

## Faith Is

Our world has had some pretty wacky perceptions about faith.

Hebrews 11

*Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

- Faith starts with the hope that intangible things that you can't touch or feel or see but you just know is there.
- We have to become as a child and believe.
- Let's take a child . . . Faith is knowing that God wants you to win like I want my boys to win.
- Faith is our Father on the sideline of life cheering for you!!

Matthew 18:1-4

The Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven

*At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."*

This month we are going to focus on faith. We need faith in the times we are living. We need to be reminded that everything there is belongs to God, to keep our eyes on the real prize, and to believe with faith in our mighty God.

This month we are going to cover these things.

- Faith is . . . understand it.
- Do Something . . . faith without works is dead.
- Miracles of Jesus . . . Let's believe for miracles.
  - We are going to do a week of **fasting** similar to last year. Details are coming to you. We want you to fast with us and believe for something God-sized and He has called us to be the help for Sacramento.
- Hungry for Greatness . . . Don't miss this Sunday.

Faith Factor #1:

**Faith is believing.**

Hebrews 11:6

And **without faith** it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

- Faith is believing!!!!!!
- Faith is not something that needs to be explained in theological exegesis. It's not something that can be explained by scientists. It's not something a mathematical equation can explain.
- Faith is that thing you just know. Faith is something that almost feels like a revelation. Saul became Paul the day the truth was revealed to him and faith exploded in his life.
- Do you remember that faith moment in your life?

Faith Factor #2:

### **Faithfulness emerges from faith.**

Galatians 5:22

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness . . .*

We'll talk more about this next week. True faith causes faithfulness no matter the circumstances.

- Our circumstances won't dictate our outcome in life.
  - Abe Lincoln
  - Robin Williams – With her prognosis, she could have given up. Not only did she not give up but she kept working. Her circumstances didn't dictate the outcome of her life. When you have faith you learn to be faithful no matter what is happening, and life moves forward.
  - Job - Wow, you talk about a guy that had his faith challenged. He lost everything and even his wife said "why don't you curse God and move on?"

When our faith is engaged we become faithful no matter our circumstances. Our feelings come into check when our faith is engaged.

Our faith will be exercised.

Proverbs 28:20

*A faithful man will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.*

Faith Factor #3:

**Faith guards our lives.**

***Ephesians 6:16 (New International Version)***

<sup>16</sup>In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Have you had those unexpected crazy things in your life that feel like random moments of craziness? Cars break down at bad moments. Kids have big issues. Someone close to us fails and causes anger or pain. Attacks on our minds. Again Job reminds us of how true faith helps to guard our lives.

Our natural response to problems in life is not always correct but when we have a compass of faith in place we can keep our direction and not be moved.

The shield is part of our armor that is movable that can change positions. Our faith applies to every part of our life. The shield of faith is usable and works everywhere.

There is no separation of faith and state. There is no separation between faith and relationships. There is no separation between faith and finances. Your faith can be applied to everything in your life.

King Jehoshaphat was pressed on every side. He decided to ask people to pray.

- The king knew we battle not against flesh and blood but against things we can't even see. So he sent the singers in first. The choir brought it!!! There is power in worship and in praise when you praise when you sing songs from the deep parts of you. Faith goes up!!!!
- He knew his faith was more powerful than his army. We many times want to rely on our own efforts, authority and strength instead of His.
- Jehoshaphat's people were empowered by something much bigger. They put it on the line.

Faith Factor #4:

**Faith empowers us, individually and corporately.**

*Mark 9:23 (New International Version)*

<sup>21</sup>Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From childhood," he answered. <sup>22</sup>"It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

<sup>23</sup>" 'If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."

<sup>24</sup>Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

*Acts 3:16 (New International Version)*

<sup>16</sup>By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

By faith in the name of Jesus you have the power to make a difference wherever you go whatever you do.

**Corporately**

*Acts 16:5 (New International Version)*

<sup>5</sup>So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

Altar: Faith in God can and will change your life. Believe and you will receive. This isn't a funny doctrine of wealth. This is truth. When we believe in Jesus Christ, we are saved and life is changed. This is why we exist. This is why we do what we do. This is why we come here on Sundays. Because we have faith, we believe in something so much bigger than us.

Faith is. . . . believing God can take this life of mine and turn it into something special, even in my failures.

Faith is. . . . knowing that God has a plan for my life, that I was created for a purpose and a reason.

Faith is. . . . believing in God's power to change my life and to change your life.

Faith is . . . believing that though my finances can look incredibly out of control to me, God has them under control. If I believe with faith in a mighty God, my mighty God can change my circumstances.

Faith is . . . knowing my past will not dictate my future, my faith will.

If your struggling with faith and hope today. Listen to what Jesus says.

Matthew 17

*He says, "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed you can move mountains."*

Start with the faith you do have and believe. Believe in something bigger and more powerful than your own means.

Take it home:

What am I doing that requires faith?

Where can I expand my faith?

What does God have in store for me?

What does a life of faith look like to me?