

V. FAITH CAN FIX ANYTHING.

-- DISCUSSION Q'S: --

INTRODUCTION

Whether we have enough faith (maybe just a mustard seed's worth) to follow God's instructions or all the faith in the world, our God is big enough to bring us home.

DISCUSSION

Who is someone with faith you admire? Why?

EXPLANATION

When is the last time someone offended you by saying you "needed more faith"? Did it surprise you to learn that Biblical faith is centered more on actions than emotions?

How does this affect your view of doubt?

Does this portrayal of faith clash with what you previously believed?

APPLICATION - Read Hebrews 11:6.

Why is faith important?

What comes to mind when you think of faith, belief, and trust?

How are they similar/different?

How do you feel knowing that, as a result of your faith, you may face suffering and tragedy in your future? Does this seem unfair?

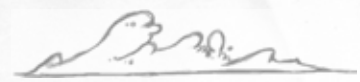
MISSION

How would you describe Biblical faith to a friend that is seeking God, if it's more than positive thinking?

Read Proverbs 22:6

HOMEWORK:

Share some stories of some of the worst kids from "Christian" homes that you can remember.



stupid summer

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TODAY'S VERSES:

MY NOTES:

Hebrews 11:37-40

Acts 17:10-11

Matthew 17:20-21

Hebrews 11:1

John 3:16

John 14:1

James 2:19-26

Acts 12

Hebrews 11

Hebrews 11:6, 39

Romans 1:5

James 2:21-23

1 Peter 1:9

1 John 2:3-5

[OURELEMENT.ORG/STUPIDSUMMER](http://ourelement.org/stupidsummer)

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

ourelement.org/events



**FANTASY FOOTBALL
DRAFT** 9/2 - 4pm \$10

MOTORCYCLE RIDE
Saturday, 9/14 - 11am

**WOMEN'S ART & WINE
GIRL'S NIGHT OUT**
Saturday, 9/14 - 4pm

BAPTISMS
Sunday, 9/1 - 1pm
Last Name:
A-L - Desserts
M-Z - Salad
or Side Dish



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-- SERMON NOTES --

Hebrews 11:37-40 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated--of whom the world was not worthy--wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

A comparison of how we use the words faith, belief and trust in modern-day English with how they were originally used in the Greek language of the New Testament can be eye opening.

- Faith - the word conjures up an image of confidence. It's defined by our feelings as much as by anything else. That is why most teachings on faith tend to focus on eradicating all fear, doubt, and negative thoughts.
- Belief - The word usually conjures up an image of intellectual assent. We say we believe in something as long as we think that it's "probably true."
- Trust - When we use the word trust it almost always carries an assumption that there will be some sort of corresponding action.

WHAT KIND OF "FAITH" DOES GOD WANT?

The word "Faith" has a twofold sense in the Bible:

- (1) "trust," "reliance" (Rom 3:3),
- (2) "fidelity," "trustworthiness."

In the Old Testament, the verb "to believe" occurs only 30 times, but this infrequency does not adequately reflect the importance of the place of faith in the Old Testament. The New Testament draws all its examples of faith from the lives of Old Testament believers (Rom 4:18; Heb 11; James 2:14), and Paul rests his doctrine of faith on the word of Habakkuk 2:4.

When used with a religious application, faith in the Old Testament is sometimes in a specific word or work of God (Lam 4:12; Hab 1:5), or in the fact of God's revelation (Exod 4:5; Job 9:16), or in the words or commandments of God in general (Ps 119:66), or in God himself (Gen 15:6). New Testament writers, especially Paul and the author of Hebrews, show that the faith manifested by Old Testament saints was not different in kind from that expected of Christians.

The terms "faith" and "believe" occur almost 500 times in the New Testament. A principal reason for this is that the New Testament makes the claim that the promised Messiah had finally come, and, to the bewilderment of many, the form of the fulfillment did not obviously correspond to the Messianic promise. It required a real act of faith to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah. It was not long before "to believe" meant to become a Christian. In the New Testament, faith therefore becomes the supreme human act and experience.

In Paul's letters, the meaning of faith is most clearly and fully set forth. Faith is trust in the person of Jesus, the truth of His teaching, and the redemptive work He accomplished on the cross. Faith is not to be confused with a mere intellectual assent to the doctrinal teachings of Christianity, though that is obviously necessary. It includes a total commitment to Christ as the Lord of one's life.

Biblical faith gives us something that all the positive thinking and visualization in the world can't provide. It gives us something we can depend on to always take us exactly where God wants us to go. It's like a map, but it's not always an easy map to follow. It takes time, experience, and an occasional leap into the unknown. It can be frustrating--and scary at times. But in the end, for those who are led by it, it's a trusty guide, guaranteed to always take us where we need to be.

When rightly understood and applied, it doesn't matter how many doubts we have, it doesn't matter if we're convinced that all is lost. Ultimately all that matters is who our faith is in...the object of our faith is CHRIST.

Whether we have enough faith (maybe just a mustard seed's worth) to follow God's instructions or all the faith in the world, our God is big enough to bring us home.

Faith is not a skill we master. It is not an impenetrable shield that protects us from life's hardships and trials. It is not a magic potion that removes every mess. It is a map we follow. It's designed to guide us on a path called righteousness. Faith will take us exactly where God wants us to go. And that's where we need to be.