

# What Does the Bible Say About Faith?

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Everyone lives by faith of some kind. We trust chairs to hold us and bridges to bear us, often without a thought. But the faith the Bible calls us to is something more definite than that, and far more important. It is faith in God and in His Son, and it is the faith without which no one can be saved. So we had better know what it is, where it comes from, and what it does.

## What Faith Is

Faith is not a leap in the dark, and it is not wishing hard enough that something might come true. The Bible defines it. *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"* ([Hebrews 11:1](#)). It is confidence resting on good ground. John said he wrote down the things Jesus did so *"that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name"* ([John 20:31](#)). Faith is built on testimony God has given, not on feelings we work up.

## Faith Comes by the Word of God

Because faith rests on what God has revealed, it comes through His word and not by some inner experience apart from it. *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* ([Romans 10:17](#)). A man does not get faith by waiting for a sign or a feeling. He gets it the way anyone gets it, by hearing the gospel and believing the One who speaks in it. This is why the word must be preached, and why it must be read.

## Without Faith We Cannot Please God

Faith is not optional. *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him"* ([Hebrews 11:6](#)). Jesus warned that the want of it is fatal, for *"if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins"* ([John 8:24](#)). What we must believe is plain, the same thing Peter confessed, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"* ([Matthew 16:16](#)), and that God raised Him from the dead ([Romans 10:9](#)).

## Faith Must Obey: It Is Not Faith Only

Here many go wrong, supposing that to believe is all God asks, and that obedience is an optional extra. The Bible will not have it. *"faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone"* ([James 2:17](#)). A

dead faith saves no one. *"the devils also believe, and tremble"* ([James 2:19](#)), yet no one thinks the devils are saved. So James says it as plainly as it can be said, that *"by works a man is justified, and not by faith only"* ([James 2:24](#)). True faith is an obedient faith. Look at the great chapter of faith in Hebrews, and every name on it did something. By faith Abel offered, by faith Noah built, and *"by faith Abraham, when he was called... obeyed"* ([Hebrews 11:8](#)). Faith that does nothing is not the faith of the Bible.

## **The Just Shall Live by Faith**

Faith is not only how we begin with God. It is how we go on with Him. *"we walk by faith, not by sight"* ([2 Corinthians 5:7](#)). Paul said, *"the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God"* ([Galatians 2:20](#)). That faith will be tried, for *"the trying of your faith worketh patience"* ([James 1:3](#)), and a faith that has stood the test is worth more than gold ([1 Peter 1:7](#)). We are to hold it to the end.

## **When Faith Is Hard**

Faith does not always come easily, and the Bible does not pretend otherwise. There are seasons when God seems far off, when prayers seem to go unanswered, and the heart is tempted to doubt. This is no new thing. A father once cried out to Jesus with honest words many of us could borrow, *"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief"* ([Mark 9:24](#)). The Lord did not turn him away for the weakness of his faith. He helped him. Thomas doubted until he saw, and Jesus met him where he was, yet said, *"blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed"* ([John 20:29](#)). When faith is hard, the answer is not to sit and wait for a feeling, but to go back to the word that gives faith and to ask God to strengthen it, as the apostles did when they said, *"Lord, Increase our faith"* ([Luke 17:5](#)). Faith fed on the word grows. Faith starved of it withers.

So the question is not whether you have faith in something, but whether you have this faith, resting on the Son of God, drawn from His word, and showing itself in obedience. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"* ([Acts 16:31](#)), and let that faith do what faith has always done. Let it obey.

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*Every Scripture reference in this study links to the King James Version. Open it and read for yourself.*