

Faith

What is the biblical definition of faith?

“Pistis” (Greek - New Testament)

‘Faith’ means trust, confidence, assurance and belief (p. 1315).

New Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Word

“The main sense of the word ‘faith’ in the NT is that of trust or reliance... [pistis] bears the sense not of faithfulness alone, but of the reliance and trust that is the basis of man’s faithfulness, i.e., the faithfulness that expresses confidence in the faithfulness of God”

(International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, 1982, article, “Faith”)

Biblical definition of the word “Pistis”

**“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the conviction of things not seen.”**

Hebrews 11:1 (ESV)

- ✦ Faith goes beyond what we can perceive with our physical senses
- ✦ Faith allows us to believe that the invisible God can do what is physically impossible

Romans 4:18-22

“In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.””

1. Is our belief in God based on a rational foundation?
2. What is the source of your faith?
3. How do we grow in our faith?
4. Is believing God enough?
5. Do you have a dead or living faith?

1. Is our belief in God based on a rational foundation?

“For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”

Romans 1:20 ESV

“but test everything; hold fast what is good.”

1 Thessalonians 5:21 ESV

Luke 24:44-49

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

2. What is the source of your faith?

“so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,”

Ephesians 2:7-8 ESV

Our relationship with
God starts with God

The initial seed of faith is
a gift from God through the
Holy Spirit

He opens our
mind to
understand
and believe

3. How do we grow in our faith

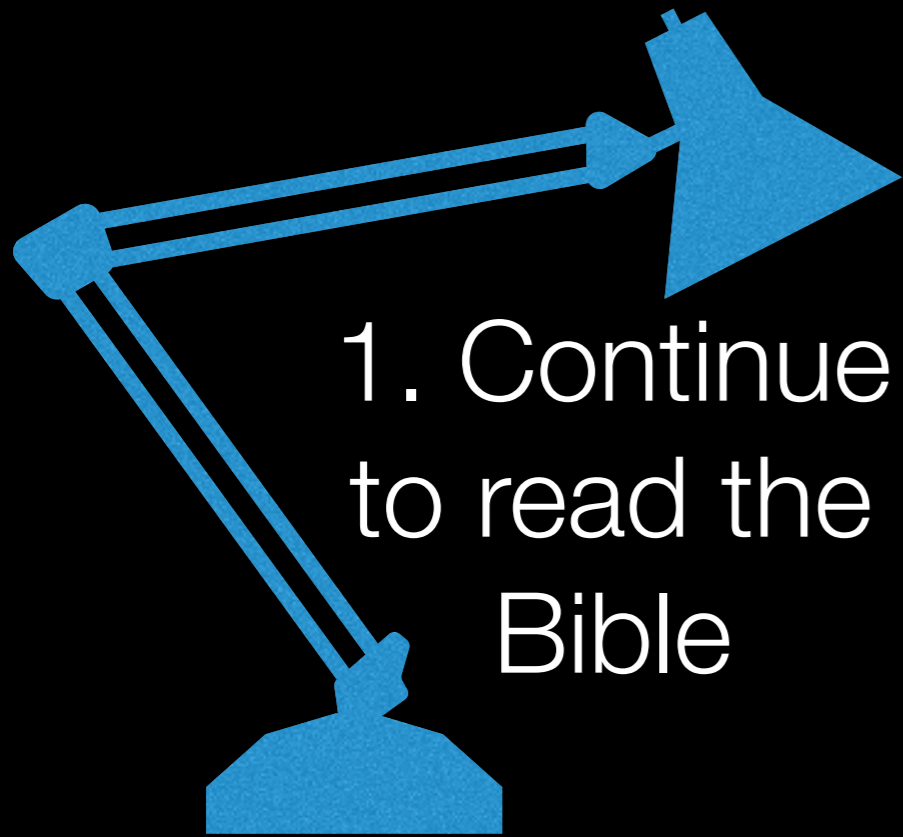
“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through
the word of Christ.”

Romans 10:17 ESV

Hearing and studying the word
of God helps us see God's
faithfulness in the past and in
the future



What if you don't have enough faith?



1. Continue
to read the
Bible

2. Ask God



Jesus Heals a Boy with an Unclean Spirit

“And Jesus said to him, “If you can! All things are possible for one who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!””

Mark 9:23-24 ESV

- ✦ In Mark 9:23-24 you see an example of a father recognising his lack of faith and then asking for God's help
- ✦ God is pleased when we recognise our own inadequacy and seek his strength and encouragement

4. Is believing God enough?

“You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!”

James 2:19 ESV

“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

Hebrews 11:6 ESV

- ✦ God wants us not just to believe in Him but:
 - For our faith to transform us
 - Believe what he says
 - Diligently seek him through prayer
 - Study and meditate on the word

Ultimately what did Christ ask us to do?

““If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

John 14:15 ESV

When we believe what God says we should do what
God says...

5. Do you have a dead or living faith?

““Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 7:21 ESV

“Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?”

James 2:20 ESV

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works;”

James 2:21-22 ESV

- ✦ Just saying we have faith isn't enough
- ✦ Our growing belief in God should lead us to obedience in Jesus Christ - through the work of the Holy Spirit to do His will and obey Him

Living Faith?

“So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

James 2:17-18 ESV

- ✦ There is no conflict between what Paul and James have written
- ✦ Paul says “faith” is a gift from God and nothing we can do or earn, and James says real living “faith” motivates our actions

“Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.”

Matthew 3:8 ESV

“Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?”

Romans 2:4 ESV

- ✦ Jesus commanded us to repent and believe the gospel (Mark 1:15 “and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”)
- ✦ God’s goodness leads us to turn our lives to God
- ✦ Repentance involves fruits, or changes in our lives

“and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Mark 1:15 ESV