

Faith

What Is Faith by Oswald J. Smith, LL.D.

Faith—what does it mean? God's Word says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). But what does it mean to believe? How does faith save?

1. Faith Means Accepting Christ as a Gift

No one would ever dream of paying for a Christmas gift, for the moment payment is made it ceases to be a gift. All you can do is to take it and say "Thank you." You do not work for it. You cannot earn it. And so it is with Christ. He must be accepted in exactly the same way. For just as you believe in the sincerity of the one who sends you a gift at Christmas, so too, you must believe in the genuineness of God's offer and accept His gift, Christ. Faith reaches out a hand and takes. Thus the Lord Jesus Christ becomes your Savior.

2. Faith Means Receiving Christ as a Guest

"Behold," He says, "I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in" (Rev 3:20). In other words, He waits outside your heart's door. But He will never force His way in. You must invite Him in. And the moment you open the door He enters. Thus you can honestly say, "Jesus is in my heart."

Oh, my friend, let Him in. Be courteous. You would not dream of keeping a guest standing on the threshold, would you? Well, then, why keep Christ outside? Why not be courteous and invite Him in? Thus you may receive Him, and receive Him now.

3. Faith Means Coming to Christ as a Pauper

That, you remember, was the way the prodigal son came to his father. He had nothing. His money was gone. He came in rags. He knew he was unworthy. And so he simply cast himself on his father's mercy. He came just as he was. And so must you. Do not wait to reform. Do not endeavor to better yourself. Come as you are, for after all you are nothing but a sinner.

4. Faith Means Trusting Christ as a Savior

You are drowning. Someone throws you a lifebelt. Do you ignore it? Do you cast it from you? Certainly not. You grasp it. You rest your weight on it. You trust it. That is faith. You must rely on another. "Put your trust in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31 N.E.B.).

Oh, how simple! Why not trust Him now? Intellectual faith will not do. "The devils believe and tremble." To believe ABOUT Christ will never save you. You must TRUST

Him. My friend, have you done it? Do not look within. You are not to examine your feelings. Cast the anchor outside. Lay hold of Christ.

You believe that “him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;” but, have you “come?” You believe that, “as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God;” but, have you “received” Him? You must take the initiative; you must act upon what you believe if you are to be saved. Have you done it?

In fact, that is the only thing that matters, after all. The head has little or nothing to do with it, for according to God's Word, it is “with the heart man believeth”. But you say you can't understand. God doesn't ask you to understand; He tells you to ACCEPT His Son. You insist that you can't believe. My friend, God asks you to RECEIVE.

Do I understand radio? Certainly not. But do I use it? Most assuredly. Can I explain how the food I eat becomes nails and skin and hair and bones? Impossible. But do I eat food? Certainly. Why? Because I know it works even though I can't explain how.

My friend, if you will come just as you are, with all your intellectual difficulties and problems, with all your doubts and fears, yes, and with your beliefs as well—if you will but come and RECEIVE Jesus Christ as your Savior, you will be saved. And then, your head will follow your heart, and all your misunderstandings will be gone.

What God is demanding of you is simply that you ACCEPT His Son as your Savior. And if you do, old things will pass away and all things become new. Therefore “CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE.”

WILL YOU DO IT?

DO IT, AND DO IT—NOW.