

# Blog



## Faith

Are we growing in faith?

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) Faith is trust, reliance and confidence in God. “Faith literally means ‘to give up, surrender, or commit.’ Faith is complete confidence.” (Billy Graham)

The Christian life begins with faith. We believe that God is real, that Jesus died for our sins and rose again from the dead. We put our trust in him for this life and for eternity. It is faith that puts us in a

right relationship with God. In my experience there is nothing more exhilarating than that initial experience of believing the gospel.

The Christian life continues with faith. We need faith to pray, worship, serve, progress and live. Without faith is impossible to please God. True faith grows and develops when it is put under scrutiny and exposed to pressure. As with anything of value, faith has to be tested. "A faith that hasn't been tested can't be trusted." (Adrian Rogers)

Paul the apostle wrote to a community of believers in Corinth and said,

*"We walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7)*

When it comes to growing in faith there are a few things to observe.

## **Faith grows with people**

*"We walk by faith..."*

Faith grows with people. It is true that faith must be personal and we cannot rely on another person's faith for salvation. However, our faith needs community in order to grow. The apostle did not say, "I walk by faith," or, "You walk by faith." He said, "We walk by faith." Paul and his companions grew in faith together, through shared experiences. Fellowship is essential to the life of faith and we grow in faith by doing life together. "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another." (Proverbs 27:17) Isolation will not help us grow in faith. Individualism will wither our faith. Community is what helps us grow in faith. Church is not a building we attend, but rather a community of people we are part of. Faith grows with people.

## Faith grows with pilgrimage

*“We **walk** by faith...”*

Faith grows with pilgrimage. The life of faith is a journey. “Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.” (Psalms 84:5) Abraham, our archetypal example of faith, shows us that growing in faith is a lifetime’s journey. From Ur of the Chaldeans to the land of promise, Abraham learned how to trust God through pilgrimage. Faith is more than adherence to a set of doctrines. It is proving the truth of what we believe through the twists and turns of daily life. With each stage of life’s journey our faith grows as experientially we learn to know Christ more. “Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One who is leading.” (Oswald Chambers) Faith grows with pilgrimage.

## Faith grows with problems

*“We walk by **faith**...”*

Faith grows with problems. This comment from Paul is set in the context of life’s struggles. He describes the painful groaning that we all experience while travelling through life. His earthly body was under strain and he longed to go home and be with the Lord, where his mortal body would be swallowed up by life. As with Paul, so with us. It is in the problems of life that we learn to walk by faith, not by sight. On prosperous, easy, sun filled days we all live by sight. It is when the storm clouds gather in a dark and threatening sky that we turn to faith. “The Lord gets his best soldiers out of the highlands of affliction.” (Charles Spurgeon) In pressing through life’s challenges we grow. Faith grows with problems.

Faith is so important that it is described by Peter the apostle as, “Of greater worth than gold.” (1 Peter 1:7) It is through the process

of life's experiences that faith develops and grows. Faith grows with people. Faith grows with pilgrimage. Faith grows with problems. "We walk by faith, not by sight." Faith.