

# faith, Faith, or FAITH?



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- Part 1 -

## Do you have *faith* that you have *FAITH*?

### Check-in

**How are you? Where have you seen God working in your life in the last week? And... what did you get for Christmas? Was Santa good to you and gave you that Red Rider BB gun? Or were you a Level-4 Naughty Lister and wound up with a lump of coal?**

### Opening Prayer

**God of Faith, help us to put our full trust in you, and remind us of your unfailing love.**

## Introduction

Do you have *faith* that you have FAITH? Okay, that's going to take some clarification. Faith has a few different definitions. First, one might say, "I have faith that when I flip on this light switch, the light will turn on." That's what we might call *faith* with a lowercase 'f'. This faith is simply an expectation that a cause will have an effect based on past experience. Faith, with a capital 'F', is different. This *Faith* is a strong belief in God or a set of doctrines of a religion where there is no proof. "I have Faith that God exists." Many of us have this type of Faith. But there is one more definition of this word that will be the foundation for the next two weeks... one that goes beyond simple expectation or hope. One that comes with a firm foundation or reliance upon God. But first...

**Review Question: Did you make a New Year's resolution this time around? What was it... did you commit to exercising or eating better? Did you commit to supporting the Cardinals no matter how bad they are? Share!**

## Scripture

Today, we're going to talk about making a New Year's Resolution to deepen your FAITH. How? Well, let's take a look at a character from the Bible who exemplified this as well as anyone else. His name was Job. Job had bigtime FAITH, all caps. Here's your set up... Job was a righteous man, faithful to God, and was richly blessed. But up in Heaven, God and "The Adversary" have a conversation, suggesting

that Job only had FAITH because he was so blessed, and that if he lost everything he would curse God. So, God allows The Adversary to strip away Job's blessings...

### **Read Job, chapter 1, verses 18 through 22.**

Job's livestock, his family, and his health were taken away. And yet, Job still refuses to curse God. The rest of the book outlines conversations between Job and his friends, as he struggles to reconcile his current situation with his unfailing FAITH.

**Question 1: Put yourself in Job's shoes. How would you have responded? Would you have been able to say with peace, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away." Or would you have been curled up in the fetal position unable to face life? No shame either way... discuss!**

## **Reflection**

So, what is FAITH, all caps? What does Job's story tell us about how we can move beyond a simple belief that God exists to a strong, unwavering conviction in our loving, trustworthy, faithful Creator? This type of FAITH allow us to trust in God's character and promises, inspires trust, love, and obedience, and is the pathway to a deeper relationship with God. Job's FAITH helped him navigate life's challenges, and gave him a way to declare hope, even in his

devastation. It can offer us the same. How? Well, on Sunday, Shelly gave us 4 things we can learn from his story.

First, FAITH is the foundation of our relationship with God. Job spent time in prayer and worship. He developed such a deep connection with his Creator that they had one-on-one conversations by the end of the book. Our FAITH, then, like Job's, can be built on trust and communication through prayer, and allows us to hold onto the character of God we find in the Bible... that God is holy, loving, generous, and faithful. Job's story reminds us that God is good and working in the situation.

Second, FAITH gives us hope and strength daily. Like plugging an appliance into an outlet, plugging into God's power allows us to function. FAITH is the cord and God is the electricity. FAITH allows us to focus on Him instead of the struggle, receiving the courage to do what scares us, to stand strong in the turmoil, and receive peace when life seems chaotic. Job focuses on his relationship with God instead of his problems, giving him hope for the future. In chapter 13, verse 15, Job even says, "though God might kill me, I will hope in Him." (NLT)

Third, FAITH allows us to look at the world through God's eyes. The Bible tells us that Job was compassionate toward others, something that didn't fall away, even in his trials. Our FAITH inspires acts of kindness and service and helps us to see people as we see them.

Finally, FAITH connects us to salvation and eternal life. In the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter, verse 25, Job says, ““But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and he will stand upon the earth at last.” (NLT) Our FAITH allows us to hope in a future where will we see God face-to-face, and all our struggles will cease. Do you a faith that you have FAITH?

**Question 2: Analize these 4 benefits of FAITH. Is there one that you feel you do well? Is there another you struggle with? Which speaks to you the most?**

## *Closing*

How is your FAITH? As we start 2026, make this a focus for you this year. FAITH is the foundation for the relationship we have with God and knowing him personally. FAITH gives us strength and hope through the midst of our trials, trusting God's guidance, provision, and promises. It allows us to live differently, loving others and seeing them as God sees them. And finally, FAITH gives us the sure and certain hope of a future where we will suffer no longer. FAITH isn't a tool or a finish line or reward. FAITH is a muscle you have to keep working every day. Exercise that muscle, and develop the kind of FAITH, all caps, of Job.

**Take some time to share prayer requests or celebrations and close in prayer.**