

## 8. Having Faith (2Q 2026 Growing in a Relationship with God)

**Biblical material:** Mark 8:11, 12; Matt. 15:21–28; Luke 7:1–10; Eph. 2:8; Hebrews 11; Rev. 14:12.

### Quotes

- Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man could stake his life on it a thousand times. *Martin Luther*
- We can look at Job, we can look at Lamentations, we can look at the Psalms, we can look at so many heroes of the faith who at different times had questions, who faced unbelief, yet God kept them, and they continued, in their doubts, to lean towards God, to lean and doubt in a way that continued to keep them attached to the vine and seeking Jesus in all of it. *Laura Wifler*
- Trusting God does not mean believing he will do what you want, but rather believing he will do everything he knows is good. *Ken Sande*
- Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God. *Corrie Ten Boom*
- When God takes out the trash, don't go digging back through it. Trust Him. *Amaka Imani Nkosazana*
- Trust is not a passive state of mind. It is a vigorous act of the soul by which we choose to lay hold on the promises of God and cling to them despite the adversity that at times seeks to overwhelm us. *Jerry Bridges*
- Faith is no irresponsible shot in the dark. It is a responsible trust in God, who knows the desires of your hearts, the dreams you are given, and the goals you have set. He will guide your paths right. *Robert Schuller*

### Questions

How do we best define “faith”? Does this mean accepting the idea of “blind faith”? How can we demonstrate that we really do put out trust on God? In what way do our experiences in life deepen our trust in God? How can even the idea of our having faith make us self-reliant? In the context of the great controversy how important is it for us to show that we trust God?

### Bible summary

The Pharisees demand that Jesus provide a miraculous sign from heaven in Mark 8:11, 12. Matthew 15:21–28 is the story of Jesus healing the Canaanite woman's daughter. Luke 7:1–10 describes the faith of the centurion in asking Jesus to heal his servant. “For you've been saved by grace through trusting in him—it's not through yourselves, it's the gift of God!” Ephesians 2:8. Hebrews 11 is the catalogue of people of faith. “Believers must patiently endure, keeping God's commandments and trusting in Jesus.” Revelation 14:12.

### Comment

In the word *salvation* is that little word *salve*. Like eye-salve, or eye ointment. The salve we put on an infected part to cure it. Salvation is God's healing from sin, restoring us into his image once more. The salve of God's salvation.

How? By the process of trusting God. As Jesus said, “Your faith (trust in God) has healed you.” Healing comes from God, and is only possible through that basic attitude of loving, trusting dependence on God. What God really wants from us is the response of accepting and trusting him as he truly is.

Seeing salvation this way helps us develop that right relationship towards our loving Healer. For only as we trust the Doctor will we respond to his treatment. If we choose to ignore his good advice, if we fail to take the medicine he prescribes, then who is to blame if we die, and die

eternally? It's not the Doctor killing his patient, but the patient's rebellious distrust! We have to trust the Divine Physician.

So this is the kind of faith we need to develop. It is not something we have, however—some mystical “substance” that guarantees our salvation. It is simply placing trusting in God to heal us, change us, and in the end to remake us fully into his image once more (1 Corinthians 15).

Our trust in God is based on the *evidence* of God as a completely trustworthy person. That's what the Bible is for—to show us what God is like in his dealings with humanity. That's what Jesus came to demonstrate personally—that God can be trusted: completely and fully. There is no doubt! And that's what we have to discover in our own experience: that we can place ourselves in God's hands without any doubts at all. It's all *a question of trust*.

This is very different to “blind faith.” The call to “deny the mind” is heard all too often in the arena of faith, leading some to blind unquestioning belief and others to the extreme opposite—the rejection of such a system of faith that refuses investigation and denies rational thought.

Faith is not to be examined, they argue, only accepted. Matters of faith should exclude investigation and questions, for they are supposed to be a mystery. The greatest faith is demonstrated by accepting ideas that cannot be reasonable. It does not take much thought to recognize the hazards associated with such an approach. If belief in the nonsensical is the greatest proof of faith, then the greater the absurdity, the better the faith. So should the believer be asked to find the most absurd concepts and believe them? This leads to the exaltation of the bizarre—a strange picture of faith!

Buying into such ideas can lead to terrifying results such as intolerance, persecution, torture and murder, all committed in the name of defending the faith. To think that what you believe does not have to make sense has contributed to many “faith-disasters,” the consequence of which are impossible to calculate.

If you choose to think with your mind, you may be persuaded. But if you are already convinced by “blind faith,” persuaded that religion does not have to make sense, nothing will help. For as Thomas Paine commented, “Attempting to debate with a person who has abandoned reason is like giving medicine to the dead.”

Blind faith cannot be accepted or endured in any subject, least of all in Christian beliefs. For this is a denial of the God-given mind, an abdication of thought, an imprisonment of the liberty that makes us free moral agents in the image of God. By denying the mind, faith actually rejects the One who created us with the ability to think and reason, and spits in the face of the God of freedom.

But to trust in a God who has demonstrated he is trustworthy—that's a very different picture. We need to trust in God not only to experience forgiveness, but to have him heal the damage done, and to help us to become his trustworthy children who do right because it is right!

### **Ellen White Comments**

The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ is an intelligent faith.... Christ would have His followers use their intellect in spiritual matters as in business transactions, conscientiously weighing evidence irrespective of results. He desires them to think deeply.” {ST July 28, 1898}

You should walk by faith, not by feeling. We do not want a sensational religion; but we want a religion founded on intelligent faith. {RH April 9, 1889}

But those who profess to believe in Jesus, should ever press to the light. They should daily pray for the light of the Holy Spirit to shine upon the pages of the sacred book, that they may be enabled to comprehend the things of the Spirit of God. We must have implicit trust in God's word, or we are lost. {CE 86}

Putting our trust in God, we are to move steadily forward, doing His work with unselfishness, in humble dependence upon Him, committing to His providence ourselves and all that concerns our present and future... {CH 238}