



Ed Sanderson, Sr.



Times of Little Faith

I. Faith – conviction that produces confidence – is necessary for salvation, but is sometimes compromised by doubt.

- Faith is very important to God. Matt. 21:21-22. Consider:
 - Faith is commanded. Mk. 16:16, Jn. 8:24 (3:16).
 - Faith “justifies” – it makes us declared innocent by God even though we have sinned. Rom. 5:1.
 - Faith introduces us to grace – God free gifts of unmerited favor. Rom. 5:2.
 - Faith gives peace. Rom. 5:1, Phil. 4:6-7.
 - Faith gives us joy. Rom. 5:3-4.
 - Faith gives us access to God and boldness when we access Him. Eph. 3:11-12.
 - Faith allows God’s *Messiah* (Christ) to live in our hearts. Eph. 3:17.
 - Faith allows us to please God. Heb. 11:6.
 - Faith allows us to overcome the world. I Jn. 5:4-5.
- Faith is dynamic, practical and active rather than mere “wishing.”
 - Faith is either obeyed or disobeyed. Acts 6:7.
 - Faith is unique – there is only one faith acceptable to God. Eph. 4:5, 13, Phil. 1:17-18.
 - Faith was once for all handed down to God’s saints so that we must contend for it. Jude 3.
 - Faith can be “fallen away from” by people if we believe and/or teach false teachings. I Tim. 4:1, 6.
 - Faith is described as assured understanding and evidence-based conviction. Heb. 11:1.
- Doubt is double-minded and suspicious choice to stay undecided, and it makes us unstable and irresponsible in life.

“Doubt” comes from “double,” and is wavering between “double” opinions in uncertainty and indecision. It also means to be inclined to disbelief and therefore to be fearful, apprehensive, or suspicious [*Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language* (N.Y.: World, 1966), p. 437].

- Both “double-minded” doubt and suspicious doubt make it difficult to respond powerfully in life so that both stop us from responsible living. When we doubt, we are unstable and insecure. James 1:5-8, 13-18.
- When I choose to act without confidence that God approves, God says I am sinning. Rom. 14:1-15:7, esp. 14:22-23.
- What are we thinking when we doubt? We fear, worry and compare when we think without listening to God.

II. We have “little faith” when we fear, worry, and compare rather than listening to our Master.

- A. We have little faith when we fear present turmoil rather than recognize Jesus’ final rule.
 1. Lack of faith comes when we see the storm but forget the Creator’s control. Mk. 4:35-41, esp. 4:40/Lk. 8:22-25, esp. 8:25/Matt. 8:23-27, esp. 8:26. Cf. Matt. 16:18, 28:18-20.
 2. Jesus rules nature. Col. 1:12-18. Cf. Ps. 50:10-12.
 3. We can endure confidently when we set our mind on God’s will and entrust our souls to Him as “our faithful Creator.” I Pet. 4:1-2, 12-19. Cf. Is. 40:28-31.
- B. We have little faith when we worry about material needs rather than recognize Jesus’ provisions.
 1. Lack of faith comes when we see limited resources but forget God’s provisions to creation. Lk. 12:22-24, esp. 12:28, Matt. 6:25-34, esp. 6:30. Cf. Lk. 18:17.
 2. Jesus provides for us through natural processes. Phil. 4:12-13, 19, Eph. 3:20-21.
 3. Our eyes sometimes imagine “needs” that we don’t need. I Tim. 6:6-11.
- C. We have little faith when we compare our weakness to the demands of life – especially life in Christ! – rather than recognize Jesus’ power in our lives.
 1. Lack of faith comes when we see our limitations to do what Jesus asks us to do but forget His power to save us. Matt. 14:22-33, esp. 14:31.
 2. Jesus provides escape from temptation. I Cor. 10:12-13.

3. Jesus provides forgiveness when we repent. I Jn. 1:5-2:21, Rom. 8:31-39.

D. We have growing faith when we listen to God – reading, studying, meditating on, and obeying His Word.

1. This is what God says happens. Rom. 10:17, Jn. 20:30-31.
2. God’s word equips us completely when we use it for our teaching, our reproof (evaluation standard), or correction, and our training in righteousness. II Tim. 3:16-17.
3. Exercising loyalty to God and praying in faith to Him permits Him to take care of us and grow our faith. Lk. 18:1-8, esp. 18:8.

III. God’s implanted word saves, but if it we won’t plant it in our hearts, we will never grow faith.

- God works when we make our heart fertile soil for His word. James 1:21-25 in contrast to Lk. 8:4-18, esp. 8:12. Cf. Jn. 20:27b.
- Consider Mk. 16:16, Acts 3:18 & 17:30-31, Matt. 10:32-33, Rom. 6:3-7 & Gal. 3:26-27, I Jn. 1:5-2:2.

“Be not faithless but believing!”