WP-15 FAITH IN PRACTICE

What Faith Is, and What It Isn’t

STATEMENT

Faith is trust in God. It is not the same as believing a fact or understanding how something works. It is given by God, it can grow or shrink, and it is proven by acting on God’s Word before seeing the result.

Read time **4 min** Sources & resources **4** Series **Faith in Practice** Author **Lee Gregory**

01 ABSTRACT

Christians use the word “faith” constantly, but often mean different things by it: agreeing with a doctrine, feeling confident, or hoping for the best. Scripture is more precise. This paper defines faith from the text, separates it from belief and from understanding, and shows how it is built and measured.

02 WHAT FAITH IS

“Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of the things we cannot see” (Hebrews 11:1). Faith matters because “it is impossible to please God without faith” (Hebrews 11:6), and “whatever is not from faith is sin” (Romans 14:23, NASB). Faith is a gift (Ephesians 2:8), a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), and every believer has been given “a measure of faith” (Romans 12:3).

03 WHAT FAITH IS NOT

Faith is not belief. “You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror” (James 2:19). Agreeing that something is true is not the same as trusting it.

Faith is not understanding. Trusting a chair to hold you is not faith. The chair was engineered for the load, built by a manufacturer, and backed by product liability. That is confidence based on understanding. Faith acts *beyond* understanding: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5). Noah built an ark with no visible sign of a flood (Hebrews 11:7). Abraham left home “without knowing where he was going” (Hebrews 11:8).

04 FAITH EQUALS TRUST

The Hebrew word **aman** is translated in the Old Testament as both “believe” and “trust.” The opposite of faith is doubt, and doubt is also the opposite of trust. When Peter walked on water and then began to sink, Jesus said, “You have so little faith. Why did you doubt me?” (Matthew 14:31). Sarah conceived “because she believed that God would keep his promise” (Hebrews 11:11). Faith is trust that God will do what He said.

05 HOW FAITH GROWS

“Faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ” (Romans 10:17). It is built up through prayer (Jude 1:20)

and through experience: we trust what we have tested. Jesus repeatedly taught that what we do with what we have determines what we receive: “To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given” (Mark 4:25; also Matthew 13:12, Luke 19:26). Trust starts small: “If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones” (Luke 16:10). Trusting God with a paycheck prepares you to trust Him through a bad economy. Trusting Him with a headache prepares you to trust Him with a diagnosis.

06 SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT

OBSERVATION	DATA & SOURCE	CONFIDENCE
Faith is defined in Scripture	Hebrews 11:1; assurance of what is hoped for and evidence of what is unseen. Hebrews 11 ↗	HIGH
Faith is required	Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23; Habakkuk 2:4 (“the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God”).	HIGH
Faith is given	Ephesians 2:8; Galatians 5:22; Romans 12:3.	HIGH
Belief alone is not faith	James 2:19: demons believe and tremble.	HIGH
Faith can be measured	“You have so little faith” (Matthew 17:20); faith “as small as a mustard seed” moves mountains.	HIGH
Faith grows by hearing and use	Romans 10:17; Jude 1:20; Mark 4:24–25; Luke 16:10.	HIGH

High = directly measured, or stated plainly in the text. **Moderate** = well-supported, with recognized debate. **Interpretive** = consistent with the text, but depends on how the passage is read.

07 OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

OBJECTION

Faith is believing without evidence.

RESPONSE

Biblical faith is not blind. It rests on God’s demonstrated faithfulness, which is why this library exists. Faith goes beyond what we can see or fully understand, not against the evidence.

OBJECTION

If faith is a gift, I can’t do anything about how much I have.

RESPONSE

Every believer has been given a measure (Romans 12:3). Scripture says faith grows by hearing God’s Word and by acting on it in small things first. What we do with the gift is our part.

08 CONCLUSION

Faith is trust in God that acts on His Word before seeing the outcome. It is different from agreeing with a doctrine and different from understanding how something works. It starts small, grows through hearing and experience, and is proven in action, in the

small things first.

> *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.” Proverbs 3:5*

09 FURTHER RESOURCES

SCRIPTURE **Hebrews 11: the “hall of faith”** New Living Translation
https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%2011&version=NLT

SCRIPTURE **James 2: faith and action** New Living Translation
https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%202&version=NLT

TEACHING **A Sure Foundation** Andrew Wommack Ministries
https://www.awmi.net

Biblical Worldview White Paper Library