

What is Faith ?

By Craig Paardekoooper

My guess is that a child of God is someone who walks in faith. But what is faith? I used to be confused about this idea. We say that someone who believes has faith. So is faith just belief?

I have come to an understanding that Faith is **acting upon what you believe**, not just saying you believe. Consequently, a person can only be described as having faith when they are not just believing but also **following** God.

Faith is fundamentally the acting out and practice of what you believe, not just an intellectual consent to it. Such a person can be described as having faith. People can have faith in different things. One person might have faith in the Bible, another might have faith in communism or in Buddhism. What-ever they have faith in, the degree of faith can only be measured by their commitment to **living out their beliefs**. If someone says they believe something but fail to act in accordance with it, then they do not have faith in it.

Someone who claimed to believe a wooden bridge is safe, but fears to walk across it, might be described technically as having a belief, but no faith.

So faith is walking the talk, or putting ourselves on the line. It is not so much an intellectual consent, but a living trust acted out.

Why is faith so important? Possibly because somethings can only be known through living them out, and other things go beyond our actual ability to know intellectually anyway, and most things can never be known with absolute certainty. So faith is a part of the human condition - and without it we would be perpetually paralyzed by indecision.

No one likes stepping out into the complete unknown, which is what "blind faith" is. But we do have evidences that support our faith - evidence of **Creation**, evidence of **prophecy**, and evidence from **current events** - which I have provided here <https://howbad.info/aboutgod.html>

But our knowledge is limited so absolute certainty and full knowledge is unavailable. So at some point we have to decide to act based on what we know - to put our faith in it and follow it in faith.

Life and living require a creature to act. Since our knowledge is always limited, then all decisions to act must always have an element of faith; so faith is necessary for life.

Like a feedback loop, once a person steps out in faith then they may experience confirmation of that faith, or experience something that undermines their faith. Say, they step onto the bridge and it collapses; then their faith is undermined.

So faith is acting upon the limited nature of belief - then revising beliefs based on experience. This seems like a fair description of what faith is - as applicable to any ideology.

The Bible frequently tells us to have faith – to act upon the little that we have – so that we can come to know more.

So, in summary a child of God is most likely to be someone who has faith - who walks the talk with God, rather than a professed believer who never acts.

Since we appear to be living in the times of the Tribulation, it looks like **it is a decision time**. We are being required to make choices and act upon them.

Many have chosen to doubt religion and doubt any absolute morality, and instead have chosen to act by distributing poisons and keeping quiet about the effects. Others have chosen to forego careers and speak out - because they have faith that there is a right and wrong. Either way, our current situation seems to require

people to make extreme decisions - to act upon what they really believe. It is a decision time like none before it. The Wheat and the Tares.

Faith in Salvation

Today I learned more about faith. It is not just **acting** in faith; it also includes **resting** in faith . For example, we are told that Jesus has died for our sins and that we are forgiven. But sometimes we feel that God cannot forgive us because we have failed a test . We might feel ashamed of ourselves . Yet God says that we are forgiven and we should have faith in that forgiveness.

We can have faith by **accepting and allowing** that God has in fact forgiven us and **acting in accordance with that** . This means we should **cease despising or accusing** ourselves, since such is NOT acting in faith. Rather we should celebrate our pardon and cleansing almost as if it were a new birth. A fresh start.

So faith can be simply **living, thinking and feeling** on the premise that something has been done for us . Walking in faith in what another has done .

It feels like a great gift. To feel **100% acceptable to the universe** . It is a powerful feeling of positive affirmation that is sure to have a deep therapeutic effect on myself and on my relationships to those around me.

I have often noticed that when I am overly self critical it can generate conflict with others . Now things will be different.

An Example

Yesterday (23rd March 2024) I read Marks gospel where Jesus heals a demon possessed man. It was the first time I have read this passage in decades. I prayed about it that night since I felt that I needed release from bad habits.

Today (24th March 2024) I was walking home through the African farmland, and in the forest I heard screaming . I thought someone might be injured so I went to investigate. A crowd of villagers were standing along the path and a girl was kneeling in the forest crying out. The village elder whose name is Juma, was standing with his hand on her head.

“What’s wrong ?” I asked. “She has a devil” he replied.

I stood there only a moment, because I felt an odd synchronicity. I felt I should act upon my beliefs – act in faith.

So I approached the girl and laid my hand on her head next to Juma’s hand. I gave a short monotone prayer that was delivered with no dramatic effect - a simple short prayer to free the girl from the evil spirit.

Immediately she stopped crying out, and fell silent.

I walked on my way.

This experience, happening immediately after my contemplation of faith, is a personal example of positive feedback – an event taking the form of a trial of faith – but providing an opportunity for strengthening faith.

The biggest event for me though is not any power over demons, but simply the faith I have that I am forgiven, and my future assured.