

FAITH

Faith: Syllabus

Notes —

CLASS #1:

- I. Introduction to Faith.
- II. A Bible Study about Faith.

CLASS #2:

- II. A Bible Study about Faith (cont'd).

CLASS #3:

- III. The What, Why, Where, When, How and Who of Faith.

CLASS #4:

- IV. Faith Related to Salvation and Sanctification (cont'd).

CLASS #5:

- IV. Faith Related to Salvation and Sanctification (cont'd).
- V. Conclusion to our Study of Faith; Exam.

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Faith: Exam

Possible 20 Point Questions

- 1) List and describe 5 results of faith (pp. 48,49).
- 2) What is faith? (pp. 50-52).
- 3) List and explain the 4 different aspects of faith (p. 57).

Possible 10 Point Questions

- 1) List 4 types of faith (p. 47).
- 2) List 3 sources of faith (p. 48).
- 3) List 2 points that show the importance of faith (p. 49).
- 4) Answer the question: “Where is our faith?” (p. 53).
- 5) Use Jn 11:39-44 to describe faith without limits (p. 54).
- 6) State 2 ways in which we can build our faith (p. 56).

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I. Introduction to Faith.

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Author's Illustration:

A man was climbing a mountain. He fell. He grabbed a branch. He desperately hung unto the branch and yelled for help.

The Conversation:

Man: Is there somebody up there?

Voice: Yes...I am here.

Man: Who is it?

Voice: It is the Lord.

Man: Lord...help me!

Voice: Do you trust me?

Man: Yes Lord. I trust you completely.

Voice: Very good. Now...let go of the branch.

Man: What!

Voice: I said: Let go of the branch.

Man: (after a long pause) Is there anybody else up there?

Insert Your Illustration:

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A. The Reality of Faith.

1. It is difficult to have faith sometimes. The implication of faith is that we will not have everything under our own control. Faith implies that we do not understand everything and that we are not able to do everything. If we could control, understand, and do all things, then we would not need faith.
2. However, it is not like that, we do need faith. Yet, sometimes the way of faith does not seem like the best way. It may even seem like a crazy way. The life of faith is not simple, but life without faith is impossible.

B. A Need for Faith.

1. Therefore, we need to study the topic of faith. We need to understand it and its implications.
2. Most importantly, we need to be challenged to live the life of faith.

II. A Bible Study About Faith.

A. The Nature of Faith.

1. Faith is a gift of God (Eph 2:8).
2. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22).
3. Faith is a gift of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:9).
4. Faith is the work of God (Jn 6:29).
5. Faith comes from the heart (Rom 10:9,10).
6. Faith believes today what is hoped for tomorrow (Heb 11:1).

B. Description of Faith.

1. Faith without limit (Jn 11:39-44).
2. Perfect faith (Jms 2:22).
3. Great faith (Mt 8:10).

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4. Precious faith (2 Pt 1:1).
5. Holy faith (Jude 20).
6. Humble faith (Lk 7:6, 7).
7. Little faith (Mt 8:26; 17:20).
8. Sincere faith (1 Tim 1:5).
9. Common faith (Tit 1:4).
10. Mutual faith (Rom 1:12).
11. United faith (Mk 2:5).
12. Faith involves Risk (Mt 14:28, 29).

C. Types of Faith.

1. Faith for salvation (Rom 10:9, 10).
2. Temporary faith (Lk 8:13).
3. Intellectual faith (Jms 2:19).
4. Dead faith (Jms 2:17, 20).

D. The Objects of Faith.

1. Faith in God (Jn 14:1).
2. Faith in Christ (Jn 20:31).
3. Faith in the writings of Moses (Jn 5:46).
4. Faith in the writings of the prophets (Acts 26:27).
5. Faith in the Gospel (Mk 1:15).
6. Faith in the promises of God (Rom 4:21).

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E. The Sources of Faith.

1. Faith from the Bible (Jn 20:30, 31).
2. Faith from preaching (Jn 17:20).
3. Faith from the Gospel (Acts 15:7).

F. The Uses of Faith in the Christian Life.

1. To live by faith (Rom 1:17).
2. To pray (Mt 21:22).
3. A weapon (1 Thes 5:8; 1 Tim 1:18, 19; 6:12; Heb 10:22).
4. To resist evil (Eph 6:16).
5. To overcome the world (1 Jn 2:13-17; 5:4).
6. To die in faith (Heb 11:13).

G. The Results of Faith.

1. Forgiveness of sins (Acts 10:43).
2. Justification (Acts 13:39).
3. Freedom from judgment (Jn 3:18).
4. Freedom from spiritual death (Jn 11:25, 26).
5. Salvation (Mk 16:16).
6. Eternal life (Jn 3:15, 16).
7. Spiritual light (Jn 12:36, 46).
8. Spiritual life (Jn 20:31).
9. Sanctification (Acts 15:9).

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10. Adoption (Jn 1:12).
11. Access to God (Eph 3:12).
12. Inheritance (Acts 26:18).
13. Peace and rest (Rom 5:1).
14. Success (2 Chron 20:20).

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H. Spiritual Commands about Faith.

1. To be firm in faith (1 Cor 16:13; Col 1:23).
2. To continue in faith (Acts 14:22; 1 Tim 1:19).
3. To be strong in faith (Rom 4:20-24).
4. To abound in faith (2 Cor 8:7).
5. To pray for more faith (Lk 17:5).

I. The Importance of Faith.

1. Everything else apart from faith is sin (Rom 14:23).
2. Faith is the only way to please God (Heb 11:6).
3. Faith has meaning (Gal 5:6).
4. Faith is essential for praying (Jms 1:6).

J. Obstacles to Faith.

1. Mt 15:23; Lk 5:18, 19.
2. Mk 5:35; Jn 9:24.

K. Tests of Faith.

1. Delays (Jn 11:3-6).

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2. Requirements that are difficult to understand (Josh 6:3; Jud 7:7; 1 Kgs 17:9, 13; 2 Kgs 3:16; 4:3).
3. George Meuhler said: “God wants to increase the faith of His children. However, many times his people do not want more faith because there is a great price to pay. There are tests and trials before the victory and there are delays before the end. We need to be willing to receive them from the hand of God. It is God’s way of increasing our faith. This is the experience of the life of faith: trials, obstacles, difficulties, and at times defeats. God uses all of them as the food of faith.”¹

III. The What, Why, Where, When, How, and Who of faith.

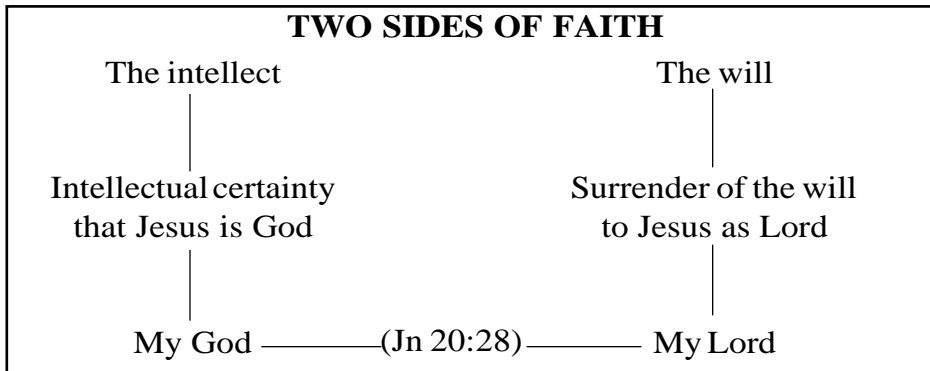
A. What is Faith? Read Hebrews 11:1 (“assurance” = upostasis in Greek).

1. The meaning of upostasis is substance, essence, foundation, guarantee, right of property.
2. Faith is your guaranteed right of property, like a property deed, with respect to your place in eternity (2 Cor 4:18).
3. Faith is the belief in God without questions (Heb 11:6).
4. Faith is to know and believe the truth in Rom 8:28. Yet, faith understands that the process may not be perfect.
 - a. At times the process may include things that are not “good.”
 - b. However, the end result will be good.
5. Faith is oriented toward the future, but the action of faith is in the present.
6. Faith must come from the commandment of God. It must be based on obedience. Faith that is not based on the commandment of God is presumption.
7. Faith has two sides.
 - a. One side has to do with the intellect.
 - b. The other side has to do with the will.

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Discussion Point

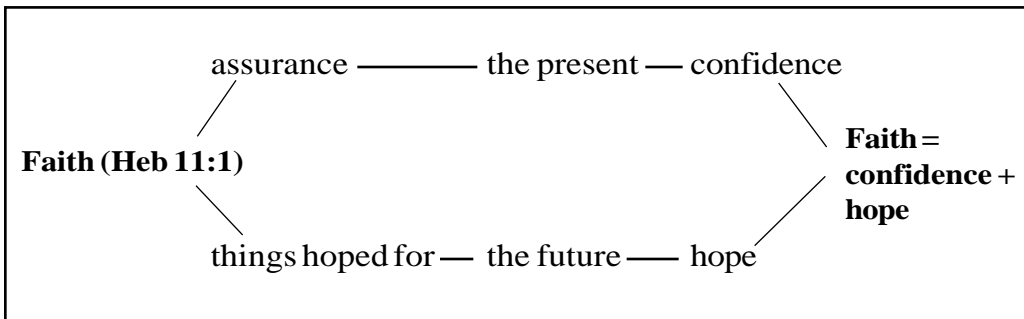
Use the following diagram for discussion.



8. Faith is the combination of confidence and hope, because faith is the combination of the present and the future.
- a. Confidence is in the present.
 - b. Hope is in the future.

Discussion Point

Use the following diagram for discussion.



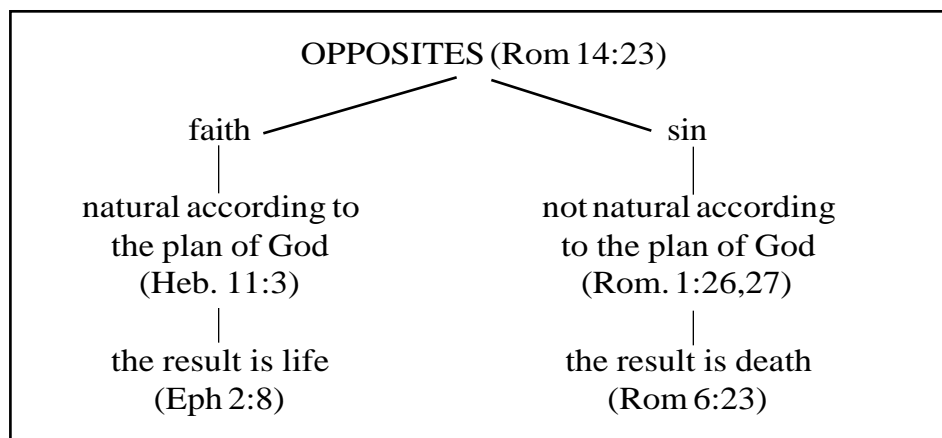
9. Through faith the following things happen:
- a. The mind trusts in God.
 - b. The heart responds to the love of God.

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- c. The will submits to the commands of God.
 - d. The spirit obeys in the service of God.
10. Faith is a paradox; it goes beyond reason.
- a. Faith believes without understanding “Why?”
 - b. Faith sings while in the jail (Acts 16:25).
 - c. Faith rejoices in tribulation (Rom 5:3).
 - d. Faith chooses to endure mistreatment (Heb 11:25).
 - e. Faith accepts all things as the will of God (Phil 1:12).
11. Faith is a perception. It is to perceive as reality that which is not revealed to the senses (“the conviction of things not seen” Heb 11:1, 2 Cor 4:18).
12. Sin is the opposite of faith:



Insert Your Illustration:

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B. Why is Faith Important?

1. The Christian life is a life of spiritual war. It is a life of spiritual conflict. Therefore, all of the spiritual armor of God is essential. Nevertheless, faith is of critical importance, “in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith” (Eph 6:16).
2. Salvation is impossible without faith (Jn 3:36).
3. Victory over the world is impossible without faith (1 Jn 5:4).
4. It is impossible to please God without faith (Heb 11:6).
5. It is impossible to pray without faith (Jms 1:6).
6. It is impossible to have peace with God without faith (Rom 5:1).
7. It is impossible to have joy without faith (1 Pt 1:8).
8. Justification is by faith (Gal 2:16).
9. We live by faith (Gal 2:20).
10. Our righteousness comes by faith (Rom 10:1-4).
11. Christ lives in us by faith (Eph 3:17).
12. We receive the Holy Spirit by faith (Gal 3:2).
13. Whatever is not faith is sin (Rom 14:23).

C. Where does our Faith come from?

1. Our faith is in God (it is not in a concept, a cause, a movement, an experience, or a human). Our faith is in God (Jn 11:26; Gal 2:16; Col 2:5).
2. Also review the “objects of faith” listed in Section II of this course.

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D. When should Faith occur?

1. We need to have faith always and in all things.
2. Consider the implications of Prov 3:5, 6 and Rom 14:23.

E. How does Faith work?

1. There are three types of faith found in Jn 11:21-44. These types of faith are limited faith, foundational faith, and unlimited faith.
 - a. Martha had limited faith (Jn 11:21). Martha's faith ended when Lazarus died. She had faith that Jesus could heal Lazarus, but she did not have faith that Jesus could raise him from the dead.
 - 1) Faith with limits can limit the power of Jesus (Mt 13:58).
 - 2) Faith with limits is controlled by circumstances.
 - 3) Faith with limits is motivated by the fear of failure.
 - b. Martha also had foundational faith (Jn 11:23-27). She stated her intellectual knowledge of Christ, but this intellectual position resulted in faith that had limits (see also Mk 10:27). As a result of this limited faith, Jesus wept.
 - 1) Intellectual knowledge of Christ is very important, but it is not sufficient.
 - 2) Faith must go beyond intellectual knowledge of Christ.
 - c. Martha later shows unlimited faith (Jn 11:39-44). At last, Martha permitted Jesus to remove the rock. She had faith without limits.
 - 1) The world says, "To see it is to believe it."
 - 2) Faith says, "To believe it is to see it."
 - 3) Faith comes before sight.

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2. Faith must be based on obedience (Mt 14:28-32).

- a. Faith must be based on the word of God.
- b. Peter did not walk on the water. He walked on the word of God. In verse 29, Jesus tells Peter to “Come.” (also see Rom 10:17).
- c. Faith is different than presumption.

Discussion Point

Use the following diagram for discussion.

CONDITION	BASIS	RESPONSE
Faith	Revelation from God	Obedience
Presumption	Example of someone else	Imitation

- d. Thus, we do not say, “Now I will walk on water. I will have the faith of Peter.” We must receive our own revelation from God. Nobody can walk in the faith of another person. Our faith must be connected directly to our personal relationship with God. However, we also must remember that there are many commands in the Bible that are applicable to all Christians at all times.
- e. When we lose sight of Jesus and we focus on other things (like the strong wind and the big waves), we begin to sink. Doubt leads to fear. Fear leads to a lack of faith. We must keep our eyes on Jesus (Heb 12:2).
- f. If we have a lack of faith, then we need to call upon Jesus (Mt 14:30b).
- g. Jesus gives us a second chance to walk in faith. The implication of Mt 14:32 is that Peter walked on water again when he went back to the boat.

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- h. We come to the conclusion that faith begins with your relationship with God. Within that relationship, God gives personal revelation, or words of direction. By faith, we must obey that direction.
- 3. We can build our faith.
 - a. We can build our faith through prayer and fasting (Mt 17:20, 21).
 - b. We can build our faith through hearing and reading the Bible (Rom 10:17).
- 4. Our faith can be made stronger when we study, understand, accept, and believe in the sovereignty of God and His promises.
 - a. We must believe that God is able to do it (His sovereignty).
 - b. We must believe that God wants to do it (His promises).

F. Who are the people of Faith?

- 1. Read and meditate on Hebrews chapter 11. Focus on the people and actions of faith.
- 2. The following is a list of examples of people of faith:

Old Testament

Gen 22:8
Josh 14:12
1 Sam 14:6
1 Sam 17:37
2 Chron 20:12
Job 19:25
Dan 3:17

New Testament

Acts 27:25
Mt 8:5-10
Mk 5:25-34
Acts 6:8
Mt 9:28
Mt 15:28
Mk 10:46-52

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IV. Faith Related to Salvation and Sanctification.

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A. God is the Source of Faith.

1. God gives faith.
2. Man receives faith (Eph 2:8-10; Phil 1:29).
3. Therefore, God is the beginning of salvation.

B. Four Aspects of Faith.

1. Knowledge is to understand that there is salvation through Jesus (Rom 10:17). Knowledge is the foundation, but it is not sufficient. There needs to be more (Jms 2:19).
2. Assent means to say yes to the contents of the Gospel, and to say yes to your need for the Gospel.
3. Trust means to trust in God and to depend on God. This includes a death to yourself and a change in who you trust in (Gal 2:20).
4. Obedience is the proof of faith. It is the manifestation of true faith.

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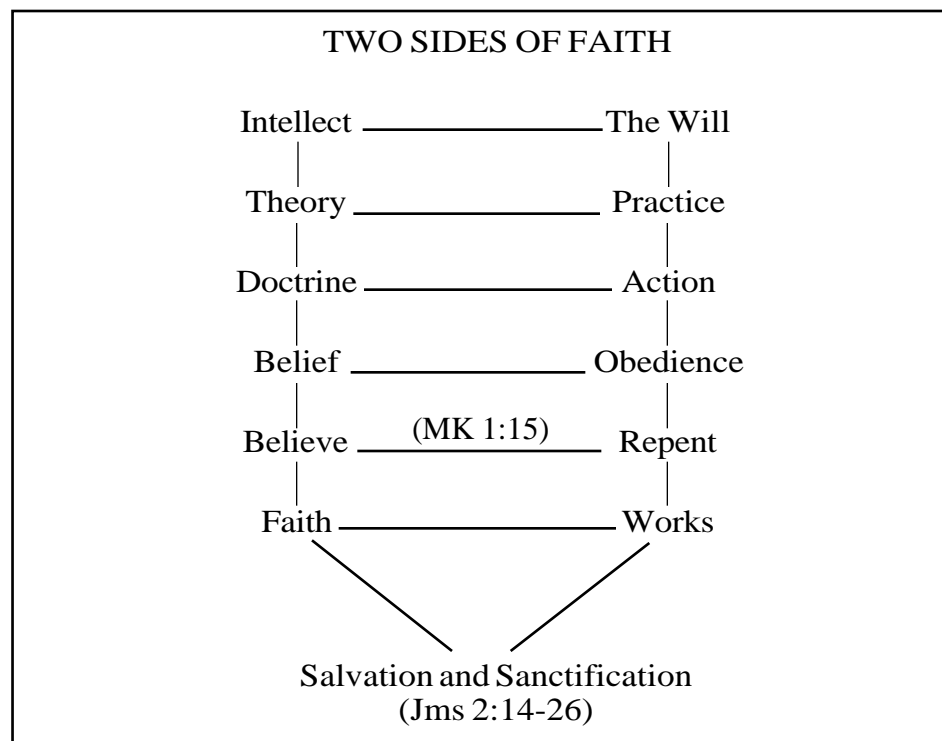
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C. Faith and Works.

1. Faith has two sides.

Discussion Point

Use the following diagram for discussion.



2. Faith and works go together.

Author's Illustration:

A house is on fire. There is a little girl on the second floor who cannot escape. A big man yells: "Jump...I will catch you." It is one part of faith that the girl knows that the man is there. It is another part of faith that the girl believes that the man is strong and that he is able to catch her. Nevertheless, the essence of faith is that the girl actually jumps!

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Insert Your Illustration:

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3. Faith and works are inseparable.

Author's Illustration:

They are like the sun and the light of the sun. Faith is the sun. The works are the rays. True faith produces works. Living faith produces works. The sun produces rays. When there are no more rays then the sun is dead (Jms 2:26).

Insert Your Illustration:

4. A man says: "I have faith without works." He is like a man who builds the foundation, but never builds his house.
5. A man says: "I have works without faith." He is like a man who does not build his house upon a good solid place (see Mt 7:24-27). The house does not have a good, safe foundation.

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Author's Illustration:

Intellectual knowledge and obedient action are like the two chemical ingredients in salt. Salt consists of chemicals called sodium and chloride. Both sodium and chloride are poisonous. Sodium will kill a human. Chloride will kill a human. However, when sodium and chloride are combined they produce life and flavor. The same is true with faith and works. The one without the other is like a poison, but together they produce life.

Insert Your Illustration:

D. The Climax of Faith is Union with Christ.

1. True faith is to be in Christ (Eph 1:3; 2 Cor 5:17).
2. Also, Christ in us (Gal 2:20).
3. In Christ and Christ in us (Eph 1:22, 23; 4:12, 13; Jn 15:4, 5).
4. These concepts are spiritual concepts, which can be understood only through faith.

V. Conclusion to our Study of Faith.

A. Ten Key Principles of Faith.

1. The Christian is saved by faith (Acts 16:31) and protected by faith (1 Pt 1:5).
2. The Christian Lives by Faith (Gal 2:20).

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3. Faith will be tested many times and in many ways (1 Pt 1:7).
4. Faith is patient, it knows how to wait on God (Is 40:31).
5. Faith always gains the victory (1 Jn 5:4).
6. At times, faith goes against “normal things” (Mt 17:14-21).
7. Faith never quits (Heb 11:32-39).
8. Faith does not make things easy, but it does make things possible.
9. Faith says, “God is completing his perfect will in my life. Therefore, I can wait. I can endure. I can suffer.”
10. In the introduction, we said that it is difficult to have faith. Nevertheless, remember: with God nothing is impossible!

B. We must not allow our past experiences to stop us from living the life of Faith.

Author’s Illustration:

An elephant was tied to a small post. The elephant should have been able to escape with no problem. However, the elephant tried to escape when he was a baby, but he was not successful. Therefore, the elephant thought that he could never escape. Do not allow your past experiences to stop you from living the life of faith.

Insert Your Illustration:

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Faith: Endnotes

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¹Michael P. Green, Ed., Illustration for Biblical Preaching (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989), p. 134, 135.