

Faith

What is faith?

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Faith is an assurance of things hoped for despite our being unable to physically them.

How do we get faith?

Rom 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Faith comes to those whose hearts are open to hear what God is saying to them.

Why is faith so important?

Heb 6:12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

It is through faith that we are able to access the promises of God; notice the need for patience to be working with our faith.

Rom 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

It is through faith alone that we are justified before God; this is faith in the finished work of Christ on the Cross.

Why does James say that we need works as well as faith?

James 2:24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

At first reading, James appears to contradict what Paul says, but the key to interpreting James' statement is found in the following verse:

James 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Just as the body contains the spirit, so also genuine faith contains the potential for all the good works God wants us to do. Faith alone justifies us before God, but since real faith contains the potential for good works, a lack of good works is proof that the faith isn't real.

Does God allow our faith to be tested?

James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, (3) knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. (4) But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

1 Pet 1:6-7 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, (7) that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Both James and Peter make it clear that our faith can be tested and that the right response through these tests is to rejoice.

What is faith for?

Rom 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
Faith in what Christ has done for us puts us in right standing with God.

Heb 11:5-6 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. (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.

It is through faith alone that we are able to please God.

Mark 9:23 Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”

Faith makes impossible things possible.