

Having Faith In God

In A Faithless World

Understanding The Bible

*We must worship God
in spirit and truth*

Joh_4:23 But the hour comes, and now is,
when the true worshipers will worship the Father
in spirit and truth,
for the Father seeks such to be his worshipers.

EDITION ONE

Where Is Faith From?

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Introduction

We all struggle from time to time with our faith in God. When times are good and you do not have a lot of worries in your life, It can be easy for our faith to seem strong. Then when troubles strike, our faith can take a massive blow as we ask God “Why has this happened to me?”

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Maybe we have been suddenly stricken with a major health problem, or we have lost someone who was very near and dear to us. Something has happened in our lives to cause us much pain and suffering. These are the times when our faith in God and His goodness will come into question.

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When our lives appear blessed we may fool ourselves into thinking our faith is strong. But is it? As I hope to show you in this book, our faith is only truly tested in times of trouble or persecution. When we are in a situation where our lives depend on how we react to certain people or circumstances. This is the Litmus test for our faith. Will we continue to trust God no matter what the world throws at us? Or are we going to give in and conform to the ways of the world just for a peaceful life?

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Rom 1:17 (NIV) For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

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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.

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We can see from the above scriptures just how important faith is in the life of a Christian. It is essential. Without it no-one can truly call themselves Christian or saved.

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The Bible that I have chosen to use for references in this book is the “World English Bible” (WEB). 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.

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I am thrilled to think that someone has seen fit to read this book, and I sincerely hope you gain a lot of pleasure and understanding from these pages.

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I pray that our amazing God will lead you into truth from His word, The Holy Bible. Please read the following scripture from the book of John and think on the true meaning of this verse.

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

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All scripture means both the old and the new testaments. Remember that the

only scriptures that were available to Jesus and His disciples were those contained in the old testament. It was the Apostles that wrote the books of the new testament, so they would not have been available during their lifetimes.

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Therefore, do not ignore the “Old Testament”. This was the only “Bible” Jesus ever knew. The “New Testament” was only written after the death of Jesus.

What Is Faith?

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

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

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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.

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And 1 John 5:4,

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

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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.

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

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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.

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Our faith is not just intellectual knowledge and agreement. It is much more than just acknowledging certain facts about Jesus. The life, the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. These are all recorded for us in the Bible to read and understand. Faith is indeed needed here to believe what has written for us. But it is the promises from God about the future where the greatest test of our faith will be.

All through the entire Bible there are prophecies pertaining to a yet future time, some that are terrifying and others that are glorious. Real faith in God is accepting these prophecies are true and will all happen in due time. 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.

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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.

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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 to you, “get into the wheelbarrow.”

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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. If on the other hand we eagerly get into the wheelbarrow, then our trust, our faith is powerful. Just how strong is our faith?

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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, (but things are changing quite rapidly) so our faith has never really been tested.

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

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We do not have faith in God because we can see into the future. No, we have this faith because we know that all is going to end well for those who choose to trust God.. We cannot see the future, so all of our trust in God is for unseen things. Or as recorded for us in 2Cor 5:7. We walk by faith and not by sight.

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2Co_5:7 for we walk by faith, not by sight.

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We must remember that Jesus has never promised us a life free from troubles. But it is the exact opposite as we can plainly see in Joh 16:33

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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."

How Do We Get Faith?

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.

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

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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, find the truth on the matter. Only then can we decide if we believe. Only then can we be fully convinced so our faith will grow strong. 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 Him. 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.

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

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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:

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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. Read Rom 10:13-15 below to understand why it is so important to study and learn.

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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!”

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How can you call upon the name of the Lord if you do not know Him? If you have not spent time in studying His words and understanding them? How can an engineer learn how to build bridges? or a plumber how to fix a leak in your home? By studying their chosen profession, there is no other way.

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We see the perfect example of people learning in Acts 18:7-8. Paul’s preaching convinced those who heard his words. They believed and their faith was strong enough for them to be baptised.

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Act 18:7 He departed there, and went into the house of a certain man

named Justus, one who worshipped 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 baptised.

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We see the effects of good preaching in the book of acts.

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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.

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In the book of 1Th 2 and chapter 13 is more evidence of the word of God turning people to believe in God. To have faith that God is who the apostles preach He is.

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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.

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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 us, 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.

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

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If we believe this verse in the Bible, Then we are on the right road to true faith in God. Every promise God has give to us in the entire Bible. He will keep.

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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.

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.

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But these two passages of scripture are a reminded of what happens to someone without faith. They are confused by different teachings and therefore they cannot please God.

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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.

Living By Faith

A true understanding of faith is critical for a true Christian, not just understanding, but also living by what we learn from the Bible. Consider the following verse and you see that righteousness is revealed in the gospel and that righteousness is by faith from start to finish.

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Rom 1:17 (NIV) For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

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Faith will also carry a cost. The cost will be as people see you as being different. Many will resent what you are becoming and criticize you for your alternative way of living. Those who do this will most times be members of your own family. Husband, wife, brother, sister, parents and many of your friends.

#

Living by faith is required to live a Christ honouring life. God is not talking about a one time event about placing your trust in Jesus, it is much more than that. Living by faith will always apply to your present and your future Christian life. It means you will believe in everything Jesus has done for you, including to die on the cross. What He is doing now in your life now by building your trust and faith. And certainly what He has promised you He will do for you in the future. This is always going to be a 24/7 lifestyle.

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Believing in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is the start of our journey to trust God for everything we need in our lives. The gift of God's grace, through the finished work of Jesus, will bring eternal life, but faith should not end there. His death has saved us from the penalty of sin, but we must continue in faith if we want to be free from the power of sin. These realizations will affect every part of our daily lives. It will deepen our dependence on God, as we realize we cannot live a perfect Christian life without God's help. We will always be sinners as we stumble and occasionally mess up. But we have God's promise that we are still forgiven.

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When we live by faith, we are also looking forward to a time when we will be free of sin in His Kingdom. Christ will one day return for His Bride, The Church. If we can keep this thought in our minds, we should be filled with joy and gladness, even when things get tough and it seems the universe is against us. If we are confident in the work Jesus Christ has already done for us, what He is now doing, and what He has promised He will do in the future, then we can live our lives in the faith of Jesus Christ.

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Right now is the time to live by faith. We know Jesus is going to return one day. Therefore, we should live today as if He will return today. But we must also plan for His return being a little in the future. We must carry on living our lives until He returns, and never give up.

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Take the first step

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Now you understand a little better what faith is, and how you acquire it, it is

time to apply faith in your own life.

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That is easier said than done. Remember how a baby learns to walk. They are very unsteady and fall often, then then get better able to stand with no support. From there they become steady and can walk without help. Finally, they can run and not fall. This is like how your faith will grow slowly but becoming stronger each day. Growing in faith is exactly that. Growing. You will need to keep learning very day as you continue to study the words of the Bible. There is simply no other way to grow in faith.

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When you feel Jesus is drawing you to Himself, do not resist Him. Because God has given every one of us free will. We can be drawn to Him, or we can resist Him. This choice is ours and ours alone. No one can make this decision for us either way. To accept Jesus as our Lord is a very personal thing to do. To reject Him is also personal, but a very big mistake.

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Trust God.

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1Ti_4:10 For to this end we both labour and suffer reproach, because we have set our trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe.

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It is OK to stumble occasionally, just remember that God will always be there to help you up again. Like any good and loving Father will do for his child. Believe He will take care of you and all He asks for in return is your love and praise. He will give you courage and strength when you need it the most. Make Bible study and

prayer times a priority in your life.

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Be a friend.

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Php 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,

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You can start living your faith by simply being a friend to others and especially to those who may be underprivileged, poor, unwell or even in jail. Be a good listener and allow Christ's love to shine through you. The worst thing you can do is to be pre-occupied with your mobile phone or other device and not listen attentively to your friend. Always be authentic and inclusive when communicating with other people.

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Mar_9:35 He sat down, and called the twelve; and he said to them, "If any man wants to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all."

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This is similar to the verse above and is one of the harder things to understand and to live by. In this present world people are very self centered and care little for the well being of others. They live by the opposite to what God expects from His Children. When you see so many people taking "selfies" and posting them on all sorts of social media. You see the effects of living for yourself, and neglecting others who may need your help.

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Sharing your money and time is vital for a Christian to do if they are living by faith. I personally believe

the most important of these is to share your time. Being a friend and maybe leading others to Jesus Christ. What greater gift can you give to anyone apart from showing them the way to eternal life?

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Use Your God-Given Gifts

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1Pe 4:10 As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms.

1Pe 4:11 If anyone speaks, let it be as it were the very words of God. If anyone serves, let it be as of the strength which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

#

We have all been given a unique gift, and we are expected to use it for the glory of God. There are many types of gifts, so the first thing you will need to do is to discover what your particular gift is. This can be the hardest part, recognizing your talent. But when you realize what that talent is, then you can use that gift to help other people.

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You may be a very good host and enjoy entertaining people. Maybe your talent is public speaking where you can impart your knowledge to your listeners. Can you teach the word of God? Are you drawn to visit the elderly, the handicapped or even prisoners who all may feel lonely. There are many different talents one can possess. Just find your own talent and use it to the glory of God.

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Meet with others of Like Mind

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Heb_10:25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

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Find a group of believers who have the same values as yourself and meet with them regularly. I do not belong to a regular church but I meet every Sabbath with some friends who are all believers and we study the Bible together. During these times of the Covid virus crisis we meet via zoom when we cannot get together physically. Remember what Jesus has said in Mat 18:20 and also from the book of Proverbs in the “Old Testament”.

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Mat 18:20 “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the middle of them.”

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Pro_27:17 Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens his friend’s countenance.

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When you gather together as God’s family of believers, there are many benefits. The first is the presence of God among His Children, and another is we can all learn from each other. That is what “iron sharpens iron” means. There can never be a lone Christian. We need each other for moral, physical and spiritual support. So if you are just starting out on your life of faith. Seek others who believe similar to yourself. You will find when you are in the company of God’s Children you will feel at peace with them.

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Always be Positive

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Pro 17:22 A cheerful heart makes good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

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There is nothing worse than being in the company of people who are always negative and gloomy. So develop a positive attitude and always be this way. And certainly when you are in the company of others. We have the option to be positive or negative when situations in our lives go bad. Choose to be positive by glorifying God with your attitude and living your faith.

#

I have known some people who were always negative about everything. They looked for the worst in people and seemed to enjoy bad news. They are very difficult to be around and I usually try to get away from them as soon as possible. On the other hand. When in the company of positive people, I feel uplifted and encouraged and want to stay as long as possible.

#

Many medical doctors claim it can be bad for your health to be negative. As the quote from the book of Proverbs above states. It dries up the bones. So be positive in all you do and especially when talking about your God.

Examples Of People Who Had Faith

There are several examples in the Bible of characters who possessed true faith in God, and what He was able to do. One exceptional case is found in Chapter 8 of the book of Luke. This is the story about a woman who experienced a flow of blood for twelve years with no ending. She had treatment from doctors, but no one was able to treat her Successfully.

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The story of this woman begins when a leader of the Synagogue, whose daughter was seriously ill, appealed to Jesus to go with him and heal his daughter. This is documented in Luk 8:40-42.

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Luk 8:40 When Jesus returned, the multitude welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him.

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.

#

From these verses, we observe a considerable crowd watching for Jesus to return. As He went with Jairus, the crowd were pressing against Him. The NIV version of the Bible reads “the crowds almost crushed him”. So the crowd really

pressed hard up against Jesus as He followed the Ruler of the Synagogue. This is when we are introduced to the woman with the blood issue in verse 43.

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Luk 8:43 And a woman was there who had been subjected to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her.

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It is interesting in the book of Matthew how much faith this woman had in Jesus. No doubt she had seen Him on other occasions and more than likely seen some of the miracles He had performed. So when she approached Jesus it was with a faith that she would be healed. Not probably, but definitely. Her attitude was remarkably positive and she anticipated she would be healed if she could merely touch His cloak.

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Mat 9:21 She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed."

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Continuing in Luk 8:44, she came behind Jesus, not in front of Him, and secretly touched the fringe of His cloak and instantly her bleeding ceased. We saw her faith in Mat 9:21 that she would be healed. Now she is rewarded for her faith because all she had to do was touch the edge of the cloak of Jesus. She did not doubt, but having witnessed some miracles Jesus had performed, she would have been extremely confident He had the power to heal her of her burdens.

#

Luk 8:44 She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

#

It is essential to understand she never planned to approach Jesus personally,

but she just preferred to do it all in secret and later quietly go home. But that was not about to happen. One thing she had not planned on, was even though the crowd was pressing hard against Him, Jesus knew someone had touched Him. She may even have had difficulty getting in close enough to touch His robe. So how could Jesus know what she had done? But Jesus knew.

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Luk 8:45 "Who touched me?" Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you."

#

When Jesus asked "Who touch Me". Notice the reply from Peter. He is asking Jesus "how could you possible know someone had touch you?" The crowd was so close to Jesus, He would not have felt the woman touch Him. But He still knew. And the answer to how He knew is in the next verse.

#

Luk 8:46 But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

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Jesus could not have felt the woman touch His cloak, but He felt that power had gone out from Him. This force was the healing energy that stopped the blood flow for the woman. Her intention now was to return home unnoticed. But Jesus had other ideas, and no doubt this is all recorded for us today so we can learn for this incident.

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Luk 8:47 Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.

#

She could not go unnoticed so she came to Jesus and fell at His feet. She acknowledged she was the one who had received power from Him and how she was instantly healed of her ailment. It is critical to understand she was cured as soon as she touched His cloak, not when she fell at His feet. Not when she came face to face with Jesus. Even before Jesus spoke to her, she was healed. Look now at verse 48 and realize why she was healed. **It was her faith.**

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Luk 8:48 Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

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Jesus did not tell her He would cure her. She was already cured as soon as she touched His cloak. Remember, in Mat 9:21 the woman accepted, or had faith, she would be cured just by touching the corner of His cloak. She did not doubt that she would be healed, because if she had any doubts, then her healing would not have taken place. We see evidence of this in James 1:6-7.

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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.

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According to what Jesus declared, we are made to understand that it was not He who healed, but the woman seized the healing!! This should have us all understanding 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.

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Why was this event documented in the Bible? Was it to provide for us a perfect lesson of what faith is and what it can accomplish for a genuine believer? I believe this is the case. A perfect example of the power of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Daniel in the lion's Den

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The story of Daniel in the lion's den was once a popular children's story from the Bible. Unfortunately, much of the Bible is today seen as a collection of fairy tales with no real truth in them. The belief in God and the Bible is fast becoming outdated and forgotten. This is a real tragedy. This story of Daniels faith is another outstanding lesson of someone who placed their hope in God, regardless of the circumstances he was in. This is a remarkable story that most older people have heard many times over.

#

Daniel was a young Jewish boy taken as a prisoner. He proved himself invaluable to King Darius who made him a prominent person in his government of King, Other members of this government were very resentful of Daniel and the high regard the King held him in. They devised a plan to get rid of Daniel by deceiving the King into signing an order whereby anybody who prayed to anyone other than the king, should be thrown into the lion's den.

#

Dan_6:7 The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions' den.

Dan 6:8 Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed."

Dan 6:9 So King Darius put the decree in writing.

#

The ambush was now set, and all those who were scheming against Daniel just had to wait. They all knew Daniel prayed three times a day to God. Even though Daniel learned of this conspiracy, he nevertheless prayed to God three times a day. Not only that but he did it in an open window where he could be seen by those who were plotting his death.

#

Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel learned the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Dan 6:11 Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help.

#

The ambush is now sprung when Daniel is heard praying to God, so the conspirators go to King Darius and reveal what Daniel is doing, knowing he will be thrown into the lion's den.

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Dan_6:12 So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: "Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions' den?" The king answered, "The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed."

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Because of the decree the King had been fooled into signing. He is now compelled to carry out the order he had earlier been deceived into bringing into the law. Daniel's fate is now sealed, and he is thrown to the lions.

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Dan_6:16 So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!"

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It is interesting here to notice the King speaking to Daniel as he was about to be lowered into the lion's den. "May your God rescue you". The King valued Daniel and did not want him thrown to the lions, but because of the law he was deceived into signing. He could not go back on his orders. Then we see the King going to the lion's den at first light the next day and finding Daniel has indeed been protected by God from the lions.

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Dan_6:19 At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den.

Dan_6:20 When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

#

Now King Darius knows Daniel is safe. He then deals with those who conspired against Daniel. It is obvious from verse 24 that the lions were hungry, so why did they not devour Daniel? The answer is obvious; he was protected by God because of his faithfulness towards Him.

#

Dan_6:24 At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

#

There are many places in the Bible where faithfulness is commended by God. It is also relevant here to recognize that Daniel was conscious of the conspiracy and realized the consequences he would suffer if he prayed to anyone other than the King. Knowing this threat to his life, he nevertheless prayed to God, and not to the King. He had faith that God would protect him. This is the type of faith God wants from us. Doing the right thing regardless of who may be plotting against us.

#

If we live our lives to please others, and not follow what we know is the right thing to do, then we are showing a lack of faith. Having faith in God, trusting God is a way of life, even when it means you are persecuted because of your trust in Him. Thousands of Christians from the time of Jesus have put their lives on the line. Trusting god to the very end.

#

Psa_56:11 I have put my trust in God. I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

#

What can man do to me? They may be able to kill the body, but our soul belongs to God. They cannot touch that.

#

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

#

These three Hebrew boys also had great faith in their God, as we see in the story of them being thrown into the furnace of King Nebuchadnezzar. The King set up a statue of himself and commanded everyone to worship this idol, otherwise they were to be thrown into the furnace.

#

Dan 3:6 Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

#

Again we see jealousy coming to the forefront, and these three boys being bought before the king for refusing to bow down and worship the idol.

#

Dan 3:12 But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—who pay no attention to you, Your Majesty. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up."

#

When the King warned the boys that they would be thrown into the furnace, they showed no fear so they replied to the King.

#

Dan 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter.

Dan 3:17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand.

#

Apparently King Nebuchadnezzar was not happy with this answer so he ordered them to be thrown into the furnace. And the furnace was to be heated to three times the normal temperature. But again we see the hand of God in rescuing them. When they came out of the furnace, the King then acknowledged it was the God of the Boys who had rescued them and then made the following decree.

#

Dan 3:28 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

Dan 3:29 Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way."

#

We can also see God is faithful to all the promises He has made throughout the entire Bible. It is not just a case of us being faithful to God, but also of God being faithful to us. It is vital to keep in mind that we are not always rescued from our troubles. There have been millions of followers of Jesus Christ who have died rather than turn away from Him. Their faith was tested, but they were not found lacking.

#

David And 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. When the prophet came to his father's house wanting to see all of Jesse's children. He was not even presented to the prophet, he was still shepherding the sheep. He was the youngest and therefore the least in the family.

#

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 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. Even when no one else in all the Israelite army was brave enough to go out and fight this giant of a man called Goliath..

#

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 has not proved whether there was rain on the earth before the time of Noah or not. Some believe the earth was watered by mist and not rain. Other 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.

#

Faith Of 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 favourite books in the old testament are Ruth and Esther. Two remarkable women.

#

So, lets look at the book of Esther. The Persian King, King Xerxes held a banquet, and his wife refused to dance for him. This made the king rather angry and he had her banished from his palace. Esther was chosen from among many beautiful young woman to become the King's wife. So Esther became the wife of the Persian King, King Xerxes. It was a law of the land that to approach the king without being invited to do so was a certain death penalty. Even for his Queen.

#

Life must have been very good for Queen Esther, who was Jewish, but kept this a secret. 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 killed. His plan was to exterminate the entire

Jewish race. Undoubtedly under the influence of Satan, who was always looking for a way to destroy the Jewish nation.

#

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 the case for all Jews. When she entered the king's presence, he extended to her the gold sceptre, this 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.

#

Faith of Abraham

#

I think one of the greatest acts of faith 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 fulfilment 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.

#

Abraham was a faithful servant of God. But one day 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 have 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 this to 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 by supplying a ram to substitute for Isaac.

Seeing Is Believing

We live in a world where scientific proof is needed to explain everything. Anything that cannot be explained this way is not the truth. Therefore, just how do we live in a world that demands physical proof, even for matters that are spiritual? Spiritual matters cannot be tested by science, they are outside science.

#

To just openly dismiss faith in God on the grounds of no physical proof, is to miss the point of faith altogether. Faith defies the “seeing is believing” idea the world demands. God’s elect will always hope for His Kingdom even though it cannot be physically seen.

#

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

#

When we turn to God, He will remove the veil of uncertainty, because Jesus Christ is where our faith comes from. We read in Rev 14:12 that it is the faith “of” Jesus that we possess, not our own faith, but Christ’s faith within us.

#

Rev 14:12 Here is the perseverance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

#

It is from Him we get our faith, This is further emphasised in Heb 12:2.

Notice, it is Jesus who is the “Author and perfecter of our faith”.

#

Heb 12:2 looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising its shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

#

In Hebrews 11:6, God tells us it is impossible for us to please Him if we lack faith. We need the faith of Jesus to please God. Remember the faith of the woman with the blood issue, Daniel and the three Jewish boys who were thrown into the furnace. These examples of faith are there to encourage us.

#

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 must rely upon the faith of Jesus to be in us, and then we can please God the Father. There are many questions that we will not have the answers to in this lifetime. This is where our faith comes into play. When we choose to believe in what we do not see, God will show Himself to us in various ways that are without doubt the works of something that is much greater and bigger than we are. He accomplishes this through His amazing creation, our moral compass and our own consciences that tell us what is right and what is wrong. Through His son Jesus Christ and the leadership from The Holy Spirit.

#

We will never have all the answers to our questions, so we must rely upon faith. We can also look at God’s track record in keeping His promises, as we can

see he has never failed to keep them. All the prophecies in the Bible have been kept, except of course for those that are yet future promises.

#

What we must do is to care a great deal more about building a relationship with God than to search for answers that are not revealed to us.

#

Four questions we should not ask

#

1. Why me? Rather than ask that question, we should seek to learn what we can from the experience. How can I grow and build my character, strengthen my faith, and become more like Jesus?

#

2. Don't ask "Where are you Lord?". Move closer to Him through daily Bible study and prayer. God is an unchanging God, so if you feel distant from Him, remember that is it you who has moved. Not Him!

#

3. Don't ask God "What is your will in my life" and then wait for God to knock on your door and give you a 100 page job description. Rather, seek God's will daily and follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. Ask with an open mind and a willing heart and be prepared to surrender to the leadership of The Holy Spirit.

#

4. "Why did You allow this to happen?" There will be many times throughout our lives when we will be tempted to ask God why He allowed something to happen. Whether it is something personal or a general problem in the world. Ask God for His comfort and guidance through all of life's troublesome times. Trust him

with the future.

#

If we spend too much time searching for answers that may not be available right now, we are taking time away from building that all important relationship with God. First, build a loving and trusting relationship and follow His lead in your life. When we do this, we are living by faith and not by sight. We learn what it means to be compassionate, humble, loving and self-disciplined.

#

James 4:7-10 contains some precious advice.

#

Jas 4:7 Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Jas 4:8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Jas 4:9 Lament, mourn, and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to gloom.

Jas 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you.

#

If we are prepared to “live by faith,” we are accepting an invitation from God to change our way of thinking (or to repent) and to trust Him for the “here and now” as well as for the future. Notice in the verses above that if we resist Satan, he will flee from us, and if we draw near to God, He will draw near to us.

#

We will all struggle from time to time when we feel we are lacking in faith. But this is when we must get closer to God through studying His words and through

prayer. Never give up, because God has promised to never leave you, not fore-sake you. Many people believe that if it is from God, then it must be easy, but this is far from the truth and most times, if it is from God, then it may be the hardest thing you have ever been asked to do.

#

In Today's Modern World

Today we live in a very different world to just a few decades ago. And a totally different world to when Jesus walked this earth. Today's life style is very fast, and more and more people are losing their faith in God. Many people no longer believe that God even exists. There are movements afoot trying to remove God from every walk of life. From our schools right through to our political leaders, God is being ignored.

#

And as if that is not enough, we find many churches being vandalized and Christians being persecuted more and more. It is becoming more dangerous almost by the day to be a Christian.

#

Having faith in God, trusting Him in every part of your life may not always be easy, but it will always be well worth it. Remember that this life is only fleeting and very temporary, but life in God's kingdom is eternal, never ending.

#

We must be prepared for opposition to our faith. We live in a world that is becoming more and more anti-Christian, so the obstacles to our faith will grow more each day.

#

Only through the regular reading and studying of God's Holy scriptures will you grow in the faith of Jesus Christ.

#

Sharing your faith expresses thanks and is an act of obedience to our Lord. But do not force your beliefs onto others. Remember that no one can come to Jesus unless God the Father draws them.

#

Joh_6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.

#

It is a waste of time to believe in God in word only. Without a living faith, it is impossible to please God. Learn from His words what He wants from you. You must welcome Jesus Christ into your life and always seek His will.

#

Having full faith in God is not an easy road to travel, but the destination is a fabulous place. Be one of those who are saved, as we see in Heb 10:39.

#

#

Heb_10:39 But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.

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.



If you have read one of my books I would greatly appreciate you leaving a comment on my website (www.leslierendell.com) or on the Amazon page where you downloaded the book.

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<https://www.amazon.com.au/dp/B08KHXMK1T>

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#

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