

BIBLICAL FAITH

What Does It Mean To Believe In



I. Introduction

So far in our studies we have discovered that Jesus is more than a myth or just a good teacher, he is Lord of heaven and earth. The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus are the foundation of Jesus' claims and the basis of our hope.

We have also learned that Scriptures are the authority of God in our lives today. The Bible we have today is the standard for having a relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

The purpose of this study is to understand what God means when He uses the word faith in Scriptures.

II. Importance of Faith

Hebrews 11:6

What is needed to please God?
What must this "God pleasing" faith have as its object of faith? (What are we to have faith in?)
What does it mean to earnestly or diligently seek God?
What is God's promise to those who seek Him in this way? What rewards might that be?



Observations. Faith in God and in His power is essential for a relationship with God. Only the diligent seekers of God are promised His reward. Imagine that you have just misplaced a check for \$10,000. What would you do to find that check? God's reward is of infinite value; therefore let us earnestly seek God all the days of our life.

III. Definition of Faith from Scripture

The Greek word for **faith** is "**pistis**" and the Greek word for **believe** is "**pisteuo**." They are basically the same Greek word except that faith is the noun form and believe is the verb form.

James 2:14-17

How does the illustration in verse 15-16 demonstrate that faith without action is worthless?
Can deedless faith save?
What are some deeds that might demonstrate our faith?

Observations. Faith that demonstrates itself only in the right words is worthless and cannot save. Action must accompany even the "good intentions" or faith is dead.

James 2:18-19

Who are used to illustrate faith that is not obedient to God?

Why do the demons shudder since they believe?

If someone's faith is nothing more than an intellectual acceptance of the Father and the Son, who does James compare them to? Why is that important to understand?

Observations. A faith equivalent to a demon is a faith that knows that God is real and will judge but does not respond in obedience to God's will. According to Matthew 25:41, condemnation is the final destiny of demons. If our faith does no more than accept God without living a life of trust and obedience we have the same faith and can expect the same consequence as demons.

James 2:20-26

What does James call the person who needs more evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

What additional illustrations does James use to demonstrate saving faith requires action?

Observations. Abraham demonstrated his faith by what he did when he offered Isaac on the altar. Faith was not just an intellectual experience for Abraham. It was giving his son as a sacrifice to God. His faith involved hearing God, trusting God and obeying God (Gen. 22:1-19). Rahab gave up all she had in choosing God. Her faith involved trust and complete sacrifice (Josh. 2:1-24). Abraham and Rahab are only two examples that demonstrate Biblical faith involves obedience and sacrifice. Verse 24 says justification (God making me just as if I'd never sinned) requires action and not faith alone. Verse 26 says faith without deeds, action or obedience, is dead.

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Hebrews 3:16-19

What is unbelief equated to in this text?

Observations. Unbelief is demonstrated by disobedience. If someone claims to believe God but does not obey His commands he is at best deceiving himself because God's word proclaims, they didn't obey therefore they didn't believe. This is in the same letter that says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Hebrews 11:6. This passage demonstrates that true belief is shown by obedience.

Romans 1:5

What is meant to come from faith?

Observations. Obedience is meant to come from faith. In the book of Romans Paul begins his discussion about faith with a definition that includes obedience.

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Thanks to Charles Dunleavy (See Numbers 14)

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GOOD NEWS, JUST 40 LAPS AROUND THE
WILDERNESS FOR DISOBEYING GOD ... BAD
NEWS, EACH LAP TAKES A YEAR

Romans 16:25-27

Why has the gospel of Jesus been revealed?
What is to accompany belief?

Observations. Believing and obeying are meant to go hand in hand. Note that at the beginning and end of Romans biblical faith or belief results in and involves obedience. Faith or belief that does not include obedience to the will of God is a dead faith, or a faith that cannot save. Paul, like James, was inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was very consistent in revealing that a biblical, saving faith involves obedience.

Matthew 7:21-23

How does this text fit with what we have discovered about faith?

Observations. Being right with God demands obedience; meaning being right with God demands faith that has action.

✓ **Application:** From what we have seen from the Bible, what is a definition of true faith?

IV. Developing Faith

Romans 10:17

How does a person develop faith?
Why would hearing the Word of God develop faith?

Observations. God has promised that reading and hearing His word, the Bible, will produce faith. Part of this fits with our last study when we discovered that the Bible is living and active. It is not a dead book but instead it impacts our mind and our heart. Decide to increase your faith by increasing your time in the word of God.

John 7:17

What does Jesus say will prove that His words come from God, or in other words, develop faith?
How does obedience develop faith?

Observations. Putting God's word into practice is a demonstration of our faith and allows God to work in our lives. Only when we begin to obey God will we truly see that He is faithful to all his promises. When we take Jesus at his word faith will grow. (See John 4:46-53, with an emphasis on verses 50 and 53 for a practical example of this faith growing experience.



V. Conclusion

Biblical faith includes obeying the word of God. For us to call ourselves Christians and not be obedient to the will of the Father is to only fool ourselves, for Jesus will not know us. James says we don't even have the sense of the demons when we have a faith without deeds, at least the demons shudder because of coming judgment. Let us have the faith that trusts and obeys God and His word.