

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FAITH?

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We were talking last week about the Eye of Faith.

We are limited by our physical senses ... though there is a very real spiritual realm all around us. We should know it is there.

FAITH IS FUNDAMENTAL.

It is basic — core!

Romans 1:16-17

16 **For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes**, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

17 **For in it (the gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith**; as it is written, “**The just shall live by faith**.”

Romans 1:17 (NIV)

17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed — **a righteousness that is by faith from first to last**, just as it is written: “**The righteous will live by faith**.”

Romans 1:17 (NLT)

17 This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. **This is accomplished from start to finish by faith**. As the Scriptures say, “**It is through faith that a righteous person has life**.”

THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.

It is not an incidental. It should permeate all of our activities. It is not the cherry on the icing on the cake.

It can be “tricky” for us ... as **it requires to be aware of — and confident of — things not seen**.

Hebrews 11:1

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

Faith is assurance — certainty — of things we can't see.

WE WALK BY FAITH ... AND NOT BY SIGHT! (2 Cor 5:7)

Faith is one of the greatest of all attributes we could have.

1 Corinthians 13:13

13 And now abide **faith, hope, love**, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Three of the attributes that are most desirable to have.

Faith is a Biblical topic. It can have a very practical application in our lives! It is worth understanding what scripture teaches.

Let's continue our review. We will see that **there are different experiences — or levels— of faith.** Will we recognise ourselves?

Mark 4:35-41

35 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."

36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.

37 **And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.**

38 **But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow.** And they awoke Him and said to Him, "**Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?**"

39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

40 **But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"**

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

NO FAITH!

They had allowed fear to take over. In this situation ... they had NO FAITH!

Fear and faith are very similar. FEAR IS BELIEF ... JUST AS FAITH IS BELIEF. FEAR WILL EXCLUDE FAITH!

When we're in the stormy circumstances of life ... where is our belief? Fear — or faith?

Matthew 14:22-32

22 Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

23 And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. **Now when evening came, He was alone there.**

24 But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

25 **Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.**

26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

27 **But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."**

28 And Peter answered Him and said, "**Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.**"

29 **So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.**

30 But **when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"**

31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "**O you of little faith, why did you doubt?**"

32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

PETER WALKED ON WATER!

Jesus criticised Peter. **LITTLE FAITH!** Better than “NO FAITH” — he at least started to walk — but failed before reaching his destination. Doesn’t deliver!

We can see the principle illustrated in:

Luke 8:11-13

11 “Now the parable is this: **The seed is the word of God.**
12 **Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.**
13 **But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.**

They believe for a while — but their faith is not sustained!

A bit like Peter on the water? What about us? **Faith has to continue.**

Matthew 6:28-30

28 “**So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;**
29 **and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.**
30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?**

LITTLE FAITH.

They had some faith. But it looks like they are prone to worry — to fear! How would they get by? How would they prosper?

So — **NO FAITH ... LITTLE FAITH.** But — there can also be **GREAT FAITH!**

Matthew 8:5-13

5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him,

6 saying, “**Lord, my servant is lying at home paralysed, dreadfully tormented.**”

7 **And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.”**

8 The centurion answered and said, “**Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.**

9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

10 **When Jesus heard it, He marveled**, and said to those who followed, “**Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!**

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, “**Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.**” **And his servant was healed that same hour.**

GREAT FAITH!

Jesus marvelled!!

The centurion merely needed a “word”. It was from Jesus directly — **but we have Jesus’ written words.**

Matthew 15:21-28

21 Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, “**Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.**”

23 **But He answered her not a word.**

And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, “Send her away, for she cries out after us.”

24 But He answered and said, “**I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**”

25 Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, “**Lord, help me!**”

26 But He answered and said, “**It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.**”

27 And she said, “**Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.**”

28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, “**O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.**” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

The lady believed — **TOOK ACTION** — and wouldn’t take no for an answer. Jesus was reluctant (because she had no covenant relationship) — but His goodness and compassion — and her **GREAT FAITH** — got her daughter healed!

Interesting that Jesus’ only references to great faith were both Gentiles?

We’ve seen mention of **LITTLE FAITH AND GREAT FAITH**. There is also **WEAK FAITH AND STRONG FAITH**.

Romans 4:18-22

18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So shall your descendants be.”

19 **And not being weak in faith**, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.

20 **He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith**, giving glory to God,

21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

22 And therefore “**it was accounted to him for righteousness.**”

Abraham was not weak in faith.

Romans 4:20 (KJV)

20 ... **was strong in faith**, giving glory to God;

The physical evidence (against believing) was strong and convincing. His age — Sarah’s age — her being barren always.

But — HE WALKED BY FAITH — NOT BY SIGHT!

Where might you and I be if the choices so far are NO FAITH ... LITTLE FAITH ... WEAK FAITH ... GREAT FAITH ... AND STRONG FAITH?

Or ... how about:

James 2:14-24

14 **What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? (*Corresponding actions*) Can faith save him?**

15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,
16 and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

17 Thus also **faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.** (*Dead faith*)

18 But someone will say, “**You have faith, and I have works.**” **Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.**

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

20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that **faith without works is dead?**

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

22 Do you see that **faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?**

23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “**Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**” **And he was called the friend of God.** 24 **You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.**

James 2:26

26 **For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead** also. (*Empty words*)

DEAD FAITH.

Definitely not what we want! **FAITH LEADS TO ACTION!** (Like the lady with the issue of blood).

NO ACTION = EMPTY TALK = DEAD FAITH.

Our faith can develop. It is not static!

2 Thessalonians 1:1-4

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 **We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly**, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, (*Luxuriantly: like a tree planted in good ground*).

4 so that **we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith** in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,

Your faith grows exceedingly.

A type of faith to aim for:

Mark 11:20-24

20 Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

21 **And Peter, remembering, said to Him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.”**

22 So Jesus answered and said to them, “**Have faith in God.**

23 **For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.** (**SAYS — WITH HIS MOUTH**)

24 **Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you HAVE receive them, and you will have them.** (*Future tense*)

THIS IS MOUNTAIN-MOVING FAITH.

But it's not exclusive to just "special" people. **"Whoever says" to this mountain. If you're a "whoever" — then this will apply to you and me!**

Mark 11:24 (ESV)

24 ... **believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.**

Mark 11:24 (NASB)

24 ... **believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.**

So ... we don't wait till we receive something ... before believing. **WE BELIEVE BEFORE ... but WE BELIEVE WE HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED.**

Because we're so dependant on our physical senses ... it is easy for us to decide we'll believe when we have received — "seeing is believing".

FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE — THE ASSURANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR. THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN!

However ... **STRONG FAITH ... GREAT FAITH ... describes how effective our faith is.** Not a reference to having to amass a great quantity!

Matthew 17:18-20

18 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" (*They knew that it was God's will to heal*)

20 So Jesus said to them, "**Because of your unbelief**; for assuredly, I say to you, **if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.**

Even the size of a mustard seed!

So ... where are we as individuals?

**NO FAITH? DEAD FAITH? LITTLE FAITH? STRONG FAITH?
GREAT FAITH? EVER-INCREASING FAITH?**

If we want more faith — **“FAITH COMES BY HEARING ... AND
HEARING ... AND HEARING ... AND HEARING — BY THE
WORD OF GOD”!!**