

## TRUSTING OUR FATHER

### Introduction

Text: **Phil. 3:8,9.**

### FAITH, THE VERY ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL

Faith is not the only thing involved in our response to the gospel, but it has an importance that is unique to it alone - **Jn. 3:16; Rom. 1:16,17.** The righteousness made possible by the gospel is called the “righteousness which is from God by faith” (**Phil. 3:8,9**). To say the very least, faith in Jesus Christ is *required* — it is not optional. Cf. **Jn. 8:24.** But without faith, nothing else in our obedience to God would be effective - **Hb. 11:6.**

### WHAT IS FAITH?

Many misconceptions about faith are popular. Faith only, apart from any obedience. Cf. **Mt. 7:21.** Faith as mere “belief.” Wishful thinking, blind faith. In the Scriptures, there are three primary ingredients in faith. **Credence** - **Jn. 8:24; Rom. 10:9,10.** **Confidence** - **2 Tim. 1:12.** In obeying the gospel, we commit (entrust) *ourselves* to Christ. Cf. **2 Cor. 8:5; 1 Pt. 4:19.** **Constancy** - **2 Tim. 4:7.**

Abraham is the great example of faith - **Hb. 11:8-18.** Cf. **Gal. 3:6-9.** Because he believed, Abraham obeyed. At God’s bidding, he risked everything he had in this world *because he trusted God’s promise.* Cf. **Jas. 2:22,23.** “The pith, the essence of faith lies in this — a casting of oneself on the promise” (Charles Spurgeon).

The basic element in faith is “trust” - **2 Cor. 1:8-10.** Cf. **2 Cor. 3:4,5; 1 Tim. 4:10.** Our tendency to self-sufficiency and self-rule is deeply rooted and long-standing. Cf. **Jer. 2:13.** The problem began in the Garden of Eden - **Gen. 3:1-5.** Sin always results from ***forsaking the trust we were meant to have in God.*** If we reject the “obedience of faith” (**Rom. 1:5**), there is no salvation for us. We must dispense with the doubts about God and His law that started us down the path of disobedience in the first place. If the problem of sin is going to be fixed, ***trust in God will have to be restored.*** Faith means not only believing in God’s *existence*, but also in His *goodness* - **Hb. 11:6.**

Faith means trusting that God is good, His commands are always going to be better than our will, and in the end He is waiting for us in heaven ***if we will adhere to His plan for our redemption.*** When immediate circumstances seem to cast doubt on God’s promises, trust will keep us faithful to our Father. Cf. **Gal. 6:9.** So even if we’re Christians, we need to ask ourselves: ***in what is our ultimate trust?*** Cf. **Lk. 18:9; 1 Tim. 6:17.**

### THE “OBEDIENCE OF FAITH”

“Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name” (**Rom. 1:5**; cf. **16:26**). Cf. “the obedience of faith” (ESV). We need to see the ***vital link between faith and obedience*** — neither without the other is what God is looking for. Faith without OBEDIENCE will not work - **Lk. 6:46.** Neither will obedience that is not OF FAITH - **Hb. 11:6.** The OBEDIENCE OF FAITH is what the gospel calls for — i.e., obedience that comes from genuine *trust* in God. Faith without obedience is useless, but so is obedience without faith. What’s in our hearts and what’s in our actions must match up.

### Conclusion

To say that faith has a special importance does not mean: Obedience is not necessary - **Jas. 2:26.** Baptism is not essential — it is in baptism that we die with Christ, as an act of faith - **Col. 2:12.** Faith, however, does mean that beginning with our initial obedience to the gospel, we follow God’s will for the rest of our lives *because we trust Him.* Think about WHY trust is so important. What it would mean if

we “came back to God” but we refused to accept anything about His will that didn’t seem “safe” or “reasonable” to us?

In our initial obedience to the gospel.

In our lives as Christians.

So in all honesty, ***what is the quality of your own faith right now?***

*Gary Henry — WordPoints.com + AreYouaChristian.com*