

General Topics :: Why has FAITH become so difficult?

Why has FAITH become so difficult? - posted by Rahman, on: 2004/6/4 12:11

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

The above scripture (which is my favorite scripture from my favorite chapter) by english word definition, seems to me to be comprised of two oxymoronical phrases, they being (substance of & things hoped for), and (evidence of & things not seen) ...

Substance means: a : physical material from which something is made or which has discrete existence b : matter of particular or definite chemical constitution ...

Hope means: 1 : to cherish a desire with anticipation 2 archaic : TRUST: to desire with expectation of obtainment 2 : to expect with confidence ...

Evidence means: 1: something that furnishes proof : 2 : to be seen : CONSPICUOUS ...

Things not seen means: Invisible, and no not things like the wind that can be scientifically proven ... But things like God Himself, angels, demons and satan ... Things such as is explained in Heb. 11 "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear".

Faith in God, His plan and His Bible is not an easy, nor practical thing, especially in our modern, scientific, technological society ... That is why the Word states at 1Cor.2 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" ... And Jesus Himself said to Thomas at John.20 "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: but blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed".

Our faith in our invisible God, is our invisible substance of what we hope for in the invisible, that has ALL the potential of visibly transforming our visible lives, and shake the very foundation of our visible world from within the invisible realm, if we TRULY BELIEVE ... For ALL of true faith know that, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" ... Our inward (invisible), turned outward (visible), "evidence" of who and what we are as Christians is inextricably linked to our unflinching belief in "things not seen" (invisible) ...

The only power we Christians have in the visible (our world) is plugged (by our faith) into the Power (the Holy Spirit) of our invisible God, and Father, but alas it's up to us to put our plug (our faith) into God (our invisible power source) to cast our visible "mountains into yonder sea" ... That is why scripture states that, "Without FAITH it is impossible to please Him" ...

The bottom line is a great many Christians don't really believe in God ... We suspect He's there, but is He really? ... That's why I think the devil has been able to make such inroads into the Church of Christ with the prosperity movement ... Ok God, if you're really there put your dew on the fleece only, and not on the ground, which today equates to ok God if you're really there bless me with this one material thing or the other ... This type of "sign" requiring may have worked for Gideon in the OT with Jehovah, but "sign" requiring in the NT will get us numbered by Jesus amongst "a wicked and adulterous generation". (Judges 6 & Matt: 16:4) ... Could it be that a main reason why it's so difficult for so many modern (adult) Christians (especially American) to continue in the faith is because we're putting our faith of God's existence in (visible) evidence, when scripture purely states it's in the invisible? ... Heb.11 Now faith is our visible substance in the invisible, our visible evidence in the invisible ... Faith comprised on what we can see does not fit this scripture's definition of faith!

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Somehow we've got to find our way back to our first (basic) love and faith in Christ, when His grace alone was more than sufficient for our praise, and service to Him ...

Help us all to get back to that place Holy Spirit ... Please REVIVE us again to simplistic, yet oh so powerful, FAITH IN GOD ALONE ... Amen

Re: Why has FAITH become so difficult? - posted by Clutch (), on: 2004/6/4 14:40

Hi Rahman,

I disagree when you said:

"The bottom line is a great many Christians don't really believe in God."

"19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."

James 2:19

"6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." (speaking of Abraham) Genesis 15:6

If folks don't believe in God like Abraham did, then they aren't born again (genuine) Christians. They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.

Clutch

P.S. Ron Bailey's devotionals on Abraham are awesome. Also, he has some audio sermons that you can download from this site that he did in a RORA conference last year. They include teachings on: Repentance, Justification, Regeneration, and Adoption. Well worth your time to go there.

Re: Why has FAITH become so difficult? - posted by Rahman, on: 2004/6/4 16:05

Clutch you posted:

((I disagree when you said:

"The bottom line is a great many Christians don't really believe in God."

If folks don't believe in God like Abraham did, then they aren't born again (genuine) Christians ... They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof)))

Lord have mercy Clutch, because if what you've posted is correct then I'm just now seeing what so many of you on this forum seem to already know ... I have a tendency to look at most Christian's weakness of faith as misguided beliefs (such as the prosperity heresy), or spiritual immaturity, instead of just downright disingenuousness ... It's like I think that if they could just be tweaked the right way with the Word, that they'll see the error of their ways and repent ... I suppose that's why God can use me in the capacity that He does ...

I posted this post out of a conversation I had with a 84 year old saint at my church who's always the same way, all the time ... She's how I long to be ... Whether up or down, sick or well, with money or without, feeling poorly or fair to middling (as she puts it), the love of Christ always shines from her, and the praise of Christ is forever on her lips ...

When I asked her, "Why don't we today seem to have the faith of old saints like herself"? ... She said two things ...

1.) That today's saints expect far too much from God past His all sufficient grace ... And that in her day they may have asked for the Lord's help, but they didn't expect Him to do all of the work Himself ... In fact she said they didn't expect Him to do anything that they knew they could do themselves, they only asked Him to do what seemed impossible to them

2.) That her generation understood that their lives are about what Jesus expected from them, and not what they expected from Jesus" ...

That's certainly not the way a lot of Christians operate today ... That's why I stated, "The bottom line is a great many Christians don't really believe in God." ... Maybe what I should have said was "The bottom line is a great many Christians don't believe in God in proper scriptural context" ... Requiring a "sign" will not get one a gold star from Jesus ...

Clutch you posted:

((P.S. Ron Bailey's devotionals on Abraham are awesome. Also, he has some audio sermons that you can download from this site that he did in a RORA conference last year. They include teachings on: Repentance, Justification, Regeneration, and Adoption. Well worth your time to go there.)))

Thanks! ... I will look into these ... I just listened to a sermon on Jacob (one of my favorite OT saints) by Tozer that was a real eye opener for me!

Re: Faith? - posted by Gideons (), on: 2004/6/4 23:06

Hi Rahmans,

I spent a lot of time of time in prayer and repentance on this topic. I really like "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.

In my heart (and I believe much in true born-again believers), the two greatest sins are unbelief and pride. As the Holy Spirit has searched my heart, God has been purging this unbelief from my heart. I'm saddened to see that many believers don't even know that this unbelief is what is holding them back into a deeper relationship with the risen Christ.

That's what lead me to SermonIndex. I was searching for some sermons by Brother Dave on Unbelief and I got a book he wrote on the New Covenant.

My life was such a mess, I prayed for the baptism of fire "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." That fire will purge all unbelief. (We also need true humility "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.")

I just pray that each of us would fervently ask the Holy Spirit to search our hearts, so that any unbelief may be purged from our hearts. It's also important to remember that to believe more literally means to "continually believe." In other words, it's a daily, hourly, sometimes second by second process of continually believing Him.

I say rather often that the greatest thing that God wants to do in our hearts and life is to continually believe Him. That's more important than a ministry, theology, or even sharing our faith. Jesus washed me by His blood and through the power of the Holy Ghost, he will enable me to live a life that's pleasing to Him. Let's believe Him brother no matter what!

Re: - posted by Jimm (), on: 2004/6/7 1:58

Hello Clutch

I would just like to make a comment about the scripture you quoted from James, "19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." James 2:19. If I read it correctly, it would seem that you were quoting this as evidence to support the fact that, believing that there is one God is faith. I do not believe that that was the essence of that verse, James goes on to say in verse 20, "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" When we look at verse 19 in this sense we see that James was saying that believing that there is one God is not enough as even the devils (which are destined for hell) believe that.

To support Rahmans original comment, "The bottom line is a great many Christians don't really believe in God." I was

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listening to a sermon by Mr Leonard Ravenhill and something he said really struck me. He spoke of a bible school that claimed to have 4000 students filled with the Holy Ghost, and nobody knows there in town! James 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Again in acts 19:13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirit the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

But its not all gloom and doom as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. So the fact that in the United States more than half the population is Christian is a good sign. It is sad to note though that faith today is not as powerful as it should be. Corinthians 12 goes on "7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to EVERY MAN to profit withal. 8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Now with all these spiritual gifts bouncing around we should see a little something right? To the Church of Corinth Paul wrote, "14:27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. 1 Corinthians 14". There were actually so many people speaking in tongues that he had to regulate it for the sake of order. But now there is so much controversy about speaking in tongues, even Christians who believe that it does not exist and it is useless...not that I believe that salvation comes from tongues, in any case that is not my point. My point is that I agree that the faith is definitely getting weaker.

James

Re: Why has FAITH become so difficult? - posted by rookie (), on: 2004/6/7 11:17

Rahman wrote:

Quote:
-----Could it be that a main reason why it's so difficult for so many modern (adulterous) Christians (especially American) to continue in the faith is because we're putting our faith of God's existence in (visible) evidence, when scripture purely states it's in the invisible?

I believe the stumbling block is as you and others have said, is pride and unbelief. I believe one's relationship and thus faith begins in the Word of God. We Christians in the US have time to argue about eternal salvation, works vs positional righteousness, grace with or without faith. I believe the bottom line is this, unbelief of the word of God allows our pride to remain intact. We are looking to man's doctrines that deny the cross and holiness. We look for the pleasures that this world has to offer while also seeking to convince ourselves that we are children of God. The substance of our relationship with or without Christ will manifest itself in the evidence for what we strive. Does the world consider us their friends?

In Christ
Jeff

Re: Gideons post - posted by Rahman, on: 2004/6/16 15:26

Gideons you posted:

((My life was such a mess, I prayed for the baptism of fire "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." That

fire will purge all unbelief. (We also need true humility "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.")))

Amen ... My life was a real mess when I came to our Lord also, way back in 1979 ... And do you know why I'm made whole today? ... Not because of our Lord Jesus Christ, but because of MY FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ... What was our Lord's definition of why anyone got healed of whatever during His earthly ministry? ... He stated, "Thy FAITH has made you whole", and we won't split hairs here because we're all believers and know that our faith in Him is our only solution/salvation ... None of us will enjoy any of our God's provision to us unless we tap into it with our faith ... Grace all by itself is surely a free gift to all, but none of us can individually attain it without the COST OF OUR FAITH in His grace ... Amen

You do well to keep to heart that scripture that states "He that cometh to God must BELIEVE that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" ... I love this scripture also, in fact I love the whole book of Hebrews ... Keep seeking Him dear saint ... Keep believing on and in Him ... And keep talking to the Holy Spirit about any unbelief, pride or whatever is not like God, and ask Him to lead you out of that darkness ...

You also posted:

(((I say rather often that the greatest thing that God wants to do in our hearts and life is to continually believe Him. That's more important than a ministry, theology, or even sharing our faith. Jesus washed me by His blood and through the power of the Holy Ghost, he will enable me to live a life that's pleasing to Him. Let's believe Him brother no matter what!)))

Amen again! ... And we touch and agree 1000% on "Let's believe Him brother no matter what" via Heb.6: Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Re: Wherewith shall we be salted!? - posted by Jimm (), on: 2004/6/16 16:59

Hello everyone

Quote:

The bottom line is a great many Christians don't really believe in God ... We suspect He's there, but is He really? ... That's why I think the devil has been able to make such inroads into the Church of Christ with the prosperity movement ...

I believe when Rahman said that a great many Christians do not believe in God he was not speaking of the belief and faith that saves us, rather of the belief that works.

Mathew 17:20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

If you listen to the featured video, "Sermon on the Mount", Mr. Daniel expresses himself more efficiently than I do. The main subject of his sermon was Mathew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Our savour is our effectiveness, the works of our faith, separate from our own personal salvation (which, in itself, is the first thing we need).

In the same way, Mathew 5:14-16 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

This light is the manifestation of our faith, in a country where more than half the population is Christian, the works of darkness should not as much as be uttered in public; on the contrary it is the Christians who fear to be known publicly. This is a great and grievous anomaly for the Holy Spirit that is after all, the immutable Holy Spirit of God! If the Holy Spirit has not changed (it has not) why then do we not see the works recorded in Acts not prevalent today? The answer, as I see it, is that the faith is weakening

Your son,

James