

I. A QUESTION OF FAITH

Will you have faith in the face of unfulfilled hopes?

(Hebrews 11:1 NKJV) "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Will you have faith to obey God, without needing assurance and knowledge of the outcome?

(Genesis 12:1, 4a NKJV) "Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you...{4} So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him..."

Will you have faith to serve if there is no apparent reward, and in spite of great personal cost?

(Job 13:15a NKJV) "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

(Matthew 16:24 NKJV) "Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

1. Faith manifests when you embrace the solid presence of things you want, need and desire that are not yet solidly present.
2. Faith is your eyewitness testimony, carrying legal weight and credibility in the courts of heaven, of things not yet witnessed with your eyes.
3. Faith is the exercise of overwhelming spiritual force, through your trust in God and His Word, leaving the opposition with no options. Such faith results in complete, full and final success.

All three of these definitions are valid because...

- They are backed by the divine guarantee that was sealed by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ
- His name is the Most High and carries the full weight of heaven's complete power and authority.
- He never changes. His faithfulness is unending and sure.

(Exodus 3:14a NKJV) "And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."

(John 8:58 NKJV) "Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.""

THOUGHTS AND COMMENTS?

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II. WILL YOUR FAITH FAIL OR SUCCEED?

YOUR FAITH CAN FAIL YOU...

1. **IF** → who or what you believe in is not really who or what you believe it to be. (← Think carefully about this.) Truth ultimately proves itself by itself. A Biblical example is the encounter between Elijah and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18).
2. **IF** → your testimony waivers, changes or fails you.

(James 1:2-8 NKJV) "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. {5} If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. {6} But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. {7} For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; {8} he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

YOUR FAITH WILL NEVER FAIL YOU...

1. **IF** → who or what you believe in is really who or what you believe it to be. (← Think carefully about this too!)
2. **IF** → your testimony remains as steadfast as the testimony found in the Word of God. The Lord testifies in His Word that He is unchanging and ever-present. He is the same through every test... and through every triumph. He is faithful!

(Psalms 16:8 NKJV) "I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved."

(Psalms 23:4 NKJV) "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."

(2 Thessalonians 3:3 NKJV) "But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one."

(Hebrews 10:23 NKJV) "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."

Faith chooses to serve one Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. Doubt chooses to serve either one master, Satan... or tries to serve two, Christ and Satan. You cannot serve two masters! It cannot be done! (Matthew 6:24 & Luke 16:13)

Faith **succeeds** as it works through one Master. Doubt **fails**, as it tries to work through one master, Satan... or through two, Christ and Satan. Faith is empowered through one Master, who is the Lord Jesus Christ. Doubt strips us of power because it denies the true Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Remain steadfast, believing what has not yet been seen. Fill your heart with the conviction that what has not yet been seen is in the hands of ultimate, complete, omnipotent, faithful and loving divine authority. Do not be moved! **THOUGHTS AND COMMENTS?**

(Psalms 112:7 NKJV) "He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD."

III. EFFECTIVE FAITH

"Effective faith" and "simple belief" are not always the same. They have the potential to mean very different things.

On the one hand, "simple belief" is based on the *acknowledgment of facts you possess and process about God.* These may be neither righteous nor effective in their ability to move God. Believing God is who He said He is does not depend on having a relationship with Him. Nor does it guarantee a person will put his or her trust in God or follow Him.

Examples of Simple Belief

- The disciples believed this and did the works of God, **yet had no faith in Christ at the time of His crucifixion.**
- The demons believed this, **yet they were in total rebellion and at war with Christ.**
They hated the one they believed was the Son of God.
- The rich young ruler (Matthew 19) believed this, **yet chose not to follow Jesus.**
He had mammon for a god and chose it over the living God.

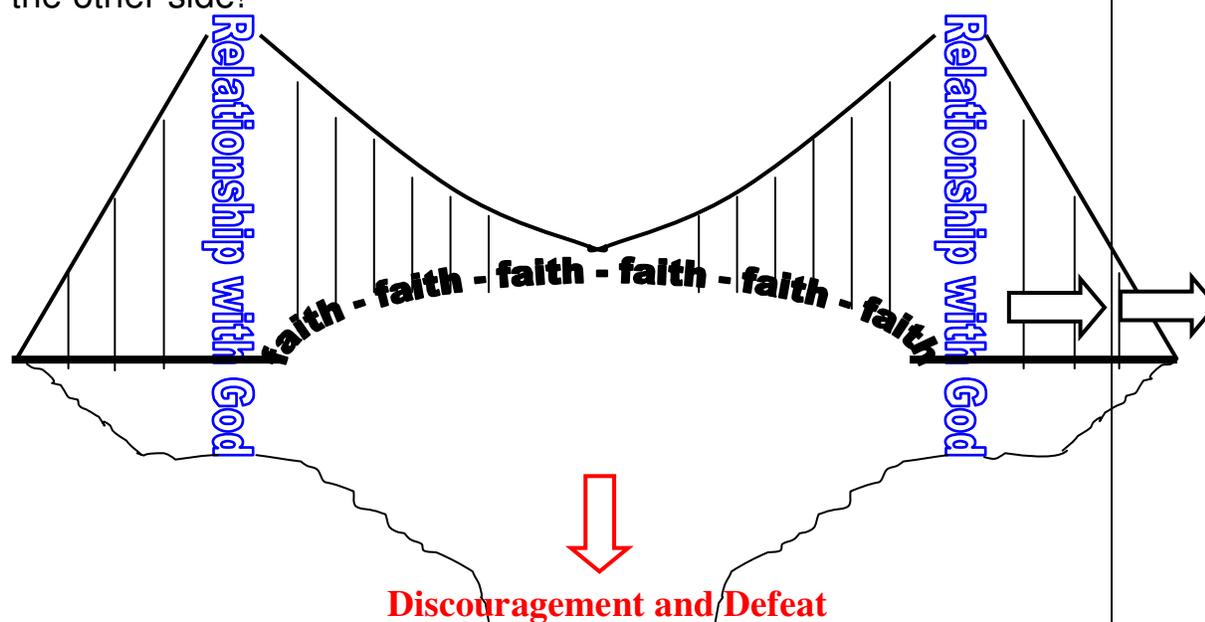
On the other hand, “effective faith” will come out of *“the position and subsequent action you take based on your active, personal relationship with Christ..”* It will cause God to move on your behalf. The reason God is moved directly relates to His covenant commitment to you, because of your personal relationship with and commitment to His Son Jesus. Therefore, we can look at faith from this perspective:

Examples of Effective Faith

- Peter and John (Acts 4:19, 20) had the faith to defy the religious authorities and declare they would preach Jesus.
- Stephen (Acts 7: 56) had the faith to face martyrdom and testify that Christ was standing at the right hand of God.

If you think you have faith, but lack a genuine relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, then your faith will one day fail you. It will prove itself a weak substitute for the real thing. It will be simply an incomplete commitment to the covenant relationship that truly defines effective faith. Only commitment to an active personal relationship with Christ will support a position of effective faith.

As your walk of faith bridges where you are to where you hope to be, your relationship with God forms the pillars this bridge hangs from. Your relationship with God guarantees that the winds of this world will not shake apart the bridge and affect your walk of faith. Effective faith, built on your relationship with God will get you to the other side!



“Effective faith proves itself by the position and subsequent action you take based on your relationship with Christ.”

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IV. THE EMBRACE OF FAITH

Faith abandons human frailty and surrenders all arguments, reasonings, prideful assumptions and vain imaginations to the dunamis (power) and dominion (absolute authority) of God!

(2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NKJV) “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. {4} For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, {5} casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,”

Faith embraces the divine right of the Creator to control **ALL** consequences of creation.

(Job 38:4 NKJV) “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding.”

(Job 40:2 NKJV) “Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it.”

(Psalms 97:1-6 NKJV) “The LORD reigns; Let the earth rejoice; Let the multitude of isles be glad! {2} Clouds and darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. {3} A fire goes before Him, And burns up His enemies round about. {4} His lightnings light the world; The earth sees and trembles. {5} The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD, At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. {6} The heavens declare His righteousness, And all the peoples see His glory.”

Faith denies rebellion’s assumption that it can control the consequences of creation!

(Job 40:3-5 NKJV) “Then Job answered the LORD and said: {4} “Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. {5} Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further.”

(Proverbs 3:5-8 NKJV) “Trust in the LORD with ALL your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; {6} In ALL your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. {7} Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. {8} It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.”

(Isaiah 29:16 NKJV) “Surely you have things turned around! Shall the potter be esteemed as the clay; For shall the thing made say of him who made it, “He did not make me”? Or shall the thing formed say of him who formed it, “He has no understanding”?”

Rebellion is sin against God. It cannot be defined in any other way. It cannot be justified or hidden behind excuses. Salvation through the cross of Christ has brought God’s people freedom from the embrace of rebellion. However, rebellion wants to recapture every one of us who has been redeemed from it. Though its embrace seems attractive, it inevitably has the same death grip it has always been. The embrace of rebellion is agreement to have an illegitimate intimacy that invades and destroys. (You cannot help but being intimate with what you embrace! You will receive into yourself some measure of the essence of what you embrace!) The essence of rebellion is spiritual death.

Will you embrace God, or will you embrace rebellion? Remember, in either case, what you embrace will embrace you! Let your choice always be to embrace God, by faith through love.

- Faith lays hold of God!
- Faith embraces God and sticks tightly to Him through a personal, intense relationship.

V. FAITH IS HEAVEN’S CURRENCY!

- ☑ You can bank on it!
- ☑ You can multiply it!
- ☑ You can withdraw it, if you have deposited it and stored it up!
- ☑ You can cash it in for what you hoped for!
- ☑ It is backed by the infallible and fully trustworthy promise of our forever faithful Heavenly Father!
- ☑ It is not subject to deflation, inflation or instability. It does not have a variable exchange rate. It always is worth what God says it is worth. It remains fully valued for eternity!



FINAL THOUGHTS AND COMMENTS?