



Portland Area Bible Students

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What is Faith?

Not long ago, my adult son was in the hospital and received a sports cup with the hospital name and phrase, “Care you can have faith in.” Questioning the definition of faith relating to health care, gave me insight into faith in God. Substituting “confidence” for faith expanded my understanding. When dealing with someone, we learn whether they are trustworthy and they keep their promises.

How often has God changed his mind? From the beginning our Heavenly Father prepared a home for mankind filled with beauty, challenges and expectations. “And God saw all that he had made and behold, it was very good...” Genesis 1:31 “And out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Genesis 2:9 “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.’” Genesis 2:16,17

There was no misunderstanding of the rules, God wanted man to obey and live. However, we are introduced to another being, the serpent, who is called the “father of lies.” He questioned God’s rule of obedience and lied saying, “You surely shall not die.” Genesis 3:4 We only need to look around us to see that God spoke the truth, we all die. Thousands of years have passed, and we all still die. Increased knowledge, medicine and science have not found a way to end death. God spoke the truth.

Now let’s look at one of God’s promise to Abraham, “...I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore...And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because you have obeyed my voice.” Genesis 22:17,18 There are two parts to this promise, a heavenly promise pictured by the “stars of the heaven” and an earthly promise shown in the “sand...on the seashore.” Jehovah explains that His earthly promise is to the nation of Israel.

Deuteronomy 7: 8,9 reads “...because The LORD loved you and kept the oath which he swore to your forefathers... Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His loving kindness to a thousand generations with those who love him and keep his commandments.” God’s promises become deeper the more we understand them.

The Law was given to Israel as a schoolmaster, “written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” Romans 15:4 The stars in heaven are representing the “sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus...and if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.” Galatians 3:26,29 God promises us grace and peace. “He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises: in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature.” 2 Peter 1:4 Where do we put our “confidence”? Can we trust in God’s promises?

Satan had proved to be “...a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature: for he is a liar, and the father of lies.” John 8:44 In our everyday dealings with friends, neighbors and business, we are

confronted with lies and truth. After spending time with someone, we begin to see a pattern. They may respond with truth, integrity and helpfulness. Others may “appear truthful” and then later a bit of deceit is discovered. We are all in the learning phase, growing our character. Are we going to follow Satan’s example, or are we going to follow God’s word in the Bible. Can we place our “faith” or “confidence” in God? The answer is an overwhelming, “Yes!” God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), He is full of mercy and compassion.

Psalm 32:8 promises, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go: I will counsel you with My eye upon you.” Those that have trusted the Lord through many years, through sunshine and shadow, through smiles and tears, by still waters and through storm and tempest, have proved the verity of His precious promises and His abiding faithfulness. “He has said, I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5 Our highest interest are matters of our Father’s constant care.

Let us study God’s word in the Holy Bible and believe in His promises. The scriptural references are quoted from the New American Standard translation. To encourage you we offer two booklets. Place your order with:

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