

Facts About Faith



Faith In God

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Scripture quotations taken from The World English Bible

Introduction

There are always at least 2 sides to every argument when we come to the subject of religion. I doubt that there would be 1 verse in the bible that we all understand with no disagreements.

Therefore, I would like to start by saying that everything written in this booklet is my understanding on the subject. Obviously you are perfectly entitled to agree or disagree with me and I have no problem with that. If you are reading this message, then at least that means that you have an interest in the matter, so all I ask is that you do two things before you get started.

First say a prayer and ask God to guide your thoughts and that He will lead you into the truth. Not necessarily to believe me, but to believe your own Bible. And that leads me into the second thing I ask you to do, and that is to get out your bible and check my work.

Please take these two requests seriously as they just may affect the way you understand what I am writing about. There is no greater authority on this subject than what it reveals to us in the Bible, and if you believe in God, and the power of prayer, then put that power to good use in your life.

My bible of choice has always been the New International Version (NIV). Only because I find it easy to read and understand. If you have a different version of the bible that is perfectly OK. The wording may be different, but I am sure you will find the meaning of the verses to be the same.

I am thrilled to think that someone has seen fit to read this message, and I sincerely hope you gain a lot of pleasure and understanding from these pages. I pray that our amazing God will lead you into truth of this matter from His word, The Holy Bible. Please read the following scripture from the book of 2 Timothy and think on the true meaning of this verse.

2Ti 3:16 Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching,
for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness,

With this thought in mind, let us proceed. I hope you have taken my first

request seriously and have said a brief prayer for true understanding. I also hope you have your own Bible handy and will use it throughout this study.

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Having faith in God, how do we define it, what is faith?

The Bible refers to faith in many places such as Rom 1:17

Rom 1:17 For in it is revealed God's righteousness from faith to faith. As it is written, "But the righteous shall live by faith."

And 1 John 5:4,

1Jn 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world: your faith.

So having faith is vital for us, but how do we define it. I think we will find the answer in Hebrews 11, the faith chapter. Every one mentioned here simply took God at His word and obeyed His commands. And for this, they were all remembered for their faith. Believing the word of God and acting on what we know is living by faith. Faith is not hoping something will happen, faith is knowing that it will happen.

So now the questions are, "How do we get this faith." and "How do we increase in faith."

Our faith is not just intellectual knowledge and agreement. It is more than just acknowledging certain facts about Jesus, the Bible, the resurrection or anything else from scripture. It is taking our entire life and making a stand that is based on our confidence that these facts are real. Genuine faith is life changing.

One way to explain faith is like this. Consider a man who pushes a wheelbarrow across Victoria Falls on a tightrope. The first time you see him do this, you are worried and chew your fingernails while he does the crossing. When he reaches the other side, you give out a loud sigh of relief. Then you come back again the next day and see him do it again. This time you are less apprehensive, as you have seen him do it before. You continue doing this for a full year and by this time you hardly even watch him; you have seen him push that wheelbarrow across Victoria Falls hundreds of times.

Then one day he approaches you and asks, “do you think I can push this wheelbarrow across with falling?” And you reply, “of course you can I have seen you do it hundreds of times.” “All right.” he says, “get into the wheelbarrow.”

There is a difference between believing and faith. We may believe that he can do the crossing without falling (intellectual knowledge) Getting into the wheelbarrow is when our belief in the facts becomes an active trust, or faith. If we refuse to get into the wheelbarrow, then we may have doubts about whether he can actually do it, because now our life will depend on him being successful. Just how strong is our faith?

It is the same with our faith in God. Are we prepared to commit everything to God, (get into His wheelbarrow) to trust Him with our futures and our lives no matter how hard thing may become. We who live in Australia have always been blessed and not had to suffer any form or persecution, so our faith has never been tested to that extent.

So if God is pushing that wheelbarrow, then we must scramble to get in. Put our faith in Him who is in control even if gale force winds and hurricanes are forecast and the ride looks like it is going to get very bumpy. We all experience these bumpy times. It may be because of ill health, lack of employment, family breakups or hundreds of other things that make our lives more difficult. This is when our trust or faith in God must not waiver.

In Hebrews 11 verses 1-6 we can see an excellent description of what faith actually is.

Heb 11:1 Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, proof of things not seen.

Heb 11:2 For by this, the elders obtained testimony.

Heb 11:3 By faith, we understand that the universe has been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen has not been made out of things which are visible.

Heb 11:4 By faith, Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had testimony given to him that he was righteous, God testifying with respect to his gifts; and through it he, being dead, still speaks.

Heb 11:5 By faith, Enoch was taken away, so that he wouldn't see death, and he was not found, because God translated him. For he has had testimony given to him that before his translation he had been well

pleasing to God.

Heb 11:6 Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to him, for he who comes to God must believe that he exists, and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him.

We do not have faith in God because we can see into the future and know that all is going to end well. We cannot see the future, so all of our trust in God is for unseen things, or we walk by faith and not by sight.

Where is faith From?

We have seen in Hebrews 11:6 that it is impossible to please God without faith, so how do we get the faith that we need to please Him. This is revealed for us in Romans 10:17.

Rom 10:17 So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

We cannot possibly have faith in anything that we know nothing about. Before we can have faith in anything we must learn about the subject, study it, and only then can we decide about the subject. When we are born, our minds are a blank canvas and as we grow and learn, we can then form opinions and choose what to believe and what not to believe. The same with having faith in God. We must learn about Him from the knowledge that is available to us in nature, books, the church, but mostly from His word the bible. We need to get the information into our minds before we can have faith in anything. Like the man crossing Niagara Falls, if we have enough faith to get into the wheelbarrow, it has come from seeing and believing. We could not have any faith in him getting us safe to the other side the very first time we see him do this, it takes time and evidence before we believe.

In Romans 10:8 we see more evidence of this.

Rom 10:8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth, and in your heart;” that is, the word of faith, which we preach:

We need to hear the message if we are to have faith. If God just put faith into our hearts, then we would not need someone to explain what the scriptures mean. Faith is near us and in our mouth and hearts because we have heard the message.

In Acts 18:7-8 we see an example of Paul’s preaching and those that heard the message, believed, and were baptized.

Act 18:7 He departed there, and went into the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue.

Act 18:8 Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with

all his house. Many of the Corinthians, when they heard, believed and were baptized.

Again in Acts 6:7 we see the effects of preaching the gospel

Act 6:7 The word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly. A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

And again in 1Th 2:13

1Th 2:13 For this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when you received from us the word of the message of God, you accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also works in you who believe.

Here we see that the word of God is at work in those who believe. This work is building our faith and love for God. We can see the wonders of nature and the intricate and beautiful way things were created. These things all point to a creator, but the crucial evidence that God has given so we may have faith in Him is from His word, the Bible. It is from this amazing book we learn to trust God. We see in Titus 1:2 that it is impossible for God to lie, so we can have absolute confidence or faith that He will keep His word to us.

Tit 1:2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who can't lie, promised before time began;

In Romans 10:8-17 is a great passage of scripture that really explains for us how we get faith.

Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth, and in your heart;" that is, the word of faith, which we preach:

Rom 10:9 that if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Rom 10:10 For with the heart, one believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Rom 10:11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed."

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Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich to all who call on him.

Rom 10:13 For, “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Rom 10:14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in him whom they have not heard? How will they hear without a preacher?

Rom 10:15 And how will they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Good News of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!”

Rom 10:16 But they didn’t all listen to the glad news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?”

Rom 10:17 So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

I think we have seen enough evidence that faith comes to us by the hearing of the word. So I would now like to look at some more evidence of faith being carried out in the lessons from the old testament.

The Right Faith

We all know the story about the woman who had a blood issue for 12 years. This is a very revealing passage, and we should not just read over it. This actually applies to every passage in this amazing book, but there is a very interesting point to be made when we look closer at this story. It starts with a leader of the synagogue pleading with Jesus to save his daughter. Let us read this passage starting in Luke 8:41-42:

Luk 8:41 Behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. He fell down at Jesus' feet, and begged him to come into his house,

Luk 8:42 for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as he went, the multitudes pressed against him.

So here we see Jesus on His way to help the daughter of the synagogue leader, and He was accompanied by a sizeable crowd of people who were pushing onto Him from all sides. The crowd was not worried about giving Jesus room to move, they just wanted to be close to Him and touch Him. So close in fact that this verse uses the term "almost crushed Him" So they were pressing hard on Jesus. Then in the next verse we read:

Luk 8:43 A woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her living on physicians, and could not be healed by any,

At this point we are introduced to the woman who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years, but no doctor had cured her of this problem. She must have been very distressed as she could not have entered the temple because she would have been regarded as being unclean.

So being unclean for 12 years would have been very embarrassing for a start, but her greatest concern was the fact that she could not enter the temple for those 12 years. Not being able to worship in the temple would have been of great concern to her. We must remember that the old covenant was still in force and no-one unclean could enter the temple.

If we turn now to Mat 9:21 which is the same story that is recorded in Luke, we can see the faith of this woman in action.

Mat 9:21 for she said within herself, “If I just touch his garment, I will be made well.”

This woman had no intentions of asking Jesus for a cure, and she would never have thought that Jesus would notice that she had touched Him. As we read in Luke 8 and verse 42, the crowd was pressing against Him, so she would have planned to just touch His garment in secret and that would be an end to it. As we see in Luk 8 verse 44, she accomplished this and was cured.

Luk 8:44 came behind him, and touched the fringe of his cloak, and immediately the flow of her blood stopped.

Notice that it was an immediate cure that happened as soon as she touched His robe. Jesus has not told her she is cured or performed a miracle for her. The woman hoped that she would go unnoticed and just slip home a fortunate woman. But that was not to be the case.

Luk 8:45 Jesus said, “Who touched me?” When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, “Master, the multitudes press and jostle you, and you say, ‘Who touched me?’”

Again we are told that the people were crowding Him and pressing against Him. I believe Peter repeated this so we would be certain that the crowd was really close and touching Jesus. So how could He know His garment had been touched by this woman?

Luk 8:46 But Jesus said, “Someone did touch me, for I perceived that power has gone out of me.”

Jesus may not have felt the touch of the woman, but He noticed that power had gone out from Him. And in verse 47 the woman had nowhere to hide and had to admit that it was she who had touched Him and taken power from Him.

Luk 8:47 When the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared to him in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

Here the woman has been completely healed before she comes trembling at

His feet. This last verse is a very telling and important verse that we must not just read over and say that everything ended well. No, please read carefully the words that Jesus spoke to the woman.

Luk 8:48 He said to her, "Daughter, cheer up. Your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

Notice that it was the woman's own faith that healed her. Jesus did not say you are healed, or that He would cure her of her illness. No, it was when she touched his garment believing that she would be healed of her sickness that she was immediately cured. In Mat 9:21 we read the words "I will be healed". She did not doubt she just had faith and believed.

This woman believed that there was something in Jesus that she could take if she wanted it, without asking for it. Was she right or wrong in doing this? Well, she was cured, and Jesus said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

She did not doubt that she would be healed, because if she had any doubts then her healing would not have happened. We see proof of this in James 1:6-7.

Jas 1:6 But let him ask in faith, without any doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed.

Jas 1:7 For that man shouldn't think that he will receive anything from the Lord.

According to what Jesus said, we are made to understand that it was not He who healed, but the woman took the healing!! This should get us all thinking about our faith. We must ask, "is God waiting for us to find sufficient faith before He will act?", or should we, by faith, take what God has already given.

Faith

There are many other scriptures that we can read that support this idea of taking what God has already provided. We know that God's number of completeness is 7, so let us look at the following 7 verses that back up this idea about faith.

Mat 9:29 Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you."

Mar 10:52 Jesus said to him, "Go your way. Your faith has made you well." Immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus on the way.

Luk 7:50 He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Luk 8:48 He said to her, "Daughter, cheer up. Your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

Luk 17:19 Then he said to him, "Get up, and go your way. Your faith has healed you."

Luk 18:42 Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight. Your faith has healed you."

Mat 15:28 Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Be it done to you even as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that hour.

OK, one more passage just for luck. In Acts 14:7-10 we read an interesting passage that also supports this truth.

Act 14:7 There they preached the Good News.

Act 14:8 At Lystra a certain man sat, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.

Act 14:9 He was listening to Paul speaking, who, fastening eyes on him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole,

Act 14:10 said with a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet!” He leaped up and walked.

When we read this passage of scripture, it can be too easy to just say how wonderful it was that Paul healed this crippled man. But if we read carefully, we can see four things that occurred. First, in verse 7, Paul preached the word of Jesus. Second, the crippled man listened to Paul. Third, Paul realised that the man had faith to be healed, and finally, Paul told the man to get up and walk. But it was because of the man’s faith in what he heard that he was healed. If the man did not have faith, then Paul would not have seen it and he would not have been healed.

How Faith Can Change Your Life

When we turn to God and start to trust Him and His written word “The Bible”. This is when we can experience some changes to our lives. Some of them may be only small changes, but others may turn out to be massive and help us to be almost completely changed. So if you are prepared to trust God then you may find the following changes in your life.

1. Faith in God Will Strengthen You

This type of strength is now muscular, the type you get by going to the gym each day. This is the strength of character that helps you to withstand troubles and turmoil that will certainly come into your life from time to time. Consider what the writer of Psalm 138 had to say:

Psa 138:3 In the day that I called, you answered me. You encouraged me with strength in my soul.

If we are willing to trust God we may find we have to courage of David when he killer Goliath. He did not doubt God was with him and would give him the victory.

2. Faith in God Can Give You Courage.

If you truly have faith, then you will be able to withstand all attempts by Satan to distract you and to lead you away from God. There is coming a time when Satan will be seeking to destroy anyone who claims to be a Christian. This is the seven years just before Jesus Christ returns to this world to establish His ever lasting kingdom. The trials and tribulations of this period of time will be horrific to say the least. Many people are going to abandon their faith in God during this time as they assume God has forsaken them. This is when we will need to be at our faithful best and cling to the many good promises that God has made for us.

During this time of tribulation God wants us to be faithful to Him even if it costs us our lives. We must remember that the rewards of being in God’s kingdom far out weigh any troubles we may encounter in this temporary life.

Read the book of Esther in the old testament to see a woman of courage and faith who trusted in her God.

3. Faith gives you Stability

You may know of people in your life who are unshakable in what they believe and how they live their lives. If unforeseen circumstances come their way, they just take it as it comes. They understand that when life feels like it is out of control, God is always in control because He never changes.

Faith always sees the victory well in advance. Faith expects us to win the race no matter what troubles and trials we are now facing. Remember the words from Romans 1:16-17

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the Good News of Christ, because it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes; for the Jew first, and also for the Greek.

Rom 1:17 For in it is revealed God's righteousness from faith to faith. As it is written, "But the righteous shall live by faith."

Faith will play an important part in your life if you let it. Faith, or trust in God, will give you the power and strength to accomplish many things that you never would have thought you could accomplish.

Is there a Difference Between Faith and Belief?

It is common today for the words faith and belief to be used interchangeably. Most times they are synonymous, and sometimes they are translated from the same Greek word Pistis (the word for faith). But the word belief can sometimes have a different meaning.

The Apostle James warns us of a “dead faith” in:

Jas 2:14 What good is it, my brothers, if a man says he has faith, but has no works? Can faith save him?

Jas 2:15 And if a brother or sister is naked and in lack of daily food,

Jas 2:16 and one of you tells them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled;” and yet you didn’t give them the things the body needs, what good is it?

Jas 2:17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead in itself.

Jas 2:18 Yes, a man will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without works, and I by my works will show you my faith.

Jas 2:19 You believe that God is one. You do well. The demons also believe, and shudder.

Jas 2:20 But do you want to know, vain man, that faith apart from works is dead?

A living faith is to believe in God and then to act upon what you know to be right. A dead faith is to just believe and then do nothing. Even Demons, the servants of Satan, believe in God and Jesus so if we just believe, then our faith is at the same level as these demons.

If we are inspired by what we read and learn from the bible, then act upon what we know to be right, then we have a living faith and a good relationship with God our Heavenly Father. Our faith will increase as we allow ourselves to be drawn closer to God through prayer and study of His words. This is explained for us in:

Rom 10:17 So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Therefore, faith is trusting God and being confident in the promises that we

have received from Him and Jesus Christ. If we ask God for more faith in our prayers and studying He will listen and respond to our prayers.

Book of Daniel

In the book of Daniel we learn of the saving faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when they refused to worship the idol of the king rather than God. We can see their faith in action in Dan 3:15-17.

Dan 3:15 Now if you are ready whenever you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe, and all kinds of music to fall down and worship the image which I have made, good; but if you don't worship, you shall be cast the same hour into the middle of a burning fiery furnace. Who is that god that will deliver you out of my hands?"

Dan 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.

Dan 3:17 If it happens, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

These three servants of God did not doubt for a second that God could, and would, save them from the flames of the furnace. They were more than happy to stake their lives on God protecting them. Even though the furnace was heated more than usual, they came out without even a smell of smoke on their clothes. This was genuine faith in God being exercised.

We may never experience this response from God, but we can be sure that whatever may come our way we can rely on the words of Romans 8:28

Rom 8:28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose.

David V Goliath

Another story about faith in the old testament is about David slaying Goliath. It is important to remember that David was still just a shepherd boy who could not even meet the prophet when he came to his house demanding to see all of Jesse's children. David was the last in the family to be considered.

When Israel was in a battle with the Philistines, David came to the Israelite camp and was confronted by his oldest brother. We can see in 1Sam 17:28 what his brother thought of David.

1Sa 17:28 Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David, and he said, "Why have you come down? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride, and the naughtiness of your heart; for you have come down that you might see the battle."

1Sa 17:29 David said, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

So the lowly David was not thought of very highly, but this did not worry him, and he approached King Saul and said that he was prepared to fight this giant of the Philistines when no one else in all the Israelite army was brave enough to fight him.

Notice verses 36 and 37. Here we see David is confident, or full of faith in God, that he can kill this giant of a man.

1Sa 17:36 Your servant struck both the lion and the bear. This uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God."

1Sa 17:37 David said, "Yahweh who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go! Yahweh will be with you."

David has already attributed his victory over the lion and the bear to God, and is now confident that God will again give him victory. He did not doubt.

Faith of Noah

Consider also the faith of Noah. During the over 100 years that it took him to build the ark, he must have suffered an enormous amount of ridicule from the surrounding people. But he stuck to his guns and completed his task of building the ark and saving his family and the animals on the ark.

Heb 11:7 By faith, Noah, being warned about things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared a ship for the saving of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

It is not proved whether there was rain on the earth before the time of Noah or not. Some people believe the flood was the first time that it actually rained on the earth. If this is the case, then consider the faith that Noah must have had. To spend 120 years building a massive vessel on dry land and never have seen rain, but also never doubting the word of God. This is real faith in action. So Noah was a perfect example of living by faith and not by sight as is recorded for us in 2Cor 5:7

2Co 5:7 for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Gideon's Faith

In the 11th chapter of Hebrews we read many names of people of faith in the old testament. One man was Gideon, so let us look at why he was regarded as a man of faith.

Israel was about to be attacked by 135,000 Midianites, all of them armed with swords. Gideon started out with 30,000 men, but he must have wanted another 200,000 to be sure of victory. But God said that that even 30,000 was too many, so he reduced the number with several tests and they ended up with 300 warriors to go up against 135,000, not only that, but they were armed with trumpets, and empty jars with burning torches in them. Not exactly a well-armed army.

Now I would think this was about to be a rather one sided fight coming up, and the Israelites were about to be slaughtered, but no, it was the Midianites who were defeated. Just how much faith did Gideon have to be prepared to go into battle when the numbers were so much against the Israelites?

Queen Esther

OK, we have seen the faith of several men here, so I had better give an example of a woman of faith just to show that I am not prejudiced. Actually, 2 of my favorite books in the old testament are Ruth and Esther.

So, lets look at the book of Esther. Esther was the wife of the Persian King, King Xerxes. It was a death sentence to approach the king without being invited to do so. Even for his Queen.

Life must have been very good for Queen Esther, who was Jewish, as she would have lived a life of luxury in the King's palace. Her guardian was Mordecai, also a Jew. Mordecai offended one of the nobles of the Kings court, Haman, by refusing to bow down to him as he rode past on his horse. This infuriated Haman and he convinced the King to have a decree passed that would see all Jews, men, women and children exterminated. His plan was to exterminate the entire Jewish race.

When Mordecai heard of this, he sent word to Esther to tell her to approach the king and get the decree changed. Esther replied to Mordecai as we see in Est 4:16.

Est 4:16 "Go, gather together all the Jews who are present in Susa, and fast for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day. I and my maidens will also fast the same way. Then I will go in to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish."

Esther knew it could be fatal to go to the king, but she went there anyway. She had faith in God and approached the King to plead her case. When she entered the king's presence, he extended to her the gold scepter that meant she could approach him without the death penalty being applied. The result, Haman's plot was exposed, and he was executed instead of the Jews. So all Jewish people were saved from what would have been certain death.

Whenever we find ourselves in difficult times, this is when we must rely upon God even more. It is just too easy to think that He doesn't care and that we are on our own. But that is never the case.

We may ask God for something that we need and we will not always get what we want. Sometimes it is “not now”, or it may be “not that way” and sometimes we may have to wait for years before we get that answer that we want. I know that for me personally I have been making the same request to God for several decades and so far He has chosen to not grant my wish. If what I am asking for is not according to “His will” then I will not get the answer I want. Maybe I need more patience and keep asking for another decade or two!

So we have many people of faith in the bible that we can get inspiration from.

Father of The Faithful

I think one of the greatest acts of faith in God in the entire bible must have been when Abraham was about to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah when Sarah was well past the age of childbearing. This child was a fulfillment of the promises that God had made to Abraham, so he must have been very confident that God would keep all of His promises to him.

Then suddenly God asks Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. We see this in Genesis 22:2-4:

Gen 22:2 He said, “Now take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go into the land of Moriah. Offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will tell you of.”

Gen 22:3 Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his donkey; and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son. He split the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went to the place of which God had told him.

Gen 22:4 On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place far off.

How would Abraham feel. Isaac was the promised son through whom all of God’s blessings and promises were to be upon. So how could this occur if Isaac was dead? He had three days to think about himself on the way to where God had commanded that he sacrifice Isaac. But he never argued against God, he just carried on in faith knowing that God was in control of their futures. Imagine the talks he would have had with his wife Sarah and Isaac. Imagine how he felt as he raised the knife to sacrifice Isaac. He was prepared to do all of this, but only because he fully trusted God, his faith was never in question. No wonder Abraham is regarded as the father of the faithful.

God intervened

Conclusion

So when we have faith in God, when we get into His wheelbarrow, we are not alone.

The 11th Chapter of Hebrews is well known as the faith chapter. Here Paul has listed some famous names from the old testament. Names such as Abel, Enoch, Isaac, Joseph, Jacob and Moses just to name a few. Then consider the millions of Christians who have been murdered over the centuries because of their trust and faith in God, and we are certainly not alone.

I started out talking about the man crossing Victoria falls with a wheelbarrow. If we watched him every day for a year, then he would have encountered just about every weather condition you can imagine. Storms, snow, rain, hail and shine. When we are in God's wheelbarrow, we are not guaranteed a smooth ride. Indeed, we will also experience the storms of life. These storms are the problems that we all face each day. Money problems, marital problems, trouble at work, or no work at all, health troubles will strike us all during our lives. Some will have to live their entire lives in some sort of pain. When bad things happen, we must put our hope and faith in God, no matter how hard it may seem we need to remember Romans 8:28.

Rom 8:28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose.

There are no exceptions here. When God says all things, that is exactly what He means. You will never be in a situation where God cannot bring some good from it. Maybe it will benefit you in the future, or maybe it benefits others. We do not know the mind of God or how He works things out. This is when faith comes into play. God has promised to never leave us nor forsake us, so when things get really tough we must consider what the Psalmist said in Psalm 46 1-3.

Psa 46:1 For the Chief Musician. By the sons of Korah. According to Alamoth. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Psa 46:2 Therefore we won't be afraid, though the earth changes, though the mountains are shaken into the heart of the seas;

Psa 46:3 though its waters roar and are troubled, though the mountains tremble with their swelling. Selah.

We may never see things quite this bad, but who knows. We just need to keep our faith. In John 16:33 we read.

Joh 16:33 I have told you these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have trouble; but cheer up! I have overcome the world.”

So we can see from this verse that troubles in this life are to be expected. No-one is going to be free from all problems. And Satan will also try to tip us out of God’s wheelbarrow. That is his one aim, to separate us from God. But when we have faith in Jesus, we can recall John 10:28.

Joh 10:28 I give eternal life to them. They will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. (or tip them out of my wheelbarrow)

When we are in the wheelbarrow, let us enjoy the ride.

When the storms of life buffet us. Hold on to the sides and you find they are not cold and hard like metal, rough and splintery like wood, or impersonal like plastic. No, the sides will be warm, inviting, soft and full of love. Because when we look closer at where we are, we see we are not in a wheelbarrow at all, but we are in God’s hands.

One reason I started this message was to find out for myself how to increase my faith in God. I think I have done that, and I hope you have all gained something from this message as well. May we all continue to grow more each day as we learn to rely on God and not our own understanding? May our faith be strengthened each day as we pray and read the scriptures.

There is one thing that is certain and that is the time of tribulation is very close at hand. A time of terrible troubles for the entire world. A time when our faith and trust in God will be tested to the limit. Many will fall away from God as they lose their faith, so this is when we must be the most vigilant and faithful to God.

Thanks for reading and may God bless you.

About The Author

My name is Leslie Rendell and I am just a normal Christian who has had no formal religious education. I have no letters after my name to try to convince you that I know what I am writing about. I just sincerely search the Bible for the information that I need.

I am retired and now live in the South West of Western Australia. Apart from my love of the Bible my other hobbies are vegetable growing, using the hydroponic method and photography where I love to photograph God's creation.

When I am doing my Bible studies, I do not just read the Bible, but I select a topic that I want to know more about, (such as the rapture) then I spend my time researching it in the Bible and also on the "World Wide Web". I like to see what other people are saying on that particular subject whether I agree with them or not. I believe it is vital to see all sides of an argument before accepting one as the truth on the matter.

Once I have decided on what I believe is right, then I start to search the scriptures to backup what I think is correct. I find this a great way to study as I can concentrate on one subject at a time.