

## GREAT BIBLE DOCTRINES - LESSON 11 THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH

Introduction: Faith is the one word that sums up man's proper response to God's grace in the process of salvation. "By grace you have been saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see...and without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him" - Hebrews 11:1,6. There is great pressure of unbelief in the world we live in. But the greatest realities are unseen, and we believers live and make our decisions in terms of these.

1. Faith is necessary for salvation.
  - A. We cannot please God without it. There cannot be a loving relationship without trust - Hebrews 11:6.
  - B. Faith is basic in accepting the gospel and so being saved - Habakkuk 2:4 - "The righteous will live by his faith." See also Romans 1:16, 17; Mark 16:16; Acts 16:31; John 3:16.
  - C. The same faith is essential throughout all the Christian life as we accept God's promises - 2 Corinthians 5:7; Ephesians 3:17 - "That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith."
  
2. Faith is based on God's word and promises - Romans 10:17; 4:20, 21; Galatians 3:22.
  - A. Faith is not based on our senses - 2 Corinthians 5:7.
  - B. We give the same weight to God's word as to our senses - Titus 1:2; Hebrews 10:22.
  - C. Where our reason or senses conflict with God's word, we can believe God's word - Romans 3:4; 4:17-25; Matthew 19:26; - "With God all things are possible."
  - D. The result is a life lived on the "kingdom plane" where reality and expectation are based on God's ability, not ours - Matthew 19:23-26; Mark 9:23; Matthew 21:18-22; James 5:15; Romans 8:28.
  
3. Every part of life is to be lived by faith.
  - A. A Christian should do nothing except what he/she believes is God's will - Romans 14:23.
  - B. In every decision, every activity, every problem we should seek God's will and ask for and expect His help and guidance - Proverbs 3:6.
  
4. Faith is in God's ability, not ours.
  - A. We depend on God for salvation, because our own deeds fall short of God's law - Romans 3:20-23; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5.
  - B. We depend on God for many other things which we cannot do for ourselves, such as overcoming death, solving impossible problems, overcoming stubborn sins, etc. - 1 John 5:4; Philippians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 15:55, 56; Romans 8:13.
  - C. Faith looks at God and His power, not at the impossibility of the problem - Matthew 14:25-33.
  - D. The result is great rest and peace - Psalm 127:2; Romans 8:32; Matthew 6:25-33.

5. True faith is always expressed in confession and action.
  - A. Confession - Romans 10:9, 10; Matthew 10:32, 33
  - B. Action and obedience - James 2:14-16 (It is not that the believer trusts the merit of his actions to save him. He acknowledges his own inability and trusts in the grace of God. But true faith in the Lord is always anxious to obey Him - Galatians 5:6; Romans 1:5; 16:26; Hebrews 5:8,9; 2 Thessalonians 1:8.)
  - C. Our belief or lack of it is demonstrated by our lifestyle, what gets us excited, what we talk about, how we spend our time and money, whether we obey God, and whether we are anxious and fearful.
  
6. Faith is a decision of the will, not just a feeling.
  - A. It is commanded, and mere feelings cannot be commanded - Acts 16:31; Mark 1:15; John 14:1.
  - B. We can decide to live as if every statement of God's word is true.
  - C. We can decide to give up every anxiety to God as a sacrifice and let Him take care of it while we live in peace and devote our minds to serving Him - 1 Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:6,7; Mark 5:36.
  - D. If we decide to live as though God is and His word is true, our experience will show these things to be so, and the feeling of trust will follow.
  - E. A faith involving a decision of the will can carry us through periods of emotional or spiritual doubt.
  
7. Through faith we can:
  - A. Come to God - Hebrews 11:6.
  - B. Receive the Holy Spirit - Galatians 3:2, 14; Ephesians 1:13, 14.
  - C. Overcome Satan's attacks - Ephesians 6:16; 1 Peter 5:9.
  - D. Receive what we pray for - James 1:5-7; Matthew 21:21, 22; James 5:15.

Conclusion: God is the greatest reality of all. His word is truer than anything else. He is perfectly good and can do us no evil. We can safely believe in Him and entrust our lives to Him. There is no hope or safety apart from the life of trust in God.

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