

## SAVING FAITH

Who Had It .... Who's Got It .... and How Does One Get It?

We will begin this study on **faith** .... with its definition.

We can get that directly from the Bible .... GOD's word (not Paul's):

**Heb 11:1** Now **faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**

Just like you cannot SEE the wind, but you can see the evidence of it because you CAN see trees blowing

'in' the wind, 'by' the wind, 'through' the wind ....

**you cannot SEE faith, but you can see people 'working' who have it:**

**James 2:14-16** What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? **can faith save him? (Obviously, no!)**

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding **ye give them not** those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? (It would be of no help at all, for you to simply SAY, "Don't be cold or hungry anymore." They would still freeze and starve, if you don't DO something, like provide clothing and meals to eat!)

Faith has no benefit .... no effect .... if it does not work:

**James 2:17** Even so **faith, if it hath not works, is dead**, being alone.

If your faith is not working .... then you don't have faith. If you think you have faith, but you don't have works .... then you are deceived:

**James 2:20** But wilt thou know, O vain man, that **faith without works is dead?**

The faith that Abraham had .... years earlier, when he believed God, and was made righteous .... 'worked' years later .... when he obeyed the Lord by taking Isaac, his promised son (Rom 9:9), to sacrifice him to God:

**Gen 22:2-3** And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

**Abraham's faith worked. The faith he had, was proved as reality, by works:**

**James 2:21-26** Was not Abraham our father (Rom 4:11,16)

justified by works, **when** he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22 Seest thou how faith wrought (**worked together**) with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23 And **the scripture was fulfilled which saith,**

**Abraham believed God,**

**and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: (Gen 15:6)**

and he was called the Friend of God.

24 Ye see then how that **by works a man is justified,**

**and not by faith only.**

25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, **when** she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, (**This is not a 'dispensational' statement. The body is ALWAYS dead without the spirit.**)

so **faith without works is dead** also.

**James showed that .... when faith is tested, tried, proven, examined ....**

**it works! "The proof is in the pudding!" James agreed with Paul, as they**

**both quoted the same scripture that God counted Abraham as righteous ....**

**when Abraham believed Him, which is salvation by faith, without works:**

**Rom 4:2-5** For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

3 For **what saith the scripture?**

**Abraham believed God,**

**and it was counted unto him for righteousness. (Gen 15:6)**

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but **believeth** on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted for righteousness.**

Before we go on, let's compare James and Paul on the issue of justification.

- James says justification is by works, not faith alone.
- Paul says it is by faith, not by works.

**James 2:21** Was not Abraham our father (Rom 4:11,16) justified by works, **when** he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

**James 2:24** Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

**Rom 4:2** For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

**Gal 2:16** Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Personally, I believe the explanation is that James was describing the proving, testing, trial of faith .... AFTER initial belief .... because he said, Abraham was justified by works 'WHEN' he offered Isaac in Gen 22:2-3 .... not 'WHEN' he first believed in Gen 15:6 (years BEFORE when God imputed righteousness to him). Abraham's works that are seen .... showed his faith that cannot be seen (Heb 11:1). Abraham's works proved his faith.

James and Paul agree because God does not contradict Himself:

**James 1:22** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

**Rom 2:13** (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

If we SAY we have faith, but don't have works, our 'faith' is vain (no good):

**1 John 1:6** If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

God tried Abraham's faith. Abraham's works proved he believed God:

**Heb 11:17-19** By faith Abraham, when he was tried <peirazo>, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. (see Gen 22:5,8)

Jesus, God's only begotten Son (John 3:16, Acts 13:33, 1 John 4:9)

also experienced trials. He can assist others going through them:

**Heb 2:18** For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted <peirazo>, he is able to succour (help) them that are tempted <peirazo>.

Jesus understands our trials. Believers are encouraged to ask Him for help:

**Heb 4:15-16** For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was <peirazo> in all points tempted <peirazo> like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Since we can't see faith, we need to inspect it, so it will show up by works:

**2 Cor 13:5** Examine <peirazo> yourselves, (also 1 Cor 11:28) whether ye be in the faith;

prove <dokimzo> your own selves. (also Gal 6:4, 1 Thess 2:4)

Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates (not standing the test, castaway, unfit)?

God proves and tries His saints. It makes their 'invisible' faith be seen:

**Psa 66:10** For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

**Titus 3:8** This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that **they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works**. These things are good and profitable unto men.

God planned for His children to show their faith by their works:

**Eph 2:8-10** For **by grace are ye saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them**.

If you don't have works, then it is ridiculous to claim you have faith:

**James 2:18** Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, (you can't because faith is not seen - Heb 11:1) and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (this is how faith is shown)

Abel's works showed his faith .... when he brought a blood sacrifice ....  
it showed that he was righteous:

**Heb 11:4** By faith **Abel** offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, **by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts**: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

Enoch's works showed his faith .... that God was pleased with him:

**Heb 11:5** By faith **Enoch** was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that **he pleased God**.

Faith is described as belief .... trust .... conviction.

Faith is required for acceptance with God:

**Heb 11:6** But **without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him**.

Noah's works showed his faith .... when he built the boat:

**Heb 11:7** By faith **Noah**, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and **became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.**

Abraham's works showed his faith .... when he packed up and left Ur:

**Heb 11:8** By faith **Abraham**, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, **obeyed**; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

**Heb 11:9** By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the **heirs with him of the same promise:**

In Gal 3:29, Paul said we are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise .... and in Gal 4:28, we are the children of promise, as Isaac was:

**Heb 11:10** For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Where is the city now? It is new Jerusalem in heaven, the mother of us all (Paul said in Gal 4:26) which WILL come down to earth (Rev 21:2). *'Mid-Acts-ers' have a doctrine that salvation for Israel was 'by' faith and that salvation for the Gentiles was **different**, being 'through' faith, based on Rom 3:30. But when you look up the Greek words that were translated 'by' and 'through' (<ek> and <dia>), you will find that both words are used for both prepositions. The BIBLE is NOT wrong .... the 'mid-Acts-ers' are!*

*FYI, as we have been reading 'By faith' statements .... be aware that there is no Greek word for the preposition 'by' in this chapter. Neither is there a Greek word for 'through' faith in the next verse we will read.*

Sara's works showed her faith .... when she got pregnant and birthed a son at 90 years old (Gen 17:17):

**Heb 11:11-12** Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

These believers did not get a **physical, visible, earthly kingdom**.

They died .... and their souls are in the heavenly city now:

**Heb 11:13-16** These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 **But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly:** wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. (also John 14:2-3)

At the end, when Jesus comes, at the resurrection of the dead ...

the saints will get a new, glorified body ....

and the heavenly city, new Jerusalem, will come down to earth.

THEN all of God's children will receive their inheritance (1 Cor 15:21-24, 42-54; 1 Thess 3:13; Acts 20:32, 26:18; Matt 24:3; Rev 21:2-3):

**Zec 8:8** And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.

A few points to remember as we read the next passage:

- 1) In the OLD testament, Israel was the people of God (Deut 7:6, 14:2).
- 2) Paul said we are able ministers of the NEW testament (2 Cor 3:6).
- 3) Paul applied the promises made to Israel, to us, as now, we are the people of God (2 Cor 6:16).
- 4) Moses wrote of Christ (John 5:46).
- 5) Christ back in Moses' day?  
Moses experienced being stigmatized because of **Christ**.

**Heb 11:24-27** By faith **Moses**, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;  
 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with **the people of God**, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;  
 26 Esteeming **the reproach of Christ** greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.  
 27 **By faith** he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, **as seeing him who is invisible**.

These saints must wait until ALL God's saints join them at the resurrection of the dead (Phil 3:11,12; Heb 12:23; Rev 6:10-11; Rom 11:25-26):

**Heb 11:35-40** Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that **they might obtain a better resurrection**:  
 36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:  
 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;  
 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.  
 39 And these all, having **obtained a good report through faith**, received not the promise:  
 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

This world of evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse (2 Tim 3:13) until the coming of the Lord, so we who are justified by faith (Rom 5:1) need to be prepared for the trying of our faith (James 1:2-3), and to continue in the faith (Acts 14:22), and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel (Col 1:23):

**1 Peter 1:6-9** Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through  **manifold temptations:**

7 That  **the trial of your faith,** being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though  **it be tried <dokimazo>** with fire, (also 1 Peter 4:12) might be found unto praise and honour and glory  **at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9  **Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.**

Yes, we must patiently wait for the return of Christ for salvation at the end:

**2 Thess 3:1-5** Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for  **all men have not faith.**

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into  **the patient waiting for Christ.**

'Mid-Acts-ers' would not use John .... but I'm not a 'mid-Acts-er' anymore:

**1 John 5:4** For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and  **this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.**

*This is David Dowell, saying, "Think about it!"*