



A Spiritual Encouragement Message

March 4, 2021

FAITH

By Randall Jarrell

We have several different definitions of faith that of course are correct.

My favorite definition of faith is this...

Faith is Belief plus Unbelief and Acting on the Belief Part.

That definition should be helpful to all of us because it clears up so many prevalent misconceptions about faith. Most people think that faith means having 100% certainty before you do anything. And they think that if you have any doubt, you can't have faith. The only problem is that 100% certainty is hard to come by in a world like ours. Just when you think you've gotten rid of all your doubts, they come creeping back in through the back door.

Do you really think Noah never doubted during those 120 years while he was building the ark?

Do you think that Abraham never doubted when he said goodbye to Ur of the Chaldees?

Do you think David never had a second thought when he stepped down into the valley?

Do you think Joshua never questioned God's instructions when he marched around Jericho?

Here's something we don't often hear from gospel preachers - - doubt is not sinful. It's a normal and natural reaction to an apparently impossible situation. Doubt only becomes sinful when you choose to act on your doubts. Most of us live our lives poised somewhere between belief and unbelief. "I believe this is a good project but there are lots of factors we can't control." "Part of me wants to go and part of me wants to stay." "I think so, I hope so, maybe so, maybe not." That's reality. That's where most of us live most of the time.

Faith is not waiting for 100% certainty. Faith is weighing your doubts in light of your belief, and then consciously choosing to act on the belief part.

Faith is ...

Faith is what you do when you cross the city limits of Ur of the Chaldees and turn to wave goodbye to your friends.

Faith is what you do when you are standing on the shores of the Red Sea with the armies of Egypt behind you. Faith is at that moment you lay your staff on the water and pray to God that the water parts.

Faith is what you do when you're marching around Jericho while they are throwing garbage over the wall on top of you.

Faith is what you do when you're falling into the lion's den and you can hear the roar of the lions who think you're going to be the main dish that night.

Faith is what you do when you step into the valley to face the giant.

Faith is not a vague feeling about God. Nor it is simply an inner conviction that certain things are true.

In the final analysis, faith is what happens when your inner conviction becomes the ground of outward action. At that moment you have stopped wavering between faith and doubt. You have decided to "act on the belief part."

The life of faith then is inherently a life of risk. Not with doctrine of course but with action. You will never become all that God wants you to be until you become a risk-taker for God.