

Faith that Goes Beyond Expectation

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Christianity is deeply rooted in faith. The public image of Christianity as a religion is definitely dogmatic with a set of traditions, legalistic in practice and polemic in witness. The private image is distinctive in its qualitative life in Christ, which promotes faith-centered experience. It is an intelligent and rational faith in God that expects us to use our minds too. We do not have to commit intelligent suicide in-order to have faith. My heart doesn't rejoice in what mind rejects.

The strong faith God requires involves both mind and the heart. Christian faith is a historical fact (Luke 2:1-5). Notice the appeal to times, places and people that is significant. Christianity and Christian faith is not based upon myths and legends, but an objective faith in Who Jesus Christ is, and what He did. It does make a difference in what we believe (John 8:24 & Rom 10:9).

The classic example of a person with faith found in the Bible is Abraham. He is called the father of the faith. The first key to Abraham's faith is that he did not consider his or Sarah's age to be an obstacle to God. He didn't limit God's ability to override human difficulty.

Secondly, he didn't waver at any of God's promises. Abraham fell down and God said to him, as for me this is my covenant with you, you will be the father of many nations, no longer will you be called Abram: your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations, I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and Kings will come from you (Gen 17:3-6).

Thirdly, Abraham gave glory to God. He praised God even before seeing any evidence that God would keep His promise. True faith believes that God is able to perform whatever He has promised. As Chuck Smith writes in his book *Wisdom for Today*, one day you will see the fulfillment of His promises to you if you will just follow the keys to faith.

How does the real faith come? Rom 10:17 answers the question: So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. If we are to have real faith, we must study the word of God and discover what is promised. Furthermore, faith comes through the Spirit. The Spirit knows the will of God and helps us to pray with faith that goes beyond expectation. It believes that prayer is heard and that the promise is granted.

Christian Wi-Fi

Sunil Thomas, Sunday school Teacher

The element of faith in a Christian life is core to its foundation, tenacity, and sustainability. This reverberates in the verse "For we live by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). An incessant faith walk necessitates determination and focus. Focus in a believer's life mandates undivided attention to a central point – Jesus Christ.

Bible says "Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you" (Pro 4:25). Keeping our faith in focus always is essential for living a triumphant Christian life. Faith and prayer are two driving forces and connecting links towards our eternal providence.

In the Old Testament Israelites followed the pillar of cloud and fire to stay connected with God's plan for direction towards promise land. If they had decided not to follow the pillar of cloud and fire, they could have gone astray and become confused as they lost their connection with God. In this era of Millennials, it is considered inevitable to have internet or Wi-Fi connection everywhere to be functional and have social networking. Similarly, for a Christian, on their voyage, it is indispensable to be always connected to God through faith and prayer. It is a warning sign for a Christian when they lose or cannot connect with God at any time.

A daily self-assessment about our connection with God will be helpful to bring back our lost focus. Having faith in our focus always is essential to establish heavenly Wi-Fi and lead a fruitful Christian life.

Have you had a YO-YO faith?

Ria Regi

A Yo-Yo faith is one that is dependent on feelings. Sometimes faith is as strong as ever and very next day we are weak. As Christians, we are called to live by faith from beginning to end; from initial faith in Christ that promises salvation as a gift from God to a moment-by-moment life of faith that encompasses all the circumstances of life.

What we need to remember is feelings come and go, and if we look only at whether or not we "feel" God is with us, our faith will never be strong. But when we focus on Jesus, our faith will grow. Binoculars that are out of focus are worthless. It is only when we bring them into focus on an object that they enhance our ability to see the object clearly. The more you focus on Christ and His Love the stronger your faith will become.

How does this happen? First, make sure of your commitment to Jesus Christ. Have you put your faith and trust in Him? If you aren't sure, turn to Christ and ask Him. Faith as small as a mustard seed can move mountains. Then take time every day to focus on Him — through reading the Bible, through prayer, and your fellowship with other believers in church where Christ is preached and lived.

What can we do to get more faith? The Bible says, "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ" (Romans 10:17).

Who can we look to for more faith? *Jesus* the pioneer and perfecter of our *faithfulness* (Heb 12:2)

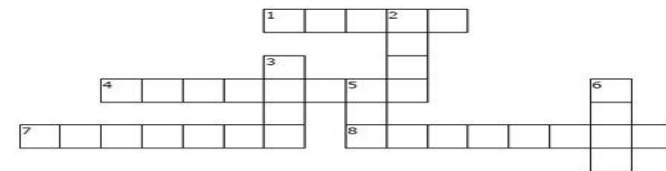
Why is it important to put our focus on Faith? Once again as the Bible says, When the Son of Man comes; will he find *faith* on earth?" (Lk 18.8)

As Paul said to the Colossians in 2:6-7, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, so walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught." That's the kind of faith that will fix your focus and bring joy, peace, healing and rest in the abundant life Christ provides. And that kind of faith will provide the revelation of God's desire, design and direction for His Church.

Kid's Corner

A Mustard Seed Faith

He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." Luke 17:6 (NIV)
This puzzle is based on Luke 17:5-6 (NIV)



ACROSS

1. Belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person or idea
2. To make greater or larger
3. A thick, yellow liquid that tastes spicy and is eaten in small amounts on meat and sandwiches
4. Twelve disciples chosen by Jesus to preach the gospel

DOWN

1. A tall plant with a wooden trunk, branches, and leaves
2. A small kernel that is buried in the ground to grow a new plant
3. A large area of salt water partly or completely surrounded by land
4. To do what you are told or expected to do

mustard	tree	seed	obey
faith	increase	sea	apostles