

Christian Foundations

Lesson 4

Faith Toward God

This lesson belongs to: _____

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Key Verse: *“Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title-deed) of things [we] hoped for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality—faith perceiving as real fact what is not yet revealed to the senses.”* Hebrews 11:1 (The Amplified Bible)

Purpose: The purpose of this lesson is to help the disciple understand and practice genuine faith toward God.

“Faith” vs “The Faith”

There is a distinction in the New Testament between “faith” and “the faith”. “The faith” refers to the “one faith”⁶³ as handed down by the apostles.⁶⁴ It refers to the essential elements of the gospel that a person must believe in order to be saved.⁶⁵ Paul calls it “that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.”⁶⁶ The foundational tenets of the faith were set forth in an early reproducible form that became known as the “Rule of Faith”.⁶⁷ It may include the decision made at the Jerusalem Council⁶⁸ which settled the controversy regarding what is required for salvation and then confirmed by the letter (“Jerusalem Decree”) delivered to the churches.⁶⁹ “The faith” refers to the core and unchanging orthodox tenets of Christianity. It is not open to revision, restructuring, or to the addition of new revelation. The faith has been delivered “once for all” to the saints.⁷⁰ The faith is to be diligently preserved, entrusted to faithful men, accurately communicated, fully preached, and earnestly defended from one generation to another. “Faith”, on the other hand, refers to an individual’s response of belief in the Truth.

- 1. A relationship with God is built upon faith in Him. Without faith it is impossible to _____ God.**
 - Hebrews 11:6 *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”*
- 2. Faith is complete confidence in _____ and the _____ of His word.**
 - Hebrews 11:11 *“By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.”*
- 3. Faith includes believing that _____ and that He _____ those who diligently seek Him.**
 - Hebrews 11:6 (NLT) *“So, you see, it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that there is a God and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.”*
 - True faith is more than simply believing there is a God and that He is able to do anything. True faith also is confident that He will answer according to His will those who sincerely seek Him.
- 4. A lack of faith (doubt) can lead to _____ and _____ toward God.**
 - Hebrews 3:18 *“And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.”*
 - Doubt is uncertainty. Doubt is when facts outweigh the level of faith in our heart.
 - Unbelief is determined disbelief. It is living by our five physical senses rather than by faith.
 - Disobedience is making choices based on our doubt and unbelief.
- 5. Doubt is the result of focusing on the _____ and _____ around _____**

⁶³ Ephesians 4:5

⁶⁴ Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:42

⁶⁵ Acts 6:7; 13:8; 14:22; 16:5; Acts 24:24; Romans 1:5-6, 12; 4:11-12, 16; 14:1; 16:26; 1 Corinthians 15:14, 17; 16:13; 2 Corinthians 1:24; 11:4; 13:5; Galatians 1:6, 7, 23; 3:23; 6:10; Ephesians 4:13; Philippians 1:27; Colossians 1:21-22, 23; 2:7; 1 Timothy 1:2, 19; 3:9, 13; 4:1; 5:8; 6:10, 21; 2 Timothy 2:18; 3:8; 4:7; Titus 1:1, 4, 13; 3:15; Hebrews 13:7; James 2:1, 18; 1 Peter 5:9; 2 Peter 1:1, 5-7; Jude 3, 20; Revelation 14:12

⁶⁶ Romans 6:17

⁶⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

⁶⁸ Acts 15:6-21

⁶⁹ Acts 15:22-28, 30-32, 41; 16:4-5

⁷⁰ Jude 3

us. Faith comes by keeping our eyes and ears focused on the _____

who is _____.

- Matthew 14:25-31 *"Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.' And Peter answered Him and said, 'Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.' So He said, 'Come.' And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'"*
- 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 *"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."*
- Romans 10:17 *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*

6. Unbelief makes God out to be a _____.

- 1 John 5:10 *"He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son."*
- Romans 3:3-4 *"For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? ⁴ Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: 'That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged.'"*

7. Unbelief was the root cause of Adam's and Eve's _____ and subsequent spiritual

- Genesis 3:1-7 *"Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"' ² And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings."*
- The command given by God to Adam and Eve was a test of their faith in Him. They would either believe Him and live or disbelieve Him and die. Satan sowed the seeds of unbelief toward God in the mind and heart of Adam and Eve by causing them to doubt the reality of God's word ("Has God indeed said?"), the integrity of God's word ("You will not surely die."), and the goodness of God ("God knows that...you will be like God."). They heeded their doubts based on the devil's lies and then acted in unbelief. Their disobedience was the direct result of unbelief toward God. Their unbelief did not change the truth of God's Word but established it. On the other hand, it did sever the relationship they once had with God based upon faith.
- In an attempt to establish their own righteousness apart from God based upon the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve forfeited the gift of righteousness that they had with God based upon faith in Him.

8. Since unbelief toward God is the root cause of spiritual death, God has chosen to give to those who believe the gospel the gift of _____ as an act of His grace.

- John 3:16 *"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."*
- Romans 4:16 *"Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."*
- Ephesians 2:8-9 *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast."*
- Romans 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

9. The believer's faith comes from _____ through _____ His Word.

- Romans 12:3 *"For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."*
- Romans 10:17 *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*
- Hearing the Word of God opens the window to faith. A man can embrace faith or defiantly refuse.

10. Faith is not blind. Faith does not ignore natural facts. Faith takes into account higher spiritual facts and realities which those without faith cannot see. For the one who believes in God, their faith in

God's promise is the _____ of their hope and the _____ of what they see through the eyes of faith until the time when their faith becomes sight.

- Hebrews 11:1 *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*
- Hebrews 11:13 *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."*
- Faith is like possessing the title-deed to a car or home that you have never seen. The title-deed is proof that the car or home is yours without having yet seen it.
- Faith does not say, "I won't believe it until I see it" but rather, "I believe it because God said it! Because I believe Him, I will one day see what He has promised!"
- John 20:29 *"Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'"*
- 2 Corinthians 5:7 *"For we walk by faith, not by sight."*

11. Faith is not _____ or _____.

- Matthew 4:3–11 (NKJV) *"Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.'⁴ But He answered and said, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,⁶ and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: "He shall give His angels charge over you," and, "In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone."⁷ Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, "You shall not tempt the LORD your God."⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.⁹ And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.'¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve."¹¹ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him."*

Faith, Foolishness, or Presumption?

Many well-meaning believers fall into danger and disaster when they mistakenly believe that foolish or presumptive acts equals faith. For instance, some mistakenly believe that trusting God to meet their needs means they should quit their jobs. Others believe that trusting God to heal them means that they should never see a doctor or take medicine. Others believe that faith requires them to make wild confessions to prove they have faith. Others put themselves in high risk situations trusting that God will deliver them. Still others attempt to duplicate the faith of others who have demonstrated great faith. How do we tell the difference between bold faith and foolish presumption? Jesus gives us a great example. If anyone had faith, Jesus did. If anyone could accomplish what He believed, Jesus could. But He didn't. Satan tried to tempt Jesus to act foolishly and presumptuously in faith. First, Satan tried to tempt Jesus into turning stones into bread to meet His physical need. Jesus resisted because true faith is not to be guided by need but by obedience to the Word of God. Second, Satan tried to tempt Jesus into throwing Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple and then trust that the angels would catch Him in the sight of all. This would be a great way to prove He was the Son of God, right? Jesus refused because true faith is not guided by a desire to prove anything to anyone. Misapplying the Word of God in an attempt to make God act outside of His will is regarded as tempting the Lord. Third, Satan tried to get Jesus to do a foolish thing—to bow and worship him so that He could receive the power and glory of this world's kingdoms. Jesus rebuked Satan because this was a violation of His faith in God. In every temptation, Jesus overcame by staying true to the word of God. Jesus did not try to duplicate the accomplishments of other men of God. He came to do what His Father sent Him to do. Attempting to prove that we have faith is foolish and leads to many presumptive actions. Attempting to duplicate the faith of someone else who did great things for God can lead to great disappointment and bring disrepute on themselves and the Gospel. As someone once said, "One man's faith is another man's presumption." Presumption is a sin that tempts particularly bold, zealous, and courageous people who are eager

to do something great for God. True faith is based upon the true meaning of Scripture—not taken out of context, cut and pasted with other Scriptures, or twisted to justify foolish and presumptive actions. True faith is born out of a genuine relationship with God intent on pleasing Him and doing His will. True faith resists foolish and presumptive sins in order to accomplish the will of God.

12. The ones who will be justified before God are those who _____ by faith.

- Romans 1:17 *“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”*
- Faith is the means through which men receive and maintain God’s righteousness.
- Romans 10:3–4 *“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”*

13. Faith is the means through which those who believe become _____ of God.

- John 1:12 *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:”*

14. Those who do not have faith are called _____ and _____.

- 2 Thessalonians 3:2 *“and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.”*
- Unbelievers accept only what they perceive with their five physical senses.
- Because they exclude God from the debate, those who do not believe in God or His Word become foolish in their reasoning.⁷¹
- Because they exclude God in their lives, they have no basis for moral restraint.⁷²

15. It is through faith that we _____ divine mysteries.

- Hebrews 11:3 *“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”*
- Those who have faith can understand mysteries based upon what God has revealed.
- Those without faith will not accept what they cannot perceive with their five physical senses.
- 1 Corinthians 2:7–10 *“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, ⁸ which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ ¹⁰ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.”*
- 1 Corinthians 2:14 *“But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”*

16. Those who believe without first seeing are _____ by God.

- John 20:24–29 *“Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ So he said to them, ‘Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.’ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, ‘Peace to you!’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.’ And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’”*

17. God often works in people’s lives according to the _____ of their faith.⁷³

⁷¹ Romans 1:22

⁷² Romans 1:24–32

⁷³ Andrew Murray states, “In order to understand God’s ways with His people, and our relations with the Lord, it is needful to understand this law thoroughly and not to deviate from it. Not only does God give or withhold His grace according to the faith or unbelief of each, but they are granted in greater or lesser measure, only in proportion to the faith which receives them. God respects the right to decide which He has conferred on man. Therefore He can only bless us in the measure in which each yields himself up to His divine working, and opens all his heart to Him. Faith in God is nothing else than the full opening of the heart to receive everything from God; therefore man can only receive divine grace according to his faith; and this applies as much to divine healing as to any other grace of God.” [Murray, A. (1900). *Divine Healing: A Series of Addresses* (pp. 38–39). Nyack, NY: Christian Alliance Publishing Co.]

- Matthew 8:13 *"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."*
- Matthew 9:28–29 *"And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.'²⁹ Then He touched their eyes, saying, 'According to your faith let it be to you.'"*

18. It is through faith and _____ that we inherit the promises of God.

- Hebrews 6:12 *"that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."*
- Patience is allowing God to fulfill His promise according to His plan for His glory and our ultimate good.⁷⁴

19. Patience is developed through the _____ of the believer's faith.

- James 1:2-3 *"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."*
- It is not the *person*, but the sincerity of a person's *faith* that is tested. The battle is over the believer's *faith*.

20. True faith is evidenced by corresponding _____.

- James 2:18 *"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."*
- Faith and works are like the two oars in a canoe. It takes both to keep from going around in circles.
- Faith that does not work is not true faith because true faith acts upon what it believes.

21. Faith without works is _____.

- James 2:20 *"But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?"*
- If we proclaim to have faith but never act upon our faith, then it is rendered useless and void of life.

22. Through works our faith is made _____ or _____.

- James 2:22 *"Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?"*
- Works—corresponding actions—perfect or complete our faith, i.e. works make our faith genuine.

23. Faith's corresponding actions can include:

- _____ to the mountain (Mark 11:22-23)
- _____ things that do not exist at though they do (Romans 4:17)
- Not _____ on contrary evidence (Romans 4:18-19)
- Not _____ in unbelief but giving _____ to God (Romans 4:20)
- Not _____ at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen (2 Corinthians 4:18)
- Responding in _____ (Hebrews 11:7)
- _____ to God (Hebrews 11:8)
- _____ and _____ the promises (Hebrews 11:13-16)
- _____ for righteousness sake (Hebrews 11:24-26)
- Acts of _____ (James 2:15-17)

24. It is through faith that we gain _____ and receive _____.

- Hebrews 11:30-35 *"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with*

⁷⁴ Romans 8:28

peace. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection."

- 1 John 5:4 "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith."

25. Genuine faith can sometimes draw _____ from those who do not have faith.

- Hebrews 11:35-38 "Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth."

26. The world, the flesh, and the devil oppose our faith in God. Therefore Paul refers to the commitment to live by faith as the good _____ of faith.

- 1 Timothy 6:12 "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

27. Paul describes faith as a protective _____ in times of assault by the enemy.

- Ephesians 6:16 "above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one."

28. Those who live and die in faith obtain a good _____.

- Hebrews 11:39 "And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,"

29. Faith works through _____.

- 1 Corinthians 13:2 "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."
- Galatians 5:6 (NKJV) "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love."