

An Examination of Faith

07/15 – 8/26/ 2018

Scripture Reading: I Peter 1:1-25

If we want a definition of faith and many examples of faith, we turn to “The Faith Chapter” – Hebrews 11. Hebrews 11:1 tells us that faith is the substance, assurance, and confidence of things that we hope for. Faith is the evidence or the conviction of things that are not seen with the physical eye. Most of Hebrews chapter eleven defines faith through the multiple examples of the actions of Old Testament characters. What we are doing in the first chapter of I Peter is to analyze the source of our faith and to see what faith does for us and through us. If we believe in Jesus Christ, what should we expect in our life and after our life? What is expected from us? How do we take care of this faith? In a sense, this chapter is a verbal diagram of faith.

The Source of Your Faith – The Triune God & The Word of God. (I Peter 1:1-3)

Salvation is totally of the Lord (Jonah 2:9; Psalm 3:8; 27:1; 37:39; 68:20). The Father created the plan of salvation and chose His Son to be the man who would purchase and provide our salvation. The Spirit of God protected us; guided us and drew us to faith in God’s Son, giving us new birth. See Ephesians 1:1-14; John 6:37-45, 63; 10:1-30; Galatians 4:4-6; I John 4:9-14. The Word of God is the means, by which the Spirit of God gives us faith. See **I Peter 1:21-23**; Romans 10:17.

The Security of Your Faith – Eternal prospects. (I Peter 1:4-5)

Since salvation comes from God, it is eternal and settled. The work that God has begun in your life will be completed by the power of God. More will be said about this in I Peter 1:21-25. See Ecclesiastes 3:14; Psalm 119:89; 130:5; 37:22-28; Jeremiah 29:11; John 3:14-21; 5:24; 6:35-40; 10:27-29; 11:25-26; Ephesians 4:30; Philippians 1:6; I Thessalonians 5:23-24; Romans 8:28-39.

The Testing of Your Faith – Refinement in the fire. (I Peter 1:6-7)

Men love to purify gold with fire. So, God, who loves our faith more than men love gold, puts our faith through fiery tests, to purify that faith. See I Peter 4:12-16; 5:10; James 1:2-12; Romans 8:18; Hebrews 2:9-11, 17-18; 4:14-16. Consider His pruning to make us more fruitful (John 15:1-2).

The Fulfilling of Your Faith – The fellowship of seeing the invisible. (I Peter 1:8-9)

When Jesus is your Savior, the future is your friend. Faith tells us that God’s outcome for us will be good. His promises give us a vision of things that others cannot see – things that are perfect and eternal. Your faith in Christ will never be in vain. See Hebrews 11:1, 8-10, 24-27; John 16:33; Job 23:10; II Corinthians 4:14-18; II Timothy 4:17-18; James 5:10-11; I Peter 2:6; Romans 5:1-5 cp. I Corinthians 13:4-8a; I John 4:16-19 [God’s love gives us peace & joy as we face trouble & uncertainty].

The Documentation of Your Faith – Dependence on divine revelation. (I Peter 1:10-12)

We can understand and confirm the validity of our faith, by consulting what God has already said. The Old Testament Scriptures accurately foretell the things of Christ – long before He came and did those things. Therefore, we can trust the Scriptures with the rest of the prophecies and promises that have not been fulfilled yet. Without God's revelation of Himself, we could never know Him and trust Him. Even the angels want to learn about our great salvation. Luke 24:44-48; Romans 16:25-27; II Timothy 3:15-17; Ephesians 3:8-10; II Peter 1:16-21; I John 5:10-12.

The Divine Purpose of Your Faith – Salvation from sin unto holiness. (I Peter 1:13-16)

The difference between faith and presumption is that faith labors to see the fulfillment of God's promises in our lives. Salvation is not just a ticket out of hell. Salvation is deliverance from sin. Holiness is the planned outcome of our lives. Faith is sharing God's vision for what He wants for our life and for the future of the world. See Galatians 5:6; James 1:12; 2:14-18; I Corinthians 2:9-16; Matthew 1:21; John 8:30-36; Romans 6:6-18; 8:1-15, 28-29; 12:1-2; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Titus 3:5-8; I Thessalonians 4:7; Hebrews 12:1-14; II Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 1:5-6.

The Price of Your Faith – Salvation is free, but not cheap. (I Peter 1:17-20 cp. 2:9-10)

Salvation is the work of Christ. It cost Him the humiliation of suffering at the hands of His own creatures. He suffered and bled and died to purchase our salvation. It is free to you, but it cost Him everything. Christ purchased you with His blood. Your faith must account for the fact that you are not in charge. Christ is the Lord, your master. You are His servant / slave. John 1:10-12; Philippians 2:5-11; Acts 20:28; Matthew 23:8-12; John 12:25-26; Romans 6:16-23; I Corinthians 6:19-20; 7:23; 10:16; Ephesians 2:11-22; 6:5-9; Hebrews 9:14-15; I John 1:7; Revelation 1:1, 5-6.

The Perpetual, Purifying Power that Supports Your Faith – The Gospel is the power of God. (I Peter 1:21-25)

Our faith is divinely produced and maintained (Hebrews 12:2; Galatians 5:22-23). Cooperating with Christ's Spirit (Philippians 1:9-11; II Peter 1:5-11), we need to develop a good spiritual diet and a good appetite for the whole counsel of God. See I Peter 2:1-3.

Our hope is a purifying hope (I John 3:3). The Gospel of Jesus Christ continues to give us power, throughout our life of faith. The Gospel not only guides us to be justified. It guides us to be sanctified. All Scripture needs to be interpreted according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many cults and false teachings stem from improper use of the Old Testament. All of Scripture needs to be understood in the context of "*the truth as it is in Jesus*" (Ephesians 4:21). Then, the Bible will develop us into the image of Christ. See Romans 1:9-11, 15-16; 16:25-27; II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 3:8-9; 4:11-15; Colossians 3:15-16; I Timothy 1:1-11; 4:1-7; 6:3-6; II Peter 1:2-4; 3:17-18.