

Study 10

The Faith JESUS commanded

And Jesus answered them, “Have faith in God.

Mark 11:22

The Jewish people did not have a concept of “faith” in God. In fact the word doesn’t appear in the Old Testament. What does appear is *faithfulness*. To the Hebrew, you *demonstrated* faith.

1. How does James reflect this Hebrew understanding of “faith” in James 2:17?

2. Is the faith mentioned in Romans 3:28 the same as the faith mentioned by James in James 2:17? (That is, do Paul and James have the same concept of faith?)
 - (a) No. It was well known that James and Paul disagreed about faith and that this is one of the greatest contradictions in the Bible.
 - (b) Yes. James and Paul have the same concept of faith. Paul emphasises the trust and rest that results from faith in God, while James emphasises the obedience that results from faith in God.
 - (c) Yes and no. James and Paul were fairly vague about what faith was. Neither of them thought faith was very important though.

 3. Why is it important for our relationship with God to have faith in God according to Romans 5:1?
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4. Is Hebrews 11:6 just describing the faith that saved us? Discuss and explain.
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Jesus Christ spoke of the necessity for faith in Him when He said, “*Believe in God. Believe also in Me.*” (John 14:1) To believe is not just to *agree that something is true*, it is also to have a change of convictions based on the *trust* being put in someone. Paul describes faith as a “mystery” (1Tim. 3:9). Perhaps this is because it is something God requires of us *and* gives to us. We are told to “have faith” (Mark 11:22) but that this faith is actually given to us as a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8).

5. What does 2Corinthians 13:5 encourage us to do?

6. What did Paul expect to result from believers' faith in Christ? (Romans 16:26)

FAITH & GRACE

The Bible connects faith to God's grace. It is by God's grace that miracles happen. Jesus nearly always associated the miracles He did with someone's faith. Perhaps you need a miracle? The question you must settle is not whether God *will* do it for you, but: *Can God do it for you?*

7. How does the response of the father in Mark 9:24 encourage us to depend upon God even more even if we do settle this question?

8. Conversely, how does Matthew 13:58 stress the importance of having faith in Christ?

9. Why do the words of Christ in Matthew 19:26 give us good reason to have faith in God?

Christ rebuked people who claimed to follow Him but didn't have faith in God to meet their needs (Matthew 6:30). He later rebuked His disciples for not having faith that He would honour His word and protect them (Matthew 8:26).

FAITH & ACTION

Faith is something that can be “seen” (Mat. 9:2).

10. How and why?
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When someone has faith in Jesus they live differently.

11. What is the promise associated with faith in Matthew 17:20?
(Note Mat. 21:21-22)
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12. How differently would you live if you had more faith in God?
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Father, give me the strength to obey You and trust You. Help me to do the things You call me to do with the faith You give me to do it.

Amen.