

# BUILDING OUR FAITH LESSON #2



# SIX EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH

- **HOW TO INCREASE YOUR FAITH TO LEAD YOUR CHURCH TO GROW**
- As noted, the Scriptures describe six expressions of faith in the Christian life. These are expressions of the "one faith" that may be described as "affirming what God has said in His Word."
- This definition is expressed in the popular statement, "Faith is taking God at His Word." To have a great faith and move mountains, a person must move through all six expressions of faith.

# ***1. Doctrinal faith.***

- If we want faith, we must begin with a correct understanding of the Word of God.
- The more we know of the Bible, the more faith we can have; and the more correctly we know the Bible and the more we act on the promises of God in His Word, the more effective our faith will be.

- Throughout the New Testament, the phrases "the faith" and "doctrine" are used interchangeably. When faith has an article preceding it, as in "the faith," it means "the statements of faith." Therefore, to have correct faith, we must have an accurate statement of doctrinal faith.
- The Apostle Paul: As Saul of Tarsus, he was persecuting the church, he thought his doctrine was accurate and that he was serving God.
- Yet later when he met Christ on the Damascus road, he gained a living faith that changed what he believed and how he lived.

- Paul talked about those who "will depart from the faith" ([1 Tim. 4:1](#))
- and those who had "denied the faith" ([1 Tim. 5:8](#)).
- At the end of his life, the apostle was able to say, "I have kept the faith" ([2 Tim. 4:1-8](#)).
- Jude challenged his readers to "contend earnestly for the faith" ([Jude 3](#)).

- [Hebrews 3:12](#)

- Here Paul again warns brethren-Christians-by the examples of Israel's failures in the wilderness. They were brought out of Egypt with the fullest assurance of blessing, prosperity, and eternal rest.
- By their sin and unbelief they came short of the promised blessings, fell in the wilderness, and were cut off from God.
- Paul states plainly that Christians-born-again or saved men-can also return to an evil heart of unbelief, depart from the living God, be hardened by deceitfulness of sin, be cut off by God, and be finally lost ([Hebrews 3:12-14](#)).

# Seven Stages of Apostasy:

- 1. Refusal to hear God ([Hebrews 3:7](#))
- 2. Hardness of heart through refusal to hear and obey God ([Hebrews 3:8](#)2. Hardness of heart through refusal to hear and obey God (Hebrews 3:8,[13](#)2. Hardness of heart through refusal to hear and obey God (Hebrews 3:8,13,[15](#)))
- 3. Unbelief a consequence of hardening the heart against God ([Hebrews 3:12](#))

- 5. Open rebellion against God to provoke and tempt Him ([Hebrews 3:8-9](#))  
5. Open rebellion against God to provoke and tempt Him (Hebrews 3:8-9, [16](#))
- 6. Habitual sinning, careless living, and flagrant violation of God's laws ([Hebrews 3:10](#))  
6. Habitual sinning, careless living, and flagrant violation of God's laws (Hebrews 3:10, [17](#))
- 7. Apostasy-all faith in God and His



- If we want to have a growing biblical faith, we need to ground it upon a correct knowledge of God.
- A certain woman once heard someone compliment her great faith. "I have not a great faith," she responded, "I have a little faith in a great God."
- Someone may ask, "How can I get more faith?" Paul wrote, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" ([Romans 10:13-17](#)).

- The gospel—meaning the good news of the message of Jesus Christ—is the source and foundation of all faith.
- Doctrinal faith is both the beginning and the test of our Christianity. **If our statement of faith is wrong, then our personal faith is misplaced.** We must begin with a correct statement of faith and build saving faith thereupon.

## 2. *Saving faith*

- A person becomes a Christian by faith. "For by grace you have been saved through faith" ([Ephes. 2:1-10](#)).
- When the Philippian jailor was troubled about his salvation, he was exhorted to exercise belief—the verb expression of faith. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" ([Acts 16:25-37](#)).
- When Nicodemus failed to understand how he could enter into a relationship with God, Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" ([John 3:1-16](#)).

- Apart from faith, personal salvation is impossible.
- Personal salvation is experienced by the inner person. Because humans are composed of intellect, emotion and will, faith comes through a proper exercise of these three aspects of personality.
- Our faith must be grounded on correct knowledge. People cannot put their trust in something they do not know about, nor can they honestly trust something that is proven false to them.

- People must first know the gospel, which means they have an intellectual knowledge of salvation. But this knowledge alone will not save them.
- The Gospel of John uses the word "believe" 98 times and ties faith to the object of belief. We are exhorted to "believe in Jesus Christ."
- As a result, the important aspect of belief is *what* you believe, not just the measure of your belief. Therefore, to have saving faith, people must believe that God will punish sin ([Romans 6:23](#) you believe, not just the measure of your belief. Therefore, to have saving faith, people must believe that God will punish sin (Romans 6:23), and that Christ has made a provision for their salvation ([Romans 5:8-11](#)))

- People must believe these truths, which means they accept them intellectually; but mere intellectual assent to biblical truth is not enough to save.
- Our faith will have an emotional expression. Knowledge about God is the foundation of saving faith, but such faith will extend to the individual's emotional responses as well.
- Solomon wrote, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding" ([Proverbs 3:5](#)).

- Jesus repeated this truth, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" ([Matthew 22:37](#)).
- This means that intellectual belief is not enough. People cannot trust their own understanding about God.
- Although emotions are involved in faith, faith is more than emotional feeling. Our emotional response to the gospel must be founded upon an intellectual understanding of the Scriptures.

- **A third aspect of saving faith is an expression of volitional faith.**
- People are saved as a result of an act of their wills whereby they rely on Christ as proclaimed in the gospel. Paul told the Roman Christians, "You obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered" ([Romans 6:17](#)).
- When people accept Jesus Christ as their Savior ([John 1:12](#)), it is a conscious act whereby they invite Him into their hearts ([Ephes. 3:16](#)).



# ***3. Justifying faith***

- Whereas saving faith is an experiential encounter with Jesus Christ, the next expression, "justifying faith" is nonexperiential.
- Justifying faith is belief that we have been justified or declared righteous. Justification is not something we feel with our senses. It is something that happens to our record in heaven. God is the One who performs the act of justification ([Romans 8:33](#)).
- Humans are the ones who receive the action and are justified ([Romans 5:1-6](#)). Justification is the judicial act of God whereby He justly declares righteousness to all those who believe in Jesus Christ.

- Abraham was the first person in the Bible described as having been justified by faith ([Genesis 15:6](#)).
- This is not to say that he was the first person to become a child of God.
- God made a promise to Abraham that he accepted as possible, and God rewarded him for his faith.
- **Justification is an act whereby our legal position in heaven is changed.**
- The basis of justifying faith is a double transference that happens at salvation.

- ***Our sin was transferred to Jesus Christ—He became our sin.*** In Paul's phrase "Christ died for us" ([Romans 5:8](#)), the preposition "for" is the key word.
- It indicates that He gave His life for the Church ([Ephes. 5:25](#)) and He gave Himself for the sins of the world ([John 1:29](#)).
- ***The second transference is that the perfection of Jesus Christ was credited to our account.***
- When God looks at us in judgment, He sees the righteousness of His son. "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us [the first step of transference], that we might become the righteousness of God in Him [the second step of transference]" ([2 Cor. 5:21](#)).

# *4. Indwelling faith*

- The Bible teaches that people cannot overcome sin and sinful habits by themselves. Faith is the secret of the victorious Christian life. "This is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith" ([1 John 5:1-12](#)).
- Even beyond living a triumphant life, a person can walk in moment-by-moment communion with God.
- This life of victory and fellowship is made available by the indwelling of Jesus Christ. When people become Christians, Christ comes into their lives. Believers have union and communion with Christ ([John 15:1-5](#)).

- Not only does Christ dwell within believers, but the power of Christ is also available to them.
- Paul testified, "Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God" ([Galatians 2:20](#)).
- Paul described this new faith that comes from Christ, "the promise by faith in Jesus Christ [that] might be given to those who believe" ([Galatians 3:22-24](#)).

- Every Christian has access to the faith of Jesus Christ. Yet many Christians are defeated and discouraged because they have not allowed Christ's power to flow out of their lives.
- The secret of victorious living is allowing the life of Jesus Christ to flow through us. Believers must surrender their fears and rebellions to Christ. In so doing, they find new faith to overcome their problems.

- To get this victory, Christians must first recognize that faith comes from Christ; it is described as "Christ's faith" ([Galatians 2:16](#)) To get this victory, Christians must first recognize that faith comes from Christ; it is described as "Christ's faith" (Galatians 2:16; [Ephes. 3:12](#)) To get this victory, Christians must first recognize that faith comes from Christ; it is described as "Christ's faith" (Galatians 2:16; Ephes. 3:12; [Phil. 3:9](#)).
- Second, Christians must yield (the nature of faith is trusting) and allow Christ to work

# 5. *Daily faith*

- When we live by faith, we are being set apart to God—this is the meaning of "sanctification." The Bible teaches that *positional* sanctification is a past action that was accomplished on Calvary.
- *Progressive* sanctification is being carried out daily, and *future* sanctification will take place when we arrive in the presence of God. Daily sanctification requires an exercise of faith, "For we walk by faith, not by sight" ([2 Cor. 5:7](#)).
- As we live by faith, God is able to use us and cause us to grow in grace. Sometimes daily growth seems minute or even nonexistent to a casual observer.



- We may sometimes become frustrated with the apparent lack of progress, not able to see the forest for the trees. It is good from time to time to look back and see how God has been working in our lives.
- As bricklayers place one brick upon the other in building a large tower, they may feel their progress is insignificant.
- Yet the tower will be built one brick at a time. It is the same in our Christian lives.
- God makes the big changes through a series of little ones.

- We must learn to trust God for the little things so we can enjoy great growth. We must trust God daily so we can enjoy yearly gain. Like any other growing experience, living by faith is taking one step at a time.
- We grow in faith through the Word of God.
- As we make the Word of God a part of our lives by reading, studying and memorizing, we begin to grow in faith ([1 Peter 2:2](#) As we make the Word of God a part of our lives by reading, studying and memorizing, we begin to grow in faith (1 Peter 2:2). Every Christian needs to hear the Word of God taught and preached regularly ([Psalm 1:1-3](#)).

- We grow in faith by following biblical principles. A growing faith is an obedient faith.
- We must put complete trust in the principles of the Bible and not trust our feelings.
- Faith is not a blind leap into the dark; faith is following the light of God's Word.
- We grow in faith through seeking the Lord. The doctrine of "seeking" the Lord is not usually emphasized, but it is biblical to search for God. "When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, Lord, will I seek'" ([Psalm 27:8](#)).
- **Our faith will grow as we seek God.**

- First, we will begin to recognize the issues that keep us from God. Then, as we search for a better relationship with the Savior, we will come to know God experientially.
- We grow in faith through confessing our sins. No Christian will live a sinless life, but God is constantly cleansing us through the blood of His Son. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" ([1 John 1:7](#)) We grow in faith through confessing our sins. No Christian will live a sinless life, but God is constantly cleansing us through the blood of His Son. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin"

- We grow in faith by surrender. The Christian must constantly surrender to the Lordship of Christ. We do this once when we are saved, but there are also subsequent moments of surrender to Christ. As we yield our lives to the Lord, we are growing in grace ([Galatians 3:3](#))

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(Galatians 3:3-6)

- We grow in faith through constant communion. If we want a growing faith, we must have constant communion with Jesus Christ. As we spend time in prayer, Bible study and fellowship with Christ, we will develop our faith more fully.
- Jesus recognized that we would become like those with whom we spend time ([Matthew 10:25](#)). As we spend time with the Lord, we will become more Christlike in our faith.
- We grow in faith through being tested by difficult experiences.

- Once we are saved, our faith is nurtured as we grow from victory to victory. Paul describes this as a movement "from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith'" ([Romans 1:17](#)).
- God wants us to have faith in Him because that pleases and glorifies Him.
- Living faith is not something we receive in the same way we take vitamin pills.

- The opportunity of taking a step of faith includes the risk of success or failure. When we successfully trust God, we should learn through the experience and grow thereby. Faith must come from a person's heart, which is governed by a free will.
- Therefore, to develop a person's faith, God will sometimes maneuver him or her into a corner so that the "creature" is forced to look at the Creator in faith. Through such experiences, we have the opportunity to grow in faith.



# 6. *The gift of faith*

- The gift of faith is one of the gifts the Holy Spirit supernaturally gives believers to serve God ([Romans 12:7](#) The gift of faith is one of the gifts the Holy Spirit supernaturally gives believers to serve God (Romans 12:7; [1 Cor. 12:9](#)).
- This is more than saving faith, which is also called a gift. The gift of faith is considered to be a serving gift, or an ability whereby a person serves God by exercising faith.
- Paul explained that the gifts differ "according to the

- God has given some this special gift of faith to enable them to carry out their ministries in more effective ways.
- If God has given us the gift of faith, we need to exercise it faithfully in keeping with well-balanced Christianity. Paul said, "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" ([1 Cor. 13:2](#)).
- The Bible teaches that the proper use of our gifts increases the effectiveness and usefulness of those gifts ([Matthew 25:14-34](#)).

- It also teaches that we can desire and pray for more gifts ([1 Cor. 12:31](#)).
- Therefore, it is possible for us (individually or corporately) to have more faith to trust God for bigger opportunities for service than we have now.
- If we are faithful in small things, God will give us more faith.
- Note that Abraham grew from being weak in faith to one who was strong in faith ([Romans 4:19-20](#)).