

“That They May Know”

Context: The world defines “faith” as wishful thinking or an unsubstantiated belief in something. So when a Christian refers to her “faith” in Christ, the non-Christian hears her claim of a “blind leap of faith” in Christ; a belief that has no supporting evidence. This view has also infiltrated the church, whereby many Christians think the evidence is unimportant for “faith” in Christ. The Bible, however, defines faith as evidence which produces knowledge that we then actively place our trust.

1. Biblical Definition of Faith – Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

2. Biblical Model of Faith – evidence, knowledge, active faith

The biblical model of faith is evidence which leads to knowledge in which you actively trust Jesus to do what you can’t do yourself: **to save you from the wrath of God.**

3. Biblical Justification of Faith

- Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 4–14) – “... that you may know ...” [See especially Ex 6:7; 7:5, 17; 8:10-11, 22; 9:14, 29; 10:2; 14:4, 16, 18, 31]
- Jesus heals the paralytic (Mark 2) – “... in order that you may know ...” [Mk2:10-12]
- Pentecost (Acts 2) – “... know for certain ...” [Acts 2:36-38, 41]
- Doubting Thomas (John 20) – “... that you may have life in His name ...” [Jn 20:30-31]

Study questions:

- The word “faith” is found 254 times in the New Testament. All but five times the Greek word is *pistis*. As a **Bible Study method**, look up the meaning of the term “faith” in *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*. Can the word “trust” be substituted for the word “faith” and still maintain the same meaning of the passage?
- Does God want us to be wishful or does He tell us to look at the evidence to gain knowledge that develops an active trust? Besides the passages under “Biblical Justification of Faith” (bullet point 3 on reverse side), read the following passages. Is the biblical model for faith (evidence – knowledge – trust) present? Describe what evidence is being presented? What knowledge is gained? Does the text describe how individuals trusted in that knowledge?
1 Kings 18:20-40
Isaiah 40
Isaiah 41
Matthew 11:2-5
Luke 24:32-35
Acts 1:3; 17:31; 18:19
Romans 1:4
- The GracePoint doctrinal statement states we believe that “salvation is received only by God’s grace unto repentance through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, wherein sins are confessed and forsaken.” (See “The Doctrine of Salvation” under What We Believe at www.gracepointfellowship.org/DocStmnt.pdf). For “faith”, the statement references Eph. 2:1-8 and Titus 3:5-7. Do these passages fit the biblical model of faith?

Transformation Exercise

Memorize Hebrews 11:1, which states “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Look up the following words in *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*: “assurance”, “hoped for”, “conviction”. Replace each of these words in the verse with its definition. Reflect on how your notion of “faith” agrees with or differs with the biblical definition of “faith.”