

ADVANCED BIBLICAL COURSE



A | D | V | A | N | C | E | D
B | I | B | L | I | C | A | L C | O | U | R | S | E
Faith towards God

I THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH TOWARD GOD

‘Repentance from... faith toward...’ – from and toward are the negative and positive aspects of justification. It is not enough to repent. We must run from sin to God.

- ◆ The word ‘*faith*’ is mentioned 200 times in the Bible.
- ◆ Hebrews 11 tells us that these great men accomplished all they did “*through faith in God.*”
- ◆ It is the only basic of all religious living. “*The just shall live by faith*” (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11 & Hebrews 10:38).

II WHAT IS FAITH TOWARD GOD?

◆ **Faith is the evidence of things not seen.**

Not the evidence of our physical senses, but of the invisible truths revealed by God’s Word. (Hebrews 11:1 & 2 Corinthians 5:7) Seeing is not believing, but believing is seeing. (John 11:39-40) Faith sometimes contradicts physical ‘evidence’. (Romans 4:17-21)

◆ **Faith is associated with the heart.** (Romans 10:10)

It is more than just in the mind. It must produce a change in the lives of those who profess salvation. “*With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.*” It produces a change and transformation of habits, character and life.

◆ **Faith is associated with the mouth.** (Romans 10:10)

There is a direct connection between “*faith in the heart*” and “*confession of the mouth.*” It is one of the great basic principles of the Bible (Matthew 12:24-25; Corinthians 4:13 & Mark 11:22-23). The word “*confession*” means “saying the same as.”

◆ **Faith relies on the mercy and grace of God.** (Luke 18:9-14)

Not on good works or self-righteousness or self-improvement. Pride is a stumbling-block to justification. To be justified you must recognise that your salvation is entirely dependent upon God’s grace. (Ephesians 2:8-9 & Galatians 2:15-16 & 21)

◆ **Not faith in our faith, but faith in God (objective, not subjective).** (Hebrews 11:6)

- Faith is “utter confidence in its object.” “*Through faith.*” (Ephesians 2:8-9) Faith is the channel, not the object; it is the channel through which God’s grace is received.

- Faith takes God at His Word. (Romans 10:17)
 - we believe what God has to say about the subject
 - we accept it without question.

Billy Graham says that “faith is not some peculiar, mysterious quality for which we must strive. Jesus said we must become as little children, and just as little children trust their parents, so we must trust God.” Faith is not “taking a leap in the dark,” but is based on the best evidence in the world – the Bible.
- God’s Word says that Jesus Christ has taken my place of punishment and judgment.
 - God counts me righteous because I am depending upon what He has done for me on the Cross. (Romans 4:4-6, John 1:12, Acts 16:31 & Hebrews 10:39)
- Faith involves an act of the will. (Hebrews 11:24-27)
 - Moses chose God’s way, after careful consideration.
 - it involved sacrifice.
 - he burned all bridges of possible retreat.
- Faith is to be our principle of life. *“The just shall live by faith.”*
 - It does not end with trust in Christ for salvation.
 - It must continue (grow). *“The life I now live.”* (Galatians 2:20)

III. THE FOUR ‘ELEMENTS’ OF FAITH (Hebrews 11:1)

- ◆ Clear-cut objective. *‘Faith is the substance of things hoped for.’*
 - Do not be vague about your goal.
 - You must have a clear and defined faith goal e.g. Bartimaeus
 - everyone knew he was blind, but Jesus asked him *“What do you want Me to do for You?”* *“Sir, I want to see.”*
 - God does not answer vague prayers.
- ◆ A burning desire for those objectives. (Proverbs 10:24)

“The desire of the righteous shall be granted.” (Psalms 37:4)

 - You should have a burning desire for a goal.
 - You should keep on ‘seeing’ that goal accomplished.
- ◆ Pray for assurance.

‘Substance’ means ‘title deed, or legal paper.’ You now pray for assurance concerning the clear-cut objectives and burning desire in your heart.
- ◆ Speak the Word.
 - This is the evidence of your faith.

- Your words are creative – they go out and create.
- They are the material which the Spirit uses to create. “God spoke and the world came into being.”

IV FAITH (TO BELIEVE)

Act 2:37-38 & 16:30, in repentance man turns his back on sin whereas faith is the turning of the person to God. Faith involves an intellectual, an emotional and volitional transaction. Men believe with the “*heart*” to be saved (Romans 10:9-10); this includes thought, will and emotions.

◆ **The intellectual element**

This element includes belief in the revelation of God in nature and in the historical facts of Scripture, and the doctrines taught therein as to man’s sinfulness, the redemption provided in Christ, the conditions to salvation and to all the blessing promised to God’s children. Faith must be based on fact (that has ample reliable evidence). (Romans 1:19-20 & 10:14 & 17)

◆ **The emotional element**

Matthews 13:10-21 & Mark 12:32-34, it is not merely a matter of agreeing with the facts (truths) but to respond personally to the facts as they apply to the individual. The emotional element of faith may be defined as the awakening of the soul to its personal needs and to the personal applicability of the redemption provided in Christ, together with an immediate assent to these truths. It is that faith which comes as a result of the person seeing his/her need of that which Christ has done for him. While the emotional element is certainly to be recognised as a constituent of faith, it must not be treated as if it were the sole characteristic of faith.

◆ **The voluntary element**

This element of faith is the logical outgrowth of the intellectual and the emotional. If a person accepts the revelation of God and His salvation as true and comes to assent to it as applicable to himself personally, he should logically go on to appropriate it to himself. The voluntary element presupposes the other two elements. It includes the surrender of the heart to God and the appropriation of Christ as Saviour. (John 1:12 & 4:12 & Revelation 3:30) The sick man must surrender himself to his doctor, but he must also appropriate the remedy for his disease. He won’t be healed by simply acknowledging the fact of his condition and that the medication can make him better. He must take the medicine.

In the New Testament faith is exceedingly prominent. The Greek noun ‘pistis’ and the verb ‘pisteuo’ both occur more than 240 times, while the adjective ‘pistos’ is found 67 times. This stress

on faith is to be seen against the background of the saving work of God in Christ. Central to the NT is the thought that God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the World. Christ accomplished man's salvation by dying an atoning death on Calvary's cross. Faith is the attitude whereby a man abandons all reliance on his own efforts to obtain salvation, be they deeds of piety, of ethical goodness or anything else. It is the attitude of complete trust in Christ, of reliance on him alone for all that salvation means. When the Philippian jailer asked, "*Men, what must I do to be saved?*" and Paul and Silas answered without hesitation, "*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.*" (Acts 16:30). It is "*whoever believes in him*" that does not perish, but has everlasting life. (John 3:16) Faith is the one way by which men receive salvation.

For Paul, faith means the abandonment of all reliance on one's ability to merit salvation. It is a trustful acceptance of God's gift in Christ, a reliance on Christ, Christ alone, for all that salvation means. Faith is clearly one of the most important concepts in the whole NT. Everywhere it is required and importance insisted upon. Faith means abandoning all trust in one's own resources. Faith means casting oneself unreservedly on the mercy of God. Faith means laying hold on the promises of God in Christ, relying entirely on the finished work of Christ for salvation, and on the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit of God for daily strength. Faith implies complete reliance on God and full obedience to God.

V FAITH (SUBJECT AND SCRIPTURES)

- ◆ **Is the substance of things hoped for.** (Hebrews 11:1)
- ◆ **Is the evidence of things not seen.** (Hebrews 11:1)
- ◆ **Commanded.** (Matthew 11:22 & 1 John 3:23)
- ◆ **The objects of, are**
 - God. (John 14:1)
 - Christ. (John 6:29 & Acts 20:21)
 - Writings of Moses. (John 5:46 & Acts 24:14)
 - Writings of the prophets. (2 Corinthians 20:20 & Acts 26:27)
 - The Gospel. (Mark 1:15)
 - Promises of God. (Romans 4:21 & Hebrews 11:13)
- ◆ In Christ is
 - The gift of God. (Romans 12:3; Ephesians 2:8 & 6:23 & Philippians 1:29)
 - The work of God. (Acts 11:21 & 1 Corinthians 2:5)
 - Precious. (2 Peter 1:1)
 - Most holy. (Jude 1:20)

- Fruitful. (1 Thessalonians 1:3)
 - Accompanied by repentance. (Mark 1:15 & Luke 24:47)
 - Followed by conversion. (Acts 11:21)
 - Christ is the Author and Finisher of. (Hebrews 12:2)
 - Is a gift of the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:9)
 - The Scriptures designed to produce. (John 20:31 & 2 Timothy 3:15)
 - Preaching designed to produce. (John 17:20; Acts 8:12; Romans 10:14-15 & 17 & 1 Corinthians 3:5)
- ◆ Through it is
- Remission of sins. (Acts 10:43 & Romans 3:25)
 - Justification. (Act 13:39; Romans 3:21-22, 28 & 30 & 5:1 & Galatians 2:16)
 - Salvation. (Mark 16:16 & Acts 16:31)
 - Sanctification. (Acts 15:9 & 26:18)
 - Spiritual light. (John 12:38 & 46)
 - Spiritual life. (John 20:31 & Galatians 2:20)
 - Eternal life. (John 3:15-16 & 6:40 & 47)
 - Rest in heaven. (Hebrews 4:3)
 - Edification. (1 Timothy 1:4 & Jude 1:20)
 - Preservation. (1 Peter 1:5)
 - Adoption. (John 1:12 & Galatians 3:26)
 - Access to God. (Romans 5:2 & Ephesians 3:12)
 - Inheritance of the promises. (Galatians 3:22 & Hebrews 6:12)
 - The gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 11:15-17; Galatians 3:14 & Ephesians 1:13)
 - Impossible to please God without. (Hebrews 11:6)
- ◆ Produces
- Hope. (Romans 5:2)
 - Joy. (Acts 16:34 & 1 Peter 1:8)
 - Peace. (Romans 15:13)
 - Confidence. (Isaiah 28:16 & 1 Peter 2:6)
 - Boldness in preaching. (Psalms 116:10 & 2 Corinthians 4:13)
 - Christ is precious to those having. (1 Peter 2:7)
 - Christ dwells in the heart by. (Ephesians 3:17)
 - Necessary in prayer. (Matthew 21:22 & James 1:6)
 - Those who are not Christs have not. (John 10:26-27)
 - An evidence of the new birth. (1 John 5:1)
- ◆ By it saints

- Live. (Galatians 2:20)
 - Stand. (Romans 11:20 & 2 Corinthians 1:24)
 - Walk. (Romans 4:12 & 2 Corinthians 5:7)
 - Obtain a good report. (Hebrews 11:2)
 - Overcome the world. (1 John 5:4-5)
 - Resist the devil. (1 Peter 5:9)
 - Overcome the devil. (Ephesians 6:16)
 - Are supported. (Psalms 27:13 & 1 Timothy 4:10)
- ◆ Saints should
- Be sincere in. (1 Timothy 1:5 & 2 Timothy 1:5)
 - Abound in. (2 Corinthians 8:7)
 - Continue in. (Acts 14:22 & Colossians 1:23)
 - Be strong in. (Romans 4:20-24)
 - Stand fast in. (1 Corinthians 16:13)
 - Be grounded and settled in. (Colossians 1:23)
 - Hold, with a good conscience. (1 Timothy 1:19)
 - Pray for the increase of. (Luke 17:5)
 - Have full assurance of. (2 Timothy 1:12 & Hebrews 10:22)
- ◆ **True, evidenced by it fruits.** (James 2:21-25)
- ◆ **All difficulties overcome by.** (Matthew 17:20 & 21:21 & Mark 9:23)
- ◆ **All things should be done in.** (Romans 14:22)