

What is Faith?

by Ryan Downey

What does faith mean to you? Who or what do you have faith in? To truly understand faith, we need to first know what faith means. The noun, faith, means to have complete trust or confidence in someone or something. I want to discuss the "someone and the something" in the definition. To most of us, faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it. It is by faith that Christians understand the whole world was made by God's command in the 7 days (Genesis 1 and 2.) We didn't see God create the heavens and the earth or hang the moon and the sun, but we believe that He is the Creator. The world encourages us to put our faith in our material possessions like cars, houses, and money. But material things are temporary things. They can leave just as quickly as they arrive.

Have you seen the Coexist bumper stickers? They spell out the word "coexist" in different world religious symbols. Peace and coexistence are both biblical principles and should be practiced by Christians. However, we must be careful that our tolerance doesn't lead to the false understanding that the religions of the world are interchangeable. We can't accept that one is just as good as another. Ephesians 4:5 says "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." He is the one "someone" we need to turn to when we wonder how will I make it through the day, or who can I turn to talk about my problems when you don't feel comfortable talking to anyone else.

Some people want to put faith into something physical because they can see it and touch it.

That is not what true faith is. In Hebrews 11:1, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. God has given us plenty of evidence that He is the Creator. It is up to us to have enough faith to believe in Him and follow Him. The bible tells about a man named Noah who believed in both the "someone and the something" Hebrews 11 talks about. Noah is a well known bible character, but what I want to point out is his amazing faith. In Hebrews 11:7, the bible says "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Never once do we read about Noah complaining to God or saying "Do I really have to build this thing to these exact specs and plans?" Noah's work was motivated by his faith.

So I ask you, what is the "someone and the something" you put your faith in? If it is not God, then why? He is our Redeemer and our Savior who is longing for you to come to Him and walk by His side. Paul, in Romans 12:1-2 pleads with us, *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may be able to prove what is good, acceptable, and the perfect will of God."* Look at your own self and consider where your faith is placed to see if you can say "I believe in that 'someone and that something'"! ■

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