placed in God and His Word, not in your emotions. Emotions can—and will—deceive you. God's Word never will. Your faith must be placed in God and His Word, not in your emotions. Emotions can—and will—deceive you. God's Word never will.

The Bible says, “Without faith it is impossible to please Him” (Hebrews 11:6). The assurance of our relationship with God is based on the authority of His Word. God loves you and you are His child. When you start to feel as if your relationship with God doesn't exist, go to the facts of the Bible to reinforce your faith in God's love for you. We live by faith in the trustworthiness of God, and His Word. Our faith is anchored in the truth of God's Word, and in what we know about God's character.

When you ride in an airplane you are exercising faith in the laws of aerodynamics to overcome gravity. If you should, however somehow decide to step outside of the plane while you are in the air, you will find the law of gravity still in effect! It is not

the amount or quality of your faith, but the object of your faith that matters! God and His Word are the objects of our faith. The better we know God, the more we feel we can trust Him, and the more we trust Him, the more we experience the reality of His love and power.

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor heavenly rulers, nor things that are present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” —Romans 8:38–39

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Q. What do you learn about God in the verses from Romans?

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see.” —Hebrews 11:1

Q. Why is faith so important?

“Jesus said to them, ‘Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, if someone says to this mountain, “Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,” and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.’” —Mark 11:22–23

Faith is another word for trust. Faith must have an object. We do not have faith in faith. For example, a person could have great faith that the ice on a pond is thick enough to walk on. By faith then, he could boldly walk out on paper thin ice, and his faith would result in an ice water dunking! A person who has a very weak faith may very gingerly step slowly onto a pond of six-foot-thick ice. It is more than enough to support him. The key here is the object of his faith.

Oswald Chambers once said, “Faith is deliberate confidence in the character of God whose ways you may not understand at the time.”

Faith is personal reliance on a God known to be trustworthy.

The great Bible teacher, Charles Stanley, has identified three levels of faith: Little Faith, Great Faith, and Perfect Faith.

### **Level 1—“Little Faith”**

This kind of faith is characterized by struggling to believe God. We hope He'll answer our prayer, but we're just not really sure. Sometimes doubts creep in because we're looking at the situation, not at the Lord and His Word. Or maybe our problem is that we just don't know what God has said in the Bible, so we have nothing to anchor our faith. An example of someone with little faith is found in Mark 9 where a father who had come to Jesus in hope that Jesus will heal his son says:

“Immediately the father of the boy cried out and said, ‘I believe; help my unbelief!’”  
—Mark 9:24

Q. When in your life have you experienced “Little Faith”?

### **Level 2—“Great Faith”**

Dr. Stanley calls this phase “reaching faith” because it involves stretching to believe the Lord more and more. Christians at this level are beginning to stand on the truth of Scripture. When we let the Word of God shape our thinking and petitions, we can know that He will grant our requests. We find an example of this kind of faith in the story of a woman who Jesus healed who had been sick for many years (Mark 5:24-34). In verse 28 she says, “If only I can just touch his clothes, I will be healed.”

Q. When in your life have you experienced “Great Faith”?

### **Level 3—“Perfect Faith”**

Perfect faith is characterized as resting in the confidence that the Lord has already accomplished what we've asked. When our requests align with God's will, it's a “done deal.” Our job is simply to thank Him and watch His promise become a reality. Jesus said:

“Ask me for whatever you want, and I'll give it to you.” —Mark 6:22

Q. Has there been a time in your life when you have experienced “Perfect Faith”?

Ask God to grow your faith!