

Photographs of Faith 1

The Construct of Faith

What Faith Is Not

1. Faith is not just a religious feeling.

Trusting our entire eternal existence in how we feel is confusing and dangerous.

Proverbs 28:26 (NLT)

Those who trust their own insight are foolish, but anyone who walks in wisdom is safe.

2. Faith is not blind.

It is not accepting something without evidence.

Acts 17:10-12 (NLT)

That very night the believers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth. As a result, many Jews believed, as did many of the prominent Greek women and men.

3. Faith is not a positive mental attitude.

It is not minded over matter.

What we believe is crucial!

When we know what we believe, making decisions becomes easier.

It is faith's object that gives faith itself any significance.

Biblical faith is not a positive mental attitude that seeks to bring into existence the things that are believed in. It is good to think positively. It is good to be around positive people. Positive thinking in and of itself is not biblical faith.

Hebrews 11:6 (NLT)

And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.

What Faith Is

Hebrews 11:1 (N KJV)

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

It is a divine substance that earthly substance both longs for and is confused by.

What Faith Involves

Biblical faith involves three key aspects:

1. Knowledge of the Divine

Faith is dependent upon what can be known about God. The New Testament says that faith involves us coming to know God Himself.

John 17:3 (NKJV)

This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

That's why it is so important to consider the claims that Jesus made. It is in knowing Him that we know God. And this knowledge of God gives us the basis for our faith.

2. Believe Without Excuse (Assent)

In biblical faith, our knowledge of God must then be followed by assent.

Once we've recognized that certain things are true and are to be believed, we must actually believe them!

We persuade our excuse-ridden flesh to be obedient.

"I don't want to believe in Jesus."

"I don't want my life taken over."

"I don't want somebody in charge of me."

When we lay our lives open before Christ, when we see Him on the cross, and when we understand that He bore all of our sin and rebellion, He compels our belief.

Knowledge must be followed by assent.

3. Trust

Genuine faith involves trust. Knowledge and assent alone do not make real faith.

James 2:19 (NKJV)

You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! '

If faith is simply about understanding God correctly, we must conclude that the demons have saving faith.

A simple awareness of facts is not faith. **There must be a movement from knowledge to assent that culminates in trust.**

A summons to trust in Christ—actively, not passively—is included in all His invitations.

Matthew 11:28-29 (NKJV)

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls"

Note the verbs: "come," "take," "learn," and "find rest."

These are all action words. They involve doing.

Faith is not passive resignation.

New Testament faith begins in knowledge, leads to assent, and ends in trust based on the knowledge to which we have assented.

The circle of faith.

4. Without Seeing

We don't have faith based on provision but on promise!

Hebrews 11:39 (NKJV)

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, '

It's what's hoped for, not what's realized...

When we don't get what we have faith for:

You are not hoping for the wrong thing.

You have not offended God.

And it is not about your level of faith (mustard grain).

His promises are as good as His provision.

Faith is the perfect blend of Hope and Endurance.

His provision builds trust.

His promises build faith.

Faith comes from hearing and hearing the WORD (promises)

(Romans 10:17)

Faith is our knowing without seeing, our doing because of what He has done, and our trust in God's unseen yet fulfilled promises.

Unseen promises are not unkept ones.

Why Faith?

Every story of Hebrews 11 will help us understand the question of why faith is essential.