

## **Faith**

### **Part 2**

#### **Introduction**

In the first part of our study we learned that our faith is so important to God that He has wrapped our spiritual life and all his promises in it. We also learned that when we have little faith, the first thing we can do is to pray for God to increase it.

#### **Our Study**

In this section, we will look at more ways we can add to our faith as well as other important lessons Scripture has to teach us about faith.

#### **Increasing Our Faith**

##### **The Scripture: Romans 10:17**

*"Faith comes by hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."*

1. How do we receive faith according to this verse? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hearing the word of God preached is a powerful means of increasing our faith. We need to listen to God's word until it becomes a vital part of us.

Paul wrote these words when scripture wasn't available in printed form to most people. Today we can also increase our faith by reading the word of God.

The Bible shows us still another way to strengthen our faith.

##### **The Scripture: Romans 12:6**

*"We have different gifts, according to the grace given us....let (us) use it in proportion to (our) faith."*

2. What are we to do with our gifts? \_\_\_\_\_

When we want our muscles to grow stronger, we exercise them. This is a physical fact, but it is true in the spiritual realm as well. If we want our faith to grow, we must regularly exercise it.

3. How do we exercise our gift? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We increase our faith by exercising it but exercising in proportion to the faith we already have. While we want to exercise our faith whenever possible, it is useless to act as though we have more faith than we do. However, the more we exercise the faith we actually have, the stronger it will grow.

Our goal is to have the strong confident faith Jesus describes in Matthew.

**The Scripture: Matthew 21:22**

*"If you believe (have faith in God) you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."*

4. What is the determining factor in having our prayers answered? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Let us admit that having the kind of faith God wants us to have is not easy. Part of the reason it is so hard is because we often go about it in the wrong way. Let's look at it the right way.

**The Scripture: Romans 10:9,10 (TAB)**

*"If you acknowledge and confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and in your heart believe (adhere to, trust in and rely on the truth) that God raised Him from the dead you will be saved. With the heart a person believes (adheres to, trusts in and relies on Christ) and so is justified (declared righteous, acceptable to God), and with the mouth he confesses—declares openly and speaks out freely his faith—and confirms (his) salvation."*

5. How do we believe (have faith)? \_\_\_\_\_

In this verse the Apostle Paul tells us how to make our faith effective. He tells us that we must believe with our heart, rather than with our head.

We need to understand that the heart and the rational mind are not the same. In Scripture, the heart refers to our deepest inner core, not our emotions or intellect. If doubt creeps into our mind while we are exercising our faith, we don't need to pay any attention to it, as long as our heart faith is strong.

6. How is our salvation confirmed? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the definition of confession given here? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Yes, when we believe with our heart and confess that faith freely with our mouth, we are using the key God has given us to answered prayer.

**Lack of Faith**

Just as our faith provides this essential key, lack of faith locks the door.

**The Scripture: James 1:6, 7**

*"When he (a man) asks he must believe and not doubt because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord, he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does."*

8. What must we do when we ask God for something? \_\_\_\_\_

9. How is the person who doubts described? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What should he not expect? \_\_\_\_\_

God has chosen to do His work on earth through us, through our faith. Lack of faith, either on our part or on the part of those we are praying for is a limiting factor.

**The Scripture: Mark 6:4-6**

*"Jesus said to them, 'Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor.' He could not any miracles there, except lay His hands on a few sick people and heal them. And He was amazed at their lack of faith."*

11. Why couldn't Jesus do any miracles in his hometown? \_\_\_\_\_

Although many people in Israel accepted Him, Jesus was met with disbelief in his hometown. The result? His power was limited and he couldn't any miracles there.

Satan will try to stop our advance in faith at every turn by trying to fill our heart with doubt. But all his powers cannot withstand genuine faith. Why?

**The Weapon of Faith**

**The Scripture: Ephesians 6:16**

*"Take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one."*

12. How does this verse describe faith? \_\_\_\_\_

Faith as a shield is an important weapon in our spiritual warfare against Satan.

13. What can the Christian do with the shield of faith? \_\_\_\_\_

We've all experienced those flaming arrows Satan shoots at us to set our doubts afire. But the shield of faith extinguishes them.

**The Scripture: 1 Peter 1:5**

*"Through faith (you) are shielded by God's power."*

14. How are we shielded by God's power? \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, when we use our faith as a weapon against Satan's tactics, God's power also acts as a shield to protect us.

The Bible has much more to tell us about faith. While we don't have space to look at every scripture, let's look at some of the more powerful ones.

### **The Gift of Faith**

Faith is also a part of another group of important gifts from God.

#### **The Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1, 7-10**

*"Now about spiritual gifts...I do not want you to be ignorant...Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues."*

15. What is faith called in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

16. What is it given for? \_\_\_\_\_

When the Holy Spirit wishes, He gives us the gifts of faith, a strong inner confidence that God will move on a particular occasion.

### **Faith's Companion**

According to the Bible faith has an important companion. Let's see what the book of James has to tell us.

#### **The Scripture: James 2:14-17**

*"What good is it...if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."*

17. How does James describe faith not accompanied by deeds? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **The Scripture: James 2:20-22**

*"Do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless. Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. You see that his faith and his actions were working together and his faith was made complete by what he did."*

18. What did Abraham's faith and his actions working together do? \_\_\_\_\_

They made his faith complete! Faith and actions are meant to work side by side. One or the other alone is insufficient. Together they made a powerful combination.

## The Testing Of Our Faith

The Bible warns us that our faith will be tested at times. However, we shouldn't let this discourage us. Valuable rewards accompany this testing.

### The Scripture: 1 Peter 1:6, 7

*"Greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."*

19. Why do we suffer trials? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

20. How is our faith described in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

At the beginning of this study we looked at the value God places on our faith. Now Peter tells us that it is of greater worth than gold.

21. What is our attitude to be in times of trial? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### The Scripture: James 1:2-4

*"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."*

22. What does the testing of our faith develop? \_\_\_\_\_

23. What is the end result of our trials? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Lord has chosen to do His work on earth through our faith. Let us move forward boldly, not doubting and not fearing the testing that lies along the way, but exercising our faith and accompanying it with good deeds.

## The Answers

1. By hearing the message through the word of Christ
2. Use them
3. In proportion to our faith
4. Believing, having faith
5. With our heart
6. By our confession
7. To declare openly and speak out freely our faith
8. We must believe and not doubt
9. Double-minded, unstable
10. To receive anything from God
11. Because of the people's lack of faith
12. As a shield
13. Extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one.
14. Through faith
15. A spiritual gift
16. The common good
17. As dead
18. They completed his faith.
19. So our faith can be tested
20. Of greater worth than gold
21. We are to greatly rejoice.
22. Perseverance
23. We will be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

I have borrowed some of the ideas in this study from the Aglow publication, How to Increase your faith by Steven Ost.

All scripture quotations in this publication are from the Holy Bible, New International Version  
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