



FAITH

James 1:6-8

...he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

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LEXICAL CONSIDERATIONS

BIBLICAL WORDS FOR FAITH

HEBREW

emunah ^{Strong's #530} - To Believe, faithfulness

Faithfulness and Certainty

The word 'emunah is synonymous with tsedek ("righteousness" — cf. Isa 11:5), with chesed ("lovingkindness" — cf. Ps 98:3, NASB), and with mishpat ("justice" cf. Jer 5:1).

aman ^{Strong's #539} - To Believe, Faithfulness

To be certain, to be firm, endure, be faithful, be true, stand fast, trust, have belief, believe

batach ^{Strong's #982}

"to be reliant, trust, be unsuspecting."

betach ^{Strong's #983}

Suggesting trust and security

mibtach ^{Strong's #4009}

The act of confiding; the object of confidence; the state of confidence or security."

GREEK

pistos ^{Strong's #4103}

- *passive, "faithful, to be trusted, reliable," said of God, of Christ, of the words of God, of servants of the Lord*
- *active, signifying "believing, trusting, relying," e. g., Acts 16:1 (feminine); 2 Cor 6:15; Gal 3:9 seems best taken in this respect, as the context lays stress upon Abraham's "faith" in God, rather than upon his "faithfulness." In John 20:27 the context requires the active sense, as the Lord is reproaching Thomas for his want of "faith."*

pistis ^{Strong's #4102}

primarily, "firm persuasion," a conviction based upon hearing (akin to peitho, "to persuade"), is used in the NT always of "faith in God or Christ, or things spiritual."

pepoithesis ^{Strong's #4006}

denotes "persuasion, assurance, confidence, trust"

peitho ^{Strong's #3982}

"to persuade," or, intransitively, "to have confidence, to be confident"

pisteuo ^{Strong's #4100}

to have faith (in, upon, or with respect to, a person or thing), i.e. credit; by implication, to entrust (especially one's spiritual well-being to Christ): KJV - believe (-r), commit (to trust), put in trust with.

WHAT IS FAITH?

Hebrews 11:1

*Now faith is the **substance** of things hoped for, the **evidence** of things not seen.*

Here we are given the definition of Faith...ok, so, is anyone else still confused?? Let's find out what is meant by 'substance' and 'evidence'...

SUBSTANCE

Strong's NT #5287 - a setting under (support), concrete, confidence, confident

Substance is defined as

- the real physical matter of which a person or thing consists

What are we having faith in?

That may sound like a silly question to those who claim to be Christians but I think its worth clarifying for those who maybe aren't exactly sure.

I have to assume that, in doing this study, you have an understanding and appreciation for the fact that we are all sinners and the wages of our sin is eternal damnation to hell. Throughout the entire bible, prophecies are made about a hope of escaping that damnation...that hope is Jesus. But, there is a catch....you have to *believe* that Jesus has already come to earth and has taken the punishment for our sin by dying on the cross and then rising again from the dead; now alive in heaven, sitting at the right hand of God. But don't be fooled, you can't stop there. The bible tells us that even Satan believes; and he most definitely is not free from damnation. Believing in Jesus is the easy bit...the hard bit comes when you have to *follow* Him.

Colossians 2:17 tells us that the 'substance' is of Christ. Jesus is the 'substance' of our faith. If Jesus didn't come to earth, die on the cross, and then rise again, then we have nothing to base our faith on. We, as Christians, put our *confidence* in the fact that Jesus has purged us of our sin (Heb 1:3), if and when we come to Him. But Christ doesn't stop there...He not only cleanses us from our sin but He also comes, by His Spirit, and lives in us. And we are told in Hebrews 3:14, that *if* we hold onto that *confidence* until the end, we will be saved.

What are we hoping for?

In my understanding, our confidence is in the saving work of Christ, but our hope is in what we will receive when we finally see the reward of our faith...eternal life with Jesus in Heaven.

EVIDENCE

Strong's NT #1650 - proof, conviction, reproof, convict, convince

Evidence is defined as

- an indication that makes something evident
- basis for belief or disbelief; knowledge in which to base belief

Evident is defined as

- clearly revealed to the mind or the senses or judgment
- capable of being seen or noticed

The question that came into my mind here was:
“How can we provide evidence for something that is not seen?”

Here’s what I discovered - **We are the evidence**. Our life needs to attest to the truth...the love of God needs to be apparent and discernable in the way we live.

For example:

- The **effects** of a drought **become apparent** to anyone who **sees** the parched fields
- A **change** in behaviour or attitude is only **evident** if it is **observable** or discernable

So how do we become that evidence?

I think the most important thing to note here, is that there needs to be a **change**. Something has to be different!

Example:

Let’s say there was a car involved in a robbery and it was exactly like yours...the police knock on your door asking to look at your car. How can they prove or disprove that your car was involved in the robbery? The police will be looking for similarities and differences, right? So luckily your car has a few differences - the number plate; the tire tread; and the dints on the panels. The question here is...if your car was identical to the car used in the robbery, how could you prove that it wasn’t the car that was used? Good luck with that!

The ‘norm’, in this world, is to believe in anything other than God, right? So having faith in God would be different. But *are* we different to the world? That my friend is the test of faith...and you only need to look in Galatians 5:19-23 to discover what *some* of those differences are.

WORKS OF THE FLESH <i>Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God</i>	FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT <i>Against such there is no law</i>
Galatians 5:19-21	Galatians 5:22-23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ jealousies ➤ outburst of wrath ➤ selfish ambitions ➤ dissensions ➤ heresies ➤ envy ➤ murders ➤ drunkenness ➤ revelries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adultery ➤ Fornication ➤ uncleanness, ➤ lewdness ➤ idolatry ➤ sorcery ➤ hatred ➤ contentions ➤ love ➤ joy ➤ peace ➤ longsuffering ➤ kindness ➤ goodness ➤ faithfulness ➤ gentleness ➤ self-control

Actions speak louder than words

We can say that we have ‘faith’ in God, but does our life show that to others? If our lives are ‘the evidence’ that there really is a God and He is everything that He and we say He is, then we need to work out our faith with fear and trembling.

The substance of our faith is Jesus, raised from the dead; but if our lives don’t bear evidence of that faith, then we are in a dangerous position of having ‘dead faith’ (which we will discuss further on).

DEGREES OF FAITH

NO FAITH

2 Thessalonians 3:2

that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.

Not all people are prepared to embrace the gospel. Hence, they set themselves against it. The Thessalonians, from their ready acceptance of the Gospel, might think "all" would receive it; but the Jews were far from having such a readiness to believe.

Deuteronomy 32:20

*And He said: 'I will hide My face from them,
I will see what their end will be,
For they are a perverse generation,
Children in whom is no faith.*

"There is no steadfastness in them," they can never be depended on. They are fickle, because they are faithless.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

REJECTED FAITH

2 Timothy 3:8

Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith;

Resist - to stand against, oppose

Reprobate - rejected, castaway, disapproved

Those that choose not to examine the evidences before them, and refused to search for and retain God in their knowledge, were given over to an unsearching or undiscerning mind. These men, were philosophers, both of power and learning, yet opposed and resisted the Word of God.

The word 'reprobate' signifies such a person who has been rejected...someone who has been rejected on testing; not having deserved the prize. These people should not be approved or regarded as true teachers of religion.

DENIED FAITH

The act of refusing to comply

1 Timothy 5:8

8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

The Christian values, strongly teach love and charity to all. The meaning in this verse is that he would, by such an act, have practically renounced Christianity, since it enjoins this duty on all. Here we learn that it is possible to deny the faith by conduct as well as by words.

A neglect of any duty is a denial of the faith.

FAITH IN VAIN

1 Corinthians 15:14

And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

As discussed earlier, our faith is based on the fact that Christ came to earth, died on the cross and rose again. If this did not occur, then what do we base our faith on? The death and resurrection of Christ *did* in fact take place, but for those who refuse to believe, and continue to look forward in faith for the coming of the messiah, their faith is in vain, for He has already come. This not only has application for the non-messianic Jews, but also for the Gentiles, who claim to believe (have faith) in God, yet deny Christ.

DEAD FAITH

James 2:20,26

*But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?
For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also*

As mentioned earlier, we are the *evidence* of that in which we believe. We can claim to have faith, but without the outpouring of that faith in our life, our faith is useless. Where true faith is, there is God; his Spirit gives life, and his love affords motives to righteous actions. Obedience is his delight, because love to God and man is the element in which his soul lives. If good works do not follow, it is clear that there is no true and proper faith; none that justifies and saves. If faith produces no fruit of good living, that fact proves that it is dead, that it has no power, and that it is of no value.

The relation between faith and works is as close as that between the body and the spirit. Life is the result of the union in both instances.

LITTLE FAITH

Matthew 8:26-27

But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?"

Here "little faith" is shown to be the same as doubting, because of fearfulness. Jesus was in control all along. Their faith was being tested to see how they would react.

Many, that have true faith, have it to seek when they have occasion to use it. But at this time their fears prevailed so that they seemed to have no faith at all. It was out of the way, when they needed it, and so it was as if they had not had it.

We have been given power to believe, and yet do not exercise it! We have little faith because we do not use the grace which Christ has already given us. Many are looking for more faith without using that which they have. It is as possible to hide this talent as any other.

Matthew 14:29-32

So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Peter trusted in Jesus, but when he took his eyes off Jesus, and saw his circumstances, fear set in and he began to doubt. Nevertheless, he called out to Jesus, and Jesus saved him. When a Christian has his eyes fixed on Jesus, he walks in faith. But when he begins to look at the difficult situations and gets his eyes off Jesus, fear and doubt can set in. His faith can begin to be like a wave. Because of the fear and doubt, his faith can be called "little." But when

he again fixed his eyes back on Jesus alone as his only hope, Jesus saved him from drowning. When a person calls on Jesus in faith, Jesus can be expected to help no matter what the problem.

James 1:6-8

*But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.
For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;
he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

Here James, uses likens doubt (little faith) to a wave, which is driven and tossed by the wind...wavering between belief and unbelief; faith and doubt...such a man is of divided allegiance.

GREAT FAITH

The woman of Canaan

Matthew 15:22-28

*And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."
But He answered her not a word.
And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."
But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"
But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."
And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."
Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.*

What made this woman's faith great?

- Earnestness
- Persevering
- The cry of a poor sinner "Lord, help me!"
- Full of trust and confidence
- Humility – relying on the mercy of God
- Not discouraged at his delay
- Respectful
- Rational

Jesus answered the woman not a word...this was done to test her faith. It was proper that the strength of her faith should be fully tried. The hindrances thrown in this woman's way only aided in increasing her faith.

The Centurion

Matthew 8:5-13

*Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented."
And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."
The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.
For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."
When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!
And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.
But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

What made this man's faith great?

➤ **Humility –**

"Lord, I am not worthy that thou should come under my roof." The centurion was a great man, yet he owned his unworthiness before God. The more humility the more faith; the more modest we are of ourselves; the stronger will be our confidence in Jesus Christ. He had an assurance of faith not only that Christ could cure his servant, but, that he could cure him at a distance, and that he could cure him with a word.

- The first degree of humility is to acknowledge the necessity of God's mercy, and our own inability to help ourselves
- The second, to confess the freeness of his grace, and our own utter unworthiness, ignorance, unbelief, and presumption will ever retard our spiritual cure.

➤ **Confidence –**

He had full confidence in the ability of Jesus to heal his servant, and requested him simply to give the command. That is, I am subject to the commands of others, and know how to obey. I have also under me soldiers who are accustomed to obedience. I say to one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes. I am "prepared," therefore, to believe that your commands will be obeyed. As these obey me, so do diseases, storms, and seas obey you. If men obey me, who am an "inferior" officer, subject to another, how much more shall diseases obey you-the original source of power having control over all things! He asked, therefore, simply that Christ would give commandment, and he felt assured he would be obeyed.

➤ **Earnest Request**

He came to him beseeching him...not demanding a cure, and standing upon points of honour.

INCREASING FAITH

Luke 17:5

And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

I can see only one answer to this petition...

Romans 10:17

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

HINDRANCES TO FAITH

FAILURE TO UNDERSTAND

WE ARE A NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Many people do not realize that they actually are new creatures. They think that when they were saved, God simply forgave them of their sins. It would do little good if this were all the sinner received, for he would still be a child of the devil and would still go to hell. He has to be born again. He has to become a new creature, putting off his old, sinful ways. We are new creatures, created by God in Christ Jesus with the very life and nature of God in our spirits. We are children of God, sons of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus.

OUR PLACE IN CHRIST

Bro. Haginalways suggested that Christians go through the New Testament –particularly the epistles –and write down the phrases “in Christ,” “in Whom,” and “in Him.” (By, Through, etc.) Writing them down helps you to remember them.

There are approximately 140 such expressions in the New Testament. If you read and meditate on these Scriptures until they become a part of you, life will be different for you.

As you read the verses, say to yourself, “This is who I am. This is what I have in Christ Jesus.”

Getting an understanding of who you are will cure you of a worry habit.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

2 Corinthians 5:21

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Therefore, by the New Birth, we become a righteous new creature. We are sons and daughters of God as though we never had sinned. This is justification. We can stand in His presence without sin-consciousness; without any feelings of guilt or shame. We can come into Gods presence because we belong there.

Some may think, “I have sinned since I became a Christian. How can I be righteous?”

John gives us the answer to this question.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

When the believer who has sinned confesses his sin and asks for forgiveness, the Lord does two things:

- (1) He forgives them;
- (2) He cleanses them from all unrighteousness.

If we are cleansed from “unrighteousness,” then we are righteous again.

When we sin, we feel guilty and have a sense of unrighteousness. We feel unworthy to come into Gods presence.

When we confess our sins, He forgives and cleanses us. We regain our right standing with Him.

OUR RIGHT TO USE THE NAME OF JESUS

John 16:23-24

"And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.

Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

When we fully realize the power of Jesus’ Name – when we understand what that Name will do – then we can resist the devil and enjoy victory.

The Name of Jesus has authority and power today, and that Name belongs to us!

FAILURE TO ACT

UPON THE WORD

James 1:22-25

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

We must not fail to act on the Word of God. Failing to work the Word will prevent the Word to work for you. Hearing the Word, even knowing the Word, is not enough. We must be doers of the Word.

Pete had become lost in the desert and had been chasing mirages. He thought to himself, "I'll follow this last one." It was a deserted town with a well in the very center. His mouth parched from the intense heat, he ran to the well with his last ounce of energy. He vigorously pumped the handle only to find that no water came forth. Then, he looked up to a note nailed to the post. It instructed its readers to "look behind the rock where a five-gallon container of water will be found" and warned against drinking or using it for anything besides priming the pump. Every ounce was needed, and not even a drop could be spared, the note emphasized. "After pouring the water down the pump, pump the handle vigorously and all the water you desire will come forth," the note said. One last instruction was to please fill the water can and place it behind the rock for the next weary soul who might happen to come along. How hard it is for people to give up a "sure thing" for something they cannot see at the time. Pete had a sure thing in the bucket of water and yet was instructed to pour it "all" down the pump.

FAILURE TO HOLDFAST

OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH

2 Timothy 1:13

Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 4:14

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

WHERE DOES FAITH COME FROM?

JESUS

Hebrews 12:2

...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...

Author

The word 'author' (*archegos*), in this verse, means captain, chief leader or prince. It also stems from the words 'arche' and 'archomai', which are both used to denote the beginning or commencement of something.

Jesus is the great leader and precedent of our faith...He trusted in God, obeyed and endured till the end.

Finisher

The word 'finisher' (*teleiotes*), means completer or the one who brings to perfection. He is the fulfiller and fulfilling of all scriptural promises and prophesies. He will judge and reward those according to their faith. He is the prize.

Jesus is the first and the last, most perfect example of our faith and confidence in God. He is not only the object of our faith but the beginning, perfecter and rewarder of it.

HEARING

Romans 10:17

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Faith in Christ is the result of hearing the Word; the gospel of Jesus. When the Gospel is heard attentively, faith will be produced; and if they believe the report, the arm of the Lord will be revealed in their salvation.

UNDERSTANDING

Matthew 13:19

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

The word 'understanding' (*sunimi*), means to comprehend or consider; by implication, to act piously.

Those who do not take heed and consider the Word of God, will not continue (or even begin) in the faith, since faith comes firstly from hearing. Hearing the word with an open heart allows for understanding. If we don't first plow the ground, by preparing our heart for the Word, and then engage ourselves attentively in it; and if we do not water the seed with prayer and meditation on good things, we will be easy prey for the wicked one (Satan), and our faith will be snatched away.

Luke 8:10 (Isa 6:9-10)

And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'

In this verse there are two types of hearers...

1. Those that see only the 'natural' or 'literal' meaning of the story (parable)
2. Those that see beyond the literal and into 'spiritual' meaning or significance

So in hearing they do not understand. If the heart of the hearer is right, without malignance and blindness, then they will understand. It is those who have hardened their heart, and are bent on iniquity, who will not understand.

A person's faith cannot exceed the knowledge and understanding he has of God's Word. Faith is built upon God's Word. It is built upon the actual amount of God's Word he has heard or read, combined with the correct understanding he has of that Word.

THE LAW?

Paul asks the question...

Galatians 3:2

Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

And further on he answers that question...

Galatians 3:10-12

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

*But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."
Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them."*

It is impossible that a man should be justified by the law, because God has appointed another way of justification. There cannot be two ways of obtaining life, and as he has appointed faith as the condition on which people shall live, he has precluded from them the possibility of obtaining salvation in any other mode.

Under the Gospel one gets life from God through faith, and then begins to do the will of God in the energy of that faith.

The curse of the Law was real...It took Christ to the cross.

FAITH TRANSCENDS REASON

Rationalists deny miracles in Scripture since they seem "unreasonable"; but faith rises above the limits of Rationalism. Faith transcends Rationalism because it is not limited to human theories, logic, reason, knowledge, and understanding. This message rings loudly in Scripture demanding that we "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). However, Rationalists walk by sight, not by faith.

JERICHO

Joshua 6:1-5

Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in.

And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.

You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days.

And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times and the priests shall blow the trumpets.

It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him."

BY FAITH THE WALLS FELL DOWN

Hebrews 11:30

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.

Now what does circling the walls of Jericho for seven days have to do with the walls falling? Logically, nothing. Rationalists attempt to explain this event in a way which dismisses the intervention of God. But we understand that Israel obeyed God in a very simple thing whereby God gave them victory over Jericho.

BY FAITH RAHAB DID NOT PERISH

Hebrews 11:31

By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

The spies told her to bring her relatives into her house, not to go outside the house during battle, and to bind a scarlet cord in the window through which she had let them down to escape (*Josh. 2:17-20*). Then after the walls fell, Joshua sent in the spies to rescue Rahab who lived on the wall (*Josh. 6:20-23*). Now what does tying a scarlet cord in a window and staying in a house have to do with being saved from the destruction of Jericho? Logically, nothing. And what does faith have to do with the salvation of Rahab and her household? By faith she obeyed God; therefore, God saved her. The cord did not save her - God saved her because of her faith.

Paul writes:

Romans 15:4

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

What do we learn from the Scriptures? We learn obedience through faith - not through logic and reason. Faith rises above the carnal mind of man to obey God whether or not His commands seem reasonable.

THE LAW

Galatians 3:23-27

*But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.
Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.
But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.
For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

THE LAW WAS UNTIL JOHN

Luke 16:16

"The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

HAS THE LAW BEEN MADE VOID?

Romans 3:31

Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

Romans 9:31-32

*but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.
Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.*

A WEIGHTIER MATTER OF THE LAW

Faith is called a "weightier matter of the Law."

Matthew 23:23

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

What does the Lord require, that we have left undone?

Micah 6:8

*He has shown you, O man, what is good;
And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justly, to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?*

FAITH, A LAW IN ITSELF

Romans 3:27

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.

The word 'law' is used figuratively to denote 'principle' - or 'basic truth'. What basic truth prevents us from boasting? The truth that righteousness is through Christ - alone.

The Law of Works demands perfection through works...

- Based on the statement..."if you do"
- Based on a work-centered life = self centered life

If perfection through works was possible (which it is not) and we had achieved that perfection, then we would have a basis for boasting.

The Law of Faith demands obedience leading to righteousness...

- Based on the statement..."if you believe"
- Based on a God-centered life

The basic truth is that we have no merit; we are lost sinners, and we are justified only through faith in Christ.

Romans 3:28

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Faith is an absolute. It is a law, not a theory.

THE JUST HAVE ALWAYS LIVED BY FAITH

So the question here is..."How do the Jews before Christ get to Heaven?" And that is a very good question!

Well for starters, only the justified can get to heaven. But if we are justified through faith in Christ then how were the Jews, before Christ, justified. The answer is..."*The same way as us - through Faith.*"

Remember, Faith means to have confidence or trust in something. And we know from the Old Testament scripture, that the Jewish people were quite aware of God's presence among them. They were told over and over again, to trust God and follow His instructions...but time and time again they became disobedient, either through doubt or their own lustful desires.

*Both the OT Jews and NT believers face the same dilemma...nothing we do, of ourselves, is pleasing to God.
but...*

Both the OT Jews and NT believers have the same hope...Jesus Christ.

The OT Jews received prophecies regarding the coming of a Saviour through whom they would be saved. All they needed to do was believe in God's promise, which was to come, and be obedient in anticipation, and they could be saved!

The NT believers have to believe that Jesus has already come and follow His example in obedience to the Holy Spirit, and they can be saved.

The only difference between the two, is that one looked forward to Christ's coming, and the other looks back to the Cross...but both look forward to the Promise which is through Christ.

So the statement in Habakkuk and Hebrews, both stand true...

Habakkuk 2:4

*"Behold the proud,
His soul is not upright in him;
But the just shall live by his faith.*

Hebrews 10:38

*Now the just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him."*

WHAT DOES FAITH HAVE TO DO WITH...

SIN

Romans 14:23

...for whatever is not from faith is sin

This prompts the question...

Why is it that we are not acting from faith when we go ahead and do something we think may be wrong?

Maybe the better question would be...

Why do we go ahead and do something we think may be wrong?

Is it because we think we won't be happy if we don't? As humans, we do what we do because we think doing it will make life more pleasant or at least bearable. And, if that is so, it is easy to see how our behavior is not from faith.

Faith trusts God to construct a future for us which is vastly superior to the one we could make for ourselves. Therefore, it is obvious that when we try to make our own future happy at the risk of wrong, we are certainly not acting from faith, for faith rests in God to shape the best future for us.

Here we get a glimpse into what Paul means by saving faith and why it is that genuine faith always changes lives. What comes out of verse 23 is that faith is confidence in God to work in the affairs of our lives so that only what is best for us happens to us.

Hebrews 3:12-13

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

We can see from this verse that sin is deceiving. Just when we think that our 'sinful' actions will make us happier or more prosperous, we soon come to the painful realization that we were wrong! We got done – again 😊

OUR CONSCIENCE

Hebrews 10:22

let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

You must know you are clean spiritually, because your faith depends on it. How can you **confidently** approach God, when your conscience is dirty? The truth is - you can't! We need to have a true heart of full assurance of faith and washed clean from an evil conscience. If our heart is full of sin they we have not faith...thus we have none of the assurances of faith. Our conscience tells us if we are in the faith or not.

Romans 2:15

who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them

REPENTANCE

Acts 20:21

testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ

Hebrews 6:1b

the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God

Mark 1:15

Repent, and believe in the gospel

In light of these verses, one would have a hard time separating repentance from faith. The long and the short of it is...both repentance and faith involve a 180° turn. To Repent means to turn from your sin; and to have Faith means to turn toward God.

If I was to stand in front of a wall – the wall representing sin (unrepentance) and unbelief (lack of faith) – and decide that I wanted to believe (have Faith) then I would have to turn around with my back toward the wall. But, in doing that 180° turn, I also have to turn from my sin (repent). I can't turn to 'true faith' without also turning from my sin. A person who claims to have faith, yet continues to live in sin, is still in fact facing the wall. Believing that God exists and living in Faith are 2 completely different things. Like I said...if you turn from one then you *must* turn from the other. For those who still don't believe me, then read it for yourself... Sorry to be the one to break it to you 😊

Titus 1:16

They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

WORKS

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

This verse says it all...

1. Salvation is through Faith – a gift of God
2. Nothing we do will save us – not even works

Now, the unenlightened would say "Oh good! That means that I don't have to do anything, since nothing I do is good enough!" Those people are treading on thin ice!

This verse is simply addressing the Jews who have been bound to keep the Law of Moses. Paul is telling them that, keeping every letter of the Law is impossible...that's why God sent Jesus. But, as you can imagine, they refused to believe.

So NO, works can not save us from our sin...only Jesus can



BUT wait...there is another side to this coin

Titus 3:8

This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Ok, so I bet, now you're confused! We have just been told that works can't save us...but now we are told to maintain good works! What the??

Let's have a look at James' rational...

James 2:14-26

- 14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?
15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,
16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?
17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.
18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.
19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble!
20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?
21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?
22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?
23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.
24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.
25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?
26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

I know it was way back in the beginning of this study...but do you remember this verse...

Hebrews 11:1

*Now faith is the **substance** of things hoped for, the **evidence** of things not seen.*

Evidence...are you remembering yet?

Our faith *must* be evident in our life and seen by those around us. Our daily life is full of things that we do (works), so we need to make sure that the 'works' of our hands, eyes, mouth, heart, mind etc...are in keeping with our faith in Christ. If we claim to have faith yet, the change of heart which comes through faith, is not evident in our life, then realistically (as hard as it is to swallow) we don't really have faith.

Look back at James 2:21-23. Abraham was told by God to take his only son and sacrifice him on an alter to God. But previously God had told him that from his seed (his son) he would make a great nation. As you can imagine, Abraham would be thinking to himself "How can I have a great nation through my son if I kill him?" I think that's a fair question. But this is where faith (confidence in God) came into play. God wants to **see** how much Abraham trusts Him. Right at this point, Abraham could have refused to sacrifice his son, thinking that it would be too painful to lose him...and life would be better *with* his son than without him! Who knows...maybe God even asked Abraham the night before "How much do you trust me?" and perhaps Abraham said, "With my life Lord!" But clearly God wanted Abraham to **prove** that he trusted Him. If Abraham had said that he trusted God but refused to sacrifice his son, then anyone looking from the outside would have to question whether Abraham really did trust God.

Faith is all of a sudden looking completely different to what we thought!! Isn't it??

LOVE

Another key to operating in faith is to be rooted and grounded in love so that your faith will operate through love. The Bible tells us clearly that all believers should be rooted and grounded in the love of Christ, if we want to experience the fullness of God, who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Ephesians 3:16-20

*16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,
17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height —
19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,*

We are told to put on the breastplate of faith and love... the two go together like hand and glove!

1 Thessalonians 5:8

But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

As we walk in the Spirit, the love of Christ will begin to flow through us, and will give birth to much faith. Among the fruit of the Spirit, we find both faith and love:

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

When the love of Christ is flowing through us, it brings fourth much faith. God's Word tells us clearly that faith works through love.

Galatians 5:6

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 4:2-5

*2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.
3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness."
4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.
5 David Celebrates the Same Truth*

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

The point of verse 3 is that Abraham was not justified by works. "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Why? Paul bases his argument on Genesis 15:6. He argues that Genesis 15:6 does not say "Abraham worked for God and therefore was justified." Nor does it say, "Abraham did acts of love and therefore was justified." Nor does it say that Abraham made progress in character formation and therefore was justified. It says, "Abraham believed God (trusted God, banked on God's free mercy, looked away from his hopeless, ungodly self to God's grace) and that faith was credited to him as righteousness."

What did Abraham find? Abraham found grace in the eyes of the Lord, through faith alone. God drew him to faith and God counted the faith as righteousness - as a right standing with God. Abraham became right with God - acquitted, forgiven, accepted, justified - by faith alone apart from works.

Hebrews 10:38

Now the just (righteous) shall live by faith

SALVATION

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Well I think that's fairly self explanatory!

Salvation comes *by* (means of) grace, *through* (the way of) faith. In other words, grace doesn't save us. It makes salvation possible. And faith can't be ignored....it's the essential activity that makes salvation a reality!

FAITHFULNESS

We need to get one thing clear in our minds. God is a God of faithfulness. He is a God of absolute reliability, of steadfast love, and of loyalty. He is stable, constant and true.

Deuteronomy 7:9

"Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

Since God is a faithful God and we are his children, we are expected also to be faithful. This quality is literally the hallmark of the Christian life. We see it mentioned as a characteristic of several early Christians teachers. For example...

Onesimus:

Colossians 4:9

with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. NKJV

Timothy:

1 Corinthians 4:17

For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord

Epaphras:

Colossians 1:7

as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf

Our faithfulness is merely the necessary and expected response to God's faithfulness. Thus, faithfulness is something that is primarily expressed toward God. It simply means "full of faith" or "trustful."

Jesus gives us several illustrations concerning the effects of faithfulness in the area of human dealings. In Luke 12:42 we see that a faithful and wise servant does what he has been instructed to do. We learn in

Luke 16:10

He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.

Paul goes on to tell us that it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful...

1 Corinthians 4:2

Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

Faithfulness is also said to be a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), yet for so many supposedly Spirit-filled and Spirit-led people, there is less and less evidence of faithfulness.

Faith becomes faithfulness as we let God define what we believe with humble hearts and His word.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Psalm 34 teaches us what "the fear of the Lord" means,

Psalms 34:11-15

11 Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

12 Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good?

13 Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.

14 Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.

According to this psalm, living in "the fear of the Lord" is what the righteous do, characterized by turning from evil and doing good. The righteous are simply those who trust in Jesus as their Savior, as Romans 1:17 tells us...

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

This last phrase has the meaning of "those who are righteous by faith in Christ will live by faith in Christ!" The righteous by faith in Christ live in the fear of the Lord!

Fear of the Lord is...

- the beginning of the knowledge of God (Prov 1:7; 2:5; Isa 33:6)
- the beginning of wisdom (Prov 9:10; Isa 33:6)
- a fountain of life (Prov 14:27; 19:23; 22:4)
- understanding (Prov 2:5)
- to know strong confidence (Prov 14:26)
- to know the secret of the Lord (Ps 25:14)
- salvation (Prov 14:27; Isa 33:6)
- a place of refuge (Prov 14:26)
- turns men from evil (Prov 16:6)
- the whole duty of man (Ecc 12:13)
- to be delivered (Ps 34:7)
- to want nothing (Ps 34:90)
- to know Gods mercy (Ps 103:11,17; Luke 1:50)
- to be blessed (Ps 112:1)
- to please God (Ps 147:11)
- to be heard by God (Heb 5:7; Mal 3:16)
- to stand in awe of Him (Ps 33:8)
- a banner (Ps 60:4; Isa 59:19)
- to hold Him in reverence, honour and glory (Ps 89:7; Mal 3:16; Heb 12:28; Rev 14:7)
- your treasure (Isa 33:6)

FAITH THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE

OLD TESTAMENT

SALVATION	BELIEVED	RIGHTEOUSNESS	FAITHFULNESS	KNOWING	FEAR OF THE LORD	HOPE	CONFIDENCE /TRUST	DID NOT BELIEVE	FAITH IN THINGS	OBEDIENCE
Prov 14:26	Gen 15:6	Gen 15:6	Numbers 12:7	Deut 7:9	2 Chron 19:9	Job 31:24	Job 8:14	Ex 4:1-9	Job 15:31	Deut 7:9
Ps 16:9	Ex 4:31	Ps 4:5	Deut 7:9	Ezek 29:16	Prov 14:26	Jer 17:7	Job 31:24	Num 14:11	Eze 33:13	
Isa 12:2	Ps 27:13	Prov 28:1	1 Sam 26:25		Ps 40:3	Ps 16:9	Ps 40:4	Deut 1:32		
			2 Chron 19:9				Prov 14:26	2 Kings 17:14		OBEDIENCE
							Prov 22:19			Deut 7:9
							Jer 17:7			
							Ezek 29:16			
							2 Kings 18:5			LIFE
							2 Kings 18:19			Ps 16:11
							1 Chron 5:20			
							Job 39:11			
							Ps 4:5			
							Ps 9:10			
							Ps 25:2			
							Ps 26:1			
							Ps 40:3			
							Prov 11:28			
							Prov 28:1			
							Prov 31:11			
							Isa 12:2			
							Isa 59:4			
							Eze 33:13			
							Mic 7:5			

NEW TESTAMENT

SALVATION	PURIFICATION	SANCTIFICATION	JUSTIFICATION	RIGHTEOUSNESS	FAITHFULNESS	PROPITIATION	SHIELD	BLESSED	CONFIDENCE
Romans 4:11-20	Acts 15:9	Acts 26:18	Romans 3:30	Romans 4:5	Romans 3:3	Romans 3:25	Eph 6:16	Jer 17:7	Rom 2:19
1 Peter 1:9		2 Thess 2:13	Romans 3:26	Romans 3:22	Matt 24:45				Philip 1:6,25
2 Thess 2:13			Gal 2:16		Matt 25:21				Philip 3:3-4
			Gal 3:8		Luke 16:10				2 Thess 3:4
			Romans 1:17		Acts 10:45				2 Tim 1:12
					Acts 13:34				Heb 2:13
					Acts 16:15				2 Cor 1:15
					1 Cor 1:9				2 Cor 3:4
					2 Cor 1:18				Eph 3:12
					2 Cor 6:15				
					1 Tim 4:3				
					1 Peter 1:21				

EXHORTATIONS	DOUBT	GREAT FAITH	REPENTANCE	OBEDIENCE	HEALING	TEST	THE LAW	WORKS	BOASTING	HEARING	FAITH IN THINGS
Acts 14:22	Romans 14:23	Matt 8:10	Acts 20:21	Romans 1:5	Luke 8:48	James 1:3	Gal 3:23-26	James 2:14	Romans 3:27	Gal 3:2	Luke 11:22
Rev 2:13	Matt 6:30	Matt 17:20		Romans 16:26	Acts 14:9	2 Cor 13:5		James 2:17	Eph 2:8	Rom 10:17	Luke 18:9
Jude 3, 20	Matt 8:26	Matt 21:21		Romans 2:8	Matt 9:22,29	1 John 3:19		1 Thess 1:3			2 Cor 1:9
Rom 1:12	Matt 14:31			Gal 5:7	Acts 3:16						
Col 1:23	Matt 16:8			Heb 13:17							
1 Tim 1:19	Luke 12:28										
1 Tim 6:12	Matt 21:21										
	Matt 4:40										
	Luke 8:25										