

## Grow Your Worship, Part 4 | Change What You Believe

**I. Definitions of Faith**

- Unger's Concise Bible Dictionary: *"In its simplest concept, faith is personal confidence in God."*
- Unger's Concise Bible Dictionary: *"To 'believe' in a biblical sense involves more than the mere intellectual assent to fact. The New Testament concept of believing means to trust in, to have faith in, to repose upon, to commit oneself to. To truly believe therefore includes not only the passive assent of the mind but also **the action of the will**. 'Whoever believes in him' (John 3:16) means whoever trusts in God's Son **so as to become united to him in life and destiny**."*
- Hebrews 11:1, *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."*
  - Damning Lie One: Faith doesn't require an object.
  - Damning Lie Two: Believing something is the same as knowing or mentally accepting something.
  - If you get nothing else out of today's discussion, please get this . . . **belief is not knowledge**. Faith is not agreement. Trust is not a collection of facts.
- There are things we know and don't believe. (2+2=4)
- There are things we must know and believe. (sitting in chairs)
- There are things we must believe 100%. (believing that God created the world)

**II. The Requirement of Faith**

- Habakkuk 2:4, *"The righteous shall live by his faith."*
- Romans 1:17, *"For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'"*
- Matthew 14:25-31, *"And in the fourth watch of the night [Jesus] came to them, walking on the sea. **26** But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, 'It is a ghost!' and they cried out in fear. **27** But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.' **28** And Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' **29** He said, 'Come.'" So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. **30** But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, 'Lord, save me.' **31** Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'"*
- Illustration: Imagine you're on a plane and the pilot tells you that the plane is going to crash and no one will survive. He then tells everyone to pull out the parachute from under their seats, put it on, and jump out of the plane. Faith in your parachute is not knowing how parachutes work. Faith is not remembering all the statistics you've heard about the success rates of parachuting. Faith is not telling yourself it will be okay. Faith in your parachute is not putting the parachute on. Faith is not telling everyone else to put their chutes on. Faith is not pushing other people out of the plane. Faith isn't praying that everything will be okay. Faith in your parachute is putting the chute on and jumping out of the plane. Faith requires works.

### III. The Two Kinds of Faith

#### - Dead Faith -

- **Misplaced Faith** - Misplaced Faith is faith in something other than God. If I believe that Santa Claus will take me to his polar workshop when I die, then my faith placed in Santa is a Misplaced Faith.
- **Confused Faith** - his refers to someone who is personally deceived about what they believe. They're convinced they believe in God, but really they just know things about God. They have confused knowledge of God with belief in Him. People who have confused faith live a confused life. They talk like they believe in God, but their life choices constantly betray what they profess.
- **Partial Faith** - A good way to illustrate this is faith in Christianity instead of faith in the Gospel. Paul was a good example of this before he was converted. He — like the rest of the Pharisees — followed the Old Testament Law in all the wrong ways. He would say that he believed in Yahweh, and he thought his obedience of the Old Testament Law was proof of that fact. But the legalism of the Pharisees showed that they didn't understand the God they claimed to worship. They believed God was judging them based on their works instead of understanding that God would save them based on their faith. Part of what they believed about God was right, and a big part was wrong. James says, *"You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!"* The demons believe in God with a Partial Faith. Their choices submit to their belief in that they fear Him, but not enough to submit to Him.

#### - Living Faith

- **Justifying Faith** - Ephesians 2:8-9 says, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast."* John 3:16 tell us, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever **believes** in him should not perish but have eternal life."* But my favorite passage on this subject is John 10:28-29, *"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. **29** My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."* The beautiful thing about saving faith is that once we've put our faith in Christ to save us, He does the miraculous work of sustain and preserving our faith. No one — not even ourselves — can take us from the hand of God.
- **Sanctifying Faith** - In Matthew 17:19-20 we learn, *"Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not cast it out?'" **20** He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you."* Now, does having "little faith" mean we have "little salvation?" Are we teetering on the edge of losing our salvation or something? In Mark 4 we read that Jesus was asleep in the bottom of the boat and a storm came up on the Sea of Galilee that was so powerful these seasoned fishermen thought they were going to die. Jesus is awoken, and with a word He calms the storm. And then he turns to His disciples — many of which are genuine believers at this time — and says, *"Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"* Does that mean they lost their salvation?
- No, Sanctifying Faith is the daily trust we put in God and His commands for our life choices. This is why not every Christian is perfect the moment they're saved. This is also why some bear fruit that's thirtyfold, and some sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold. Our conformity to the image of Christ and our maturity is a result of the strength of our Sanctifying Faith.