

What is Faith?

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. **2** For by it the elders obtained a good report. **5** By faith Enoch... pleased God. **6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Nobody can be saved without faith. The Bible speaks of faith, or believing, in relation with believers and the work of Jesus on the cross. **But without this faith, nobody can please God nor go to heaven.** This is the essential element to be saved. Other conditions that God imposes for a person to be saved is that one believes that God does exist, and that the God of the Bible, Jehovah, he is the Supreme Being that will judge every person, giving them what they deserve, rewards or punishment.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: **9** Not of works, lest any man should boast. God affirms that man is saved by having faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior. At the same time, it is grace or a gift without being deserved, but gifted by the hand of God. But what is faith? Because this faith is something much more than just a door into heaven, even though by this faith WE WILL BE SAVED AND GO TO HEAVEN. This is true. Faith is to believe something, but you don't have faith simply because you declare something to be so, but rather, you have faith by being convinced that it is true, and that it is powerful in changing the world and you, and acting in the world, and you are basing your life upon this principle or event. Faith is when you are totally convinced that this is the principle that you should embrace and use as the guide of your life forever.

Faith and Israel's Destruction

Habakkuk 2:4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. The situation in Habakkuk is that Israel proclaimed that they were the children of God, in other words, saved. But their lives were a testimony to their infidelity and spiritual prostitution against that very same professed relationship with God. Because of this, it got to the

point that God said, "enough is enough, I will punish them." In this prophecy and curse against Israel, God identified the deceived that thought that they were saved, but nonetheless their declarations, in their actual lives, "their souls were not right" and they were "proudful". God saw these elements as being directly opposite of faith in God, and they were not compatible, a child of God cannot be like this.

Equally, you can identify the few truly saved in society by their faith in God and their ways that show their true salvation, because the "just," or the truly saved, impose with strength on their own lives that what they believe (their faith) will guide their actions in their lives, so that this defines the person, "the just will live by his faith." For Israel in the time of Habakkuk, the Babylonians (or Chaldeans) were going to destroy Israel, and this judgment came because they did not really make Jehovah their God, but they made other things their gods.

Before condemning Israel and going out bragging that "we are not like this today", yes, we are exactly like them. No, we don't make gods out of wood and silver, but we exalt gods of metal called cars, cell phones, we have gods of entertainment and pleasure, etc. that consume our lives so that we don't have time, resources, nor strength for the True God. We exalt experiences that give us pleasure and joy, entertaining us as our gods. But we do not have the joy of Jesus! We have our possessions, money, riches, and houses as our gods. Before God, these are our priorities.

Luke 8:14 And that (seed) which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. In this parable, he who does not bear fruit is lost to hell. But the pleasures of this life are exactly what impedes these people from being saved, and they are gods in the place of the True God.

The Principle of Faith, the End of Faith

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to

every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. **17** For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. Paul was not ashamed of his salvation, that of the good news of the gospel. In other words, Paul did not hide his salvation like something that he didn't want others to see. He understood that his salvation was an event, not of a day, but that affected his daily life until God would take him up to heaven. For Paul, salvation was something that he had to develop every day. Paul lived his life in such a manner that his Savior could be seen in all his life. Paul didn't hide his faith. The persecution that came to him was because he could not cease to preach Christ. The gospel was in his thoughts every moment. Hebrews 11 exalts such people like Paul in this aspect.

The principal theme of Romans is justice, or to be good with God. This is not done by works but through faith. What you believe is important, and these beliefs come out through the different aspects of your life (by your actions, works, your speech, your attitudes) after you are saved if in truth you have believed.

"By Faith and unto Faith." Even if you do not understand everything well, this speaks of our salvation in the beginning of our life in Christ, all because we believe, and after we are saved some time, until the rest of our life, our faith will guide us in our priorities so that we follow the example of Jesus.

To live by faith is to say that the moral principles of God, that God has given us in His Word, these principles are alive every day, in every action, in every word that we speak, in every attitude of the heart, and this shines in our lives. **Matthew 5:16** Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. The just puts aside his beliefs and previous priorities for the Word of God now to shine through his life. He does not believe that good works will save him, but rather that he is saved by faith, and now this biblical faith will

take him by the hand, and saturate his life with these principles, guiding him.

Faith guides us.

Galatians 3:11 *But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith.* There is a relationship that we must understand. The law of God does not justify. Faith, in itself, is the only thing that we are able to do in order to please God. But what is faith? It is not your declaration or some doctrine that you are supposed to subscribe to. Faith is a belief that so totally overwhelms you and your life, that from your actions unto your speech and even your attitudes are impregnated with that belief.

James 2:22 *Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?*

You really do not believe in something if there is no evidence (works) that correspond to that belief. Good works according to the Bible are evidence of your declarations, that they are what you believe and what are "real" in your life, because faith has caused these good works.

If you have faith, do not go backwards.

In Hebrews 11:6, God says that He is the rewarder (he who judges, punishes, chastises, and rewards good things). **Hebrews 10:38** *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

Our salvation is in the past, in the cross of Calvary, but it is also our faith for the present, and active in our daily lives, and it is our future hope, that God will rescue us in the day of the judgment of sins on that day.

Hebrews 9:27 *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: Psalms 96:13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth. Psalms 58:11 So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that*

judgeth in the earth. It is important to understand what salvation is, and what is what God expects from you in the present and in the future. Your faith (without works or merits that you have done, only your faith) saves you in the moment of salvation. BUT, for every saved person, that same faith will work in you, God through Jesus and the Holy Spirit working with you, so that your faith will produce good works or evidence that you have truly believed.

God will judge all. There is a decision of if you will go to heaven, or if not, then you will go to hell. This decision is based in your faith. But the evidence after the moment of salvation is revealed by how you live afterwards, your works after you say you have that faith. These works are going to sustain your declaration of faith, or they are going to show that you never truly had faith since the beginning. You have only been deceiving yourself.

Faith is through receiving God.

John 1:12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:* It is only through your faith that you are saved. But after being saved, faith is the only way or method by which God can bless you. For your faith, you receive instructions from God, the guide for your life, spiritual understanding, and by faith you can avoid the punishments of God. The blessings and provisions of God only come as you exercise your faith within your life.

But you must understand that faith in the Bible usage is also a moral principle, as "the truth", and exists only when the person declares that faith and actually uses it in his life.

James 2:18 *Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*

You cannot say that you have faith when you believe good works will save you, but you cannot throw out good works either. The faith that you have is exactly seen by your works. The evidence of your life is what you see important and rules in your life.

The Just Will live by their Faith

Faith will be the Guide of their Life



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John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. The Bible makes it very clear that a saved person will be in heaven for the future eternity, and this is because he believes and "has" Jesus as his Savior. The prophet Habakkuk follows this thinking with an observation, the just, or in other words, the saved, will live by this same faith that saves them. Salvation will so change his life that the person will be like his Savior, and this faith that saves him will appear in how he changes his speech, his actions, and his attitudes because Jesus will do this to his redeemed. There are no people who are exceptions to this principle. Certainly, it is a slow process to make this change (called sanctification). God understands that you will not be perfect immediately. But the person that is not in this road to begin with is probably not even saved.