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# FAITH

(UNDERSTANDING WHAT REAL FAITH IS IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD)

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## INTRODUCTION:

Faith is not an option, it is absolutely necessary to possess in order to please God. The purpose of this study is to convey the importance of building one's faith in God and His Word. Our goal is to help individuals connect his or her life with Scripture.

## What does it mean to have faith in God?

### FAITH DEFINED

Hebrews 11:1-3

Faith is a conviction of truth beyond the confirmation of our senses.

- The goal of the Christian walk is a relationship with God. What is real faith in terms of a relationship with a close friend? Faith in a relationship = trust.
- There are many things you can't see or prove in a relationship- but you know that they are there. Love, for instance. Do you know when people love you? How? You can't see it flying through the air, obviously, but you know that it is there- How do you know if you trust someone?
- Faith is the full acceptance of the truth of God's Word (i.e. the universe was formed at God's command) – faith must be put in something greater than ourselves (even many scientists now believe in intelligent design- that the universe is so complex and perfect that some higher power HAD to create it...).

Hebrews 11:6

Without faith it is impossible to please God.

- It is impossible to have a relationship with someone if you don't believe they exist. It's impossible to be close to God if you don't trust Him.
- God is pleased when you put your trust in Him. He is good, all-powerful, and loves you tremendously. Do you trust God?
- Do you believe that God exists and rewards those who earnestly seek Him?

1 Peter 1:3-9

Our faith is more valuable than anything in the world in God's sight.

- The resurrection of Christ gives you the hope of an eternal inheritance.
- Through faith you are shielded by God's power through difficulties.
- Through faith you have confidence and joy in the salvation of your soul.
- Your faith is tested and refined! How is your faith (trust) in God tested? How can tough times actually strengthen your faith in God? Ask yourself: Is my faith genuine?

Ephesians 2:8-10

Salvation is only possible if there is both grace and faith.

- God's responsibility - grace. Only God has the power to give grace (i.e. the limitless kindness and mercy of God that is freely given to human beings undeserved).
- Man's responsibility - faith (i.e. the underlying senses of "belief," "trust," and "conviction" in the person of God and Christ as the only means of salvation, forgiveness of sin, and guarantee of eternal life).
- Therefore salvation is a gift made available through God's grace, which can only be received by us through faith – grace and faith must work together.
- Put grace in terms of a relationship. You can't BUY or EARN a real friendship- it is by a freewill choice. Grace in a relationship is the gift of someone choosing you to be close to them - despite your shortcomings. How would that apply to your relationship with God?

## FAITH THAT PLEASES GOD

Romans 1:5-6

The same faith that allows you to trust God with your life should also produce obedience.

- Do you have enough faith - enough trust - to obey God and do things His way?

James 2:14-26

Faith without deeds (action, work) is like a body without spirit -- dead!

- Faith is more than simple assent that God exists – it is demonstrated by one's obedience and service to God.
- Though God did not choose you because of your deeds, deeds in a relationship are critical.

What someone DOES in a relationship greatly affects you and makes a difference either positively (being considerate, gifts, etc.) or negatively (like not showing up or gossiping).

So what you DO matters as well. Consider these examples from history: by faith...

- o Noah built the ark to save his family after being warned by God (Hebrews 11:7)
- o Abraham obeyed and went to a foreign land because he understood that God was calling him to an even better home (i.e. heaven) (Hebrews 11:8-10)
- o Moses gave up the treasures of this world because he trusted God's promises to be better in the end... (Hebrews 11:23-27)