

Making Faith Your Own
(Taking the First Steps)
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Introduction: It has been said that God has no grandchildren!

- A. Saving faith must be found in each individual. **(Rom 14:11-12)**
 - 1. Men have wrongly concluded that salvation can be inherited. **(Mt 3:8-9)**
 - 2. We are blessed with many Godly parents who dearly want their Children to serve God. How can we assist our Children in that great path?
- B. When a child leave home for the first time there will be tests that reveal what is in your heart!
 - 1. For many this occurs during the college years. This was true for me.
 - 2. Godly parents can lay a strong foundation to prepare their child to seek God. What does God's word teach us about this crucial time in life?

I. What does it mean to "make faith your own?"

- A. It means that you begin to trust God based on your coming to know Him. **(Phil 3:8-9)**
 - 1. This can be because one has become a Christian or it can be reflected in a maturing faith. You seek because you want to!
 - 2. Each one must learn to look to God and see some great truths. **(Mt 5:3-10)**
 - 3. How do you go from the protected world of your parents to serve God?
- B. You must learn how to read the Bible for your own understanding. **(Acts 17:11)**
 - 1. This can be a huge challenge for one raised by Christians. Why?
 - 2. It depends on what progress has been made on reasoning from the scripture and being personally tested to stand on truth.
 - 3. When a child learns to *praise God* and *seek Him in suffering* is a great step!
 - 4. Many children have never been tested doctrinally and thus have no doctrinal core. Personal tests and doctrinal challenges are steps they must take! **(1 Jn 2:12-15)**
 - 5. A warning sign is when your teenager is not asking questions!

II. Questions to consider as you seek to "make faith your own."

- A. Have I developed a doctrinal core? **(Eph 4:14-15)**
 - 1. Families and local churches can do much to build a doctrinal core.
 - 2. Many cannot go beyond saying what they believe but cannot stand on scripture.
 - 3. If you are here then please consider the challenges you face.
- B. Who have I chosen to open my heart to?

1. You are vulnerable at this time in your life.
(**Rom 16:17-18; 1 Cor 15:33**)
 2. There are certain characteristics of healthy relationships and of unhealthy ones! (**Gal 4:16-17; Prov 2:1-2; 3:1-2**)
 3. Please do not let others isolate you and separate you from others! If you are finding God's truth then you should openly talk with spiritual men!
 4. What will spiritual maturity look like? (**James 3:14, 17-18**)
 5. Who are you drawing closer to? Who are you pulling back from?
- C. Am I seeking to find God's will or am I reacting to others?
1. It is not a good for one to dwell on bad examples of a few. (**Rom 3:4**)
 2. When bitterness is nurtured then we can lose the ability to be fair and just. Many began to reject teachings because people we no longer like teach it! (Consider the "anti-church of Christ" movements)

III. Things to remember while making faith your own.

- A. Do not let doubt, guilt and fears stop you from seeking God. (**Heb 11:6**)
1. Satan wants to intimidate you, blind you and capture you.
(**2 Cor 4:4; 2 Pt 2:19**)
 2. God's love promotes an *honesty* to see your weaknesses and face them.
 3. Learn to overcome the burden of wanting to please others! (**Gal 1:10**)
 4. Parents do not try to shut down the questions of your children.
 5. Doubt is the doorway to knowledge and faith! Avoid the emotional response to run and hide.
- B. Do not make sweeping generalizations.
1. There are two wrong reactions when you find yourself in error.
 - a. To blindly accept everything another tells you.
 - b. To blindly set aside everything you have learned.
 2. Do not in pride think you are the first to discover new truths and that everyone else in the church is blind. (**1 Cor 8:1-3**)
 3. We need to learn patience with ourselves and with others. (**Jas 5:9-11**)
- C. Do not flee from the struggle for truth. (**Rom 12:1-2**)
1. The struggle for truth is a daily one. You must learn how to "dig deep."
(**Mt 13:13-15; Lk 6:48**)
 2. Please seek godly council. (**Prov 24:5-6**) (This does not mean that you follow them blindly)
- D. Pray to God for wisdom and serve Him with the knowledge you have.
(**Jas 1:5-8**)
1. Always serve God vigorously while seeking His will. It is folly to sit and study and do nothing else.
 2. Wisdom takes time. The learning process goes throughout life.
(**Eph 3:16-19**)

Conclusion: Where is your faith?