

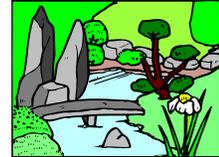


Is It Faith or Believing?



If you cannot answer this question, this will be a very important issue for you to study. It is the difference between building your life, and the lives of your children, on sand or on solid rock. Faith is built on God, believing is built on your decisions.

Faith dwells in your spirit, and comes forth from there – believing dwells in your mind, and comes forth from there.



Faith is the foundation – believing is what we build on that foundation.

Faith is in a substance (the person of God) – believing is a choice to take action in response to that person.

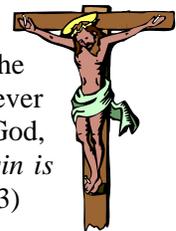
A good example of the difference between ‘faith or believing’ is found in Mark 11:22,23. Jesus is talking to His disciples, “Have FAITH in God, for I tell you the truth; whoever shall say unto this mountain, ‘remove yourself and cast yourself into the sea’; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall BELIEVE that those things that he says will happen; he shall have whatever he says!”



Look back at the first line of that Scripture and notice it says that FAITH is something you have – and BELIEVING is something you do! Faith is the foundation for asking in prayer, and believing is the choice you make to trust that foundation and dare to pray and ask for the desires of your heart.

The Bible uses another word with the same meaning as faith – that word is “assurance.” God gave us assurance (faith) that we will live forever with Him – in righteousness, peace and joy – by raising Jesus from the dead and making Him our Savior who gives us eternal life – when we choose to believe on Him. (Acts 17:31)

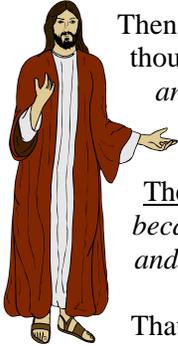
Another assurance that we have for faith is in the blood of Jesus that was shed on the cross at Calvary for the washing away in absolute forgiveness, every sin we have ever committed, or ever will commit. So that we know we can stand in the presence of God, innocent and without shame or blame of any kind. Hallelujah! “*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” (Romans 6:23)



Now, let’s take a closer look at believing. Believing is a decision or opinion based on something that can’t be seen or touched with your hands. We believe in God, because we have written words that we believe He spoke to men who wrote them down – but we have never seen God or touched Him with our hands. We believe in Him because of what the Holy Spirit has done in our spirit implanting faith so we can believe.

(Cont'd)

Jesus honors those who believe without being able to see or touch. His disciple Thomas didn't believe it was Jesus who had returned after being dead; even after the other disciples told him they had seen Jesus. Thomas said, "*Unless I see the wounds from the nails in his hands, and put my finger in them; and touch the wound in His side, I will not believe!*" (John 20:25)



Then when Jesus appeared to Thomas, having entered the room, somehow, even though the doors were all shut, He said to Thomas, "*Reach out your finger, and see and touch my hands, and reach out and touch the wound in my side, and stop being without faith, but be believing.*" (John 20:27)

Then Thomas believed and said, "*My Lord and My God!*" But Jesus said, "*Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed: Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed!*" (John 20:28,29)

That is the kind of faith God honors, the kind that is based in absolute assurance on Him, and therefore causes us to trust and believe in Him without being able to see or touch Him.

There is a scripture that shows clearly that God is the substance of our faith in Hebrews 11:1. "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" That word substance in the original Greek language that the Bible was written in, means "a person who stands under." God is that person!

The reason that knowing the difference between faith or believing is so important for a Christian is because without the solid foundation of faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ, we will serve God, and seek God, and relate to God based only on what we have heard about Him from other people, and that can be tragic because you could live your whole life without ever knowing Him, but just knowing about Him.

Your whole salvation depends on your faith. "*For by grace you are saved through faith; and that is not something you can get by yourself; it is a gift (a present) from God.*" (Ephesians 2:8)



Is It Faith or Believing?

1. What is faith built on? _____
2. What is believing built on? _____
3. Where does my faith dwell? _____
4. Where does believing dwell? _____
5. What did Jesus tell His disciples? (Mark 11:22,23) _____

6. How did God give us assurance of eternal life? _____

7. How did God give us the assurance of complete forgiveness?

8. What is believing? _____

9. Why didn't Thomas believe it was Jesus?

10. What did Jesus say about those who have not seen, but believed?

11. What proof do we have that these things are true? (Hebrews 11:1)
(The answer to this question will be your memory verse)

MEMORY VERSE _____

Is It Faith or Believing?

1. What is faith built on? On God.
2. What is believing built on? My decisions and opinions.
3. Where does my faith dwell? In my spirit.
4. Where does believing dwell? In my mind.
5. What did Jesus tell His disciples? (Mark 11:22,23) Have faith in God and believe what you say will happen.
6. How did God give us assurance of eternal life? By raising Jesus from the dead and making Him our Savior.
7. How did God give us the assurance of complete forgiveness?
By sending His Son Jesus to the cross to die for us.
8. What is believing? Believing is a decision or opinion based on something that can't be seen or touched.
9. Why didn't Thomas believe it was Jesus?
Because he couldn't see Him or touch Him.
10. What did Jesus say about those who have not seen, but believed. They are blessed.
11. What proof do we have that these things are true? (Hebrews 11:1)

MEMORY VERSE *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*