

Faith – What Is It And Where Do We Get It?

God wants us to live in a place of hope. God wants us to experience more and more deeply that He is with us to give us a life that is full and settled and free. As we begin to learn about and obey God's ways, we begin to experience what it is like to live sanely. For some of us we have our first taste of life as something good. Can we hope for more? Can we hope that it will last? What is faith? How can we be confident that something we want is going to happen, especially if all of our hopes have been dashed in the past -- perhaps many times? How can we risk believing that the life we hope for is waiting for us around the bend?

What is faith? It is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. It is the evidence of things we cannot yet see. By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see, did not come from anything that can be seen. 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. (From Hebrews 11)

The Bible tells us that the key to faith is in the nature of the God we look to. If we see God as *the one waiting to help us* we will be more eager to look for Him. If our faith has not matured to that point yet, we can ask for help – *help to have more faith*. Then we can ask God for the courage to hope for a better future.

There was a man who came to Jesus and asked him to help his young son who was afflicted by a demon. *He said to Jesus, "Do something if you can". "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is*

possible if a person believes." *The father instantly replied, "I do believe, but help me not to doubt!"* (From Mark 9)

Jesus instantly delivered the man's son from the affliction. We too can begin with what faith we have and come to Him. We can ask Him for help. We will gain more faith as we see that He is able to do much more than we dared to hope. The witness of others whose lives have been touched by Jesus can also help our faith in God's goodness to grow until we dare to believe for ourselves that God can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

For "Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them. Faith comes from listening to this message of good news—the Good News about Christ. (From Romans 10)

When we realize that God is the only One who can help, nothing can block our recovery.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. For a Christian, what is faith?
2. What do we believe in that gives us hope?
3. Who is this God who invites us to faith in Him?
4. What has your process of coming to believe been like?
5. What kind of people have been helpful examples to you in your journey to faith?
6. How do you believe you are living today that will give a helpful example to someone else struggling to find faith?