

God Chat

4-A FRIEND WANTS OUR TRUST

A WAY WE CAN DESCRIBE FAITH:

When we think of a describing a relationship with a friend or a person we know well faith will be an essence of this relationship. Faith can be a word we use to describe a relationship with God.

Faith is an attitude of love, trust, and deep admiration for God. Faith is having confidence in God based on enough evidence shown. In believing this evidence we believe what He says, accept what He offers, and do what He wishes, without hesitation, for the rest of eternity.

Faith is all God wants from us. A friend wants our trust.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We trust the reality that God is love (1 John 4:8). Love is other-centered, not self-seeking. The full representation of the love of God came in human flesh through the person of Jesus Christ, who created all things in the universe by the word of His mouth, lived a life of service to humanity and saved us from our sins, our rebellion, our own desire to live without Him. By His death and resurrection we have assurance of a future without pain, hurt and selfishness.

We also trust the ancient scriptures hold the evidence for the story of this passionate God, how He intended the world to be, what happened to get the world in the mess that it is in and if this mess is ever going to end.

Throughout these Friday nights we will present glimpses of evidence that can give us assurance God loves us deeply, has won the hearts of most of the universe, except for this little planet, but His light is shining on the heart of humanity brighter and brighter each day. As restored followers of Christ, we will also show outwardly how to live a life of other-centered love, helping others in physical, material, emotional and spiritual need.

INTRO

Why do we need faith and what exactly is it? What we do know from our past three studies is that trust has been broken and this led the way for a war that affects our everyday lives today. When mutual trust is restored between the God who is love and his creatures the war will end, and everlasting peace and perfect happiness will be forever. Through our study of God's character today we will discover that all God asks of us is trust. If we trust him he can heal us and save us. Can we learn to trust again?

ACTS 16:25-34 - About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole family.

When the jailer in Philippi asked Paul what he should do to be saved the answer was: "Believe in the Lord".

1) WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BELIEF AND FAITH?

The Greek word Pistis is translated into two words: Believe and Faith. So ultimately they are the same word.

ACTS 16:30, 31 - "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'" (KJV)

• "Put your trust in the Lord Jesus ..." (NEB)

• "Have faith in the Lord Jesus ..." (Berkeley)

As we can observe in this example the same passage was translated and interpreted using various words for Pistis.

2) WHAT IS FAITH? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE FAITH?

Faith is used too commonly in our everyday vocabulary. We almost need a new word for faith, something that hasn't been stripped of deeper meaning. Commonly faith has been described as believing what you know isn't so. So if faith is believing something for which you have insufficient evidence does that mean when we see God and have physical evidence faith will end?

HEBREWS 11:1 - "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (KJV)

- "Now faith is the title-deed of things hoped for ..." (Montgomery)
- "Now faith means that we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see." (Moffatt)
- "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." (NIV)

The Greek word **Elencos** is translated to be evidence or conviction. The word **Hipostasis** is translated to be substance, but it's very literal translation is: that which stands under. As archeologist found manuscripts in Egypt they found title deeds to properties which were business agreements or covenants. At the title of these documents the word Hipostasis was found.

Faith is an agreement, a covenant conviction and certainty.
If we decide to trust God that trusting relationship is Faith.

HEBREWS 10:35-39 - "Don't throwaway your trust now - it carries with it a rich reward. Patient endurance is what you need If after doing God's will, you are to receive what he has promised. For yet a very little while, He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry. But my righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, my soul hath no pleasure in him. Surely we are not going to be men who cower back and are lost, but men who maintain their faith for the salvation of their souls! (Phillips)

When God's character was questioned the faithful angels trusted God and waited for Calvary. They trusted God enough to give him time to provide the sufficient evidence at the right time. So unlike what we might have heard before let us dare to say that faith does not save us, God saves us. But He cannot save if we don't trust Him to heal us. How can a physician take care of us and help us heal if we don't trust him and his diagnosis? If we do not accept the medicine and we don't follow the council of our doctors? They cannot force us to be well and so God will not take away our free will, He will not force us to be healed.

3) WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KNOWING GOD AND TRUSTING HIM?

JOHN 17:3 - "And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (RSV)

To know is to trust, love and admire. To be a friend is to trust and be trusted, to share who we are with the other. The word "Know" in the bible is used even for the intimacy between husband and wife. God wants us to know him as he wants us to know him. Only by knowing him will we be able to truly trust him.

One of God's Friends:

EXODUS 33: 11 AND 17 - "The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend ... And the Lord said to Moses, 'I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.'" (NIV)

4) DOES GOD ASK US TO GAMBLE WHEN WE TRUST HIM? HAS GOD LEFT US IN THE DARK?

God does not ask us to trust Him as a stranger. He wants us to know him, and in seeking this that we may decide for ourselves if He is trustworthy.

ROMANS 10:17 - "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (RSV)

5) IS IT TOO LITTLE THAT ALL GOD ASKS IS TRUST?

David knew what God asked for:

PSALM 51:6, 10, 16, AND 17 - "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward being: therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me... For thou hast no delight in sacrifice; were I to give a burnt offering, thou wouldst not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (RSV)

True knowledge and Love for God is the same.

HOSEA 6:6 & 7 - "It is true love that I have wanted, not sacrifice; the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. But they, like Adam, have broken their agreement; again and again they have played me false." (Phillips)

When Nicodemus asked Jesus what he should do to be saved this was Jesus' answer:

JOHN 3:3 - "Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" (RSV)

To be born anew means to have a new heart and right spirit just as David said in Psalms 51. David later was said to be a man after God's own heart. Jesus also didn't say be justified or forgiven, some legal standing adjusted. He said to change the way you see and believe.

6) HOW CAN YOU TELL IF YOU HAVE REALLY BEEN REBORN AND HAVE GENUINE TRUST AND FAITH? WILL ALL THEN BE WELL?

JAMES 2:14, 19, 21-23 - "My brothers, what use is it for a man to say he has faith when he does nothing to show it? Can that faith save him? ...You have faith when he does nothing to show it? Can that faith save him? ... You have faith enough to believe that there is one God. Excellent! The devils have faith like that, and it makes them tremble... Was it not by his action, in offering his son Isaac upon the altar, that our father Abraham was justified? Surely you can see that faith was at work in his actions, and that by these actions the integrity of his faith was fully proved. Here was fulfillment of the words of Scripture: 'Abraham put his faith in God, and that faith was counted to him as righteousness'; and elsewhere he is called 'God's friend.'" (NEB)

Counted could mean considered or reckoned as God's Friend. Abraham trusted God.

7) HOW MUCH FAITH DO WE HAVE TO HAVE? MUST WE TRUST COMPLETELY AND PERFECTLY? COULDN'T WE GET AWAY WITH LESS?

Does it make sense for a wife or husband to ask the other how much cheating is allowed for the relationship to work? Should we ask a friend: How much can I lie? Does it make sense to be asking these questions? No matter what God will not break friendship with us but if we cheat our side of the friendship may be damaged. This is something all of us will experience in some level throughout our lives; healing after betrayal is difficult and can be painful. The biblical word for obedience means to be listening under or a humble willingness to listen.

Hupakoe is different than **Peitharcho** - Obedience to an authority.

Hupo – Underneath, Akouo – to hear: To submit by hearing.

It was used in the New Testament more than 15 times, translated as obedience.

When we see repeated over and over then in the bible is that we should be willing to listen. Be willing to listen to what I ask of you and be willing to do what I say.

HEBREWS 11: 31, 32, 39 - "by faith the prostitute Rahab escaped the doom of the unbelievers, because she had given the spies a kindly welcome. Need I say more? Time is too short for me to tell the stories of Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets... These also, one and all, are commemorated for their faith." (NEB)

People who were willing to listen loved and trusted God.

LUKE 23:42 & 43 - "And he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' And he said to him, ... 'You will be with me in Paradise.'" (RSV)

A King who forgives is who this thief at the cross saw. When he heard Jesus ask God for the forgive those who hurt him, those who were not worthy. This is why the thief asked: Will you remember me? When Jesus answered: 'Yes I'd be pleased to remember you', the thief was even more surprised. Will we die God's trusting friends because we will be afraid? Or will we die trusting God because we know him and know that he wants what is best for us?