

Faith in God. This was originally entitled *The Marks of a Disciple of Jesus* but an entirely different version was found. They were both dated January 1989. Unsure if this was ever shared with SCF*

Faith is a free gift from God, it is the starting place for our new life in Christ, the old life having been completed by a conscious decision on our part to respond to Jesus Christ. The end of our old life would have been sealed as we repented and were baptised in the same way as the early disciples did.

Acts 2 verse 37-40

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." 40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!"

In our old lifestyle we would have been influenced by the world, satan is in charge there, but now we have a new Lord and Master. He is looking to change us from the inside where He now lives, He is our source of faith as we hear His voice. Let's take a quick journey through the book of Hebrews. There are a number of things that we can look at for our good.

Hebrews 1 verse 2

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.

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Hebrews 2 verse 1

For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.

The author (probably either Paul or Barnabus) obviously feels that his audience is not relying on the word of God and are in danger of falling away.

Hebrews 3 verse 1-2

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; 2 He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house.

God sees us as holy as with a heavenly task, what faith He has for us! As we confess Jesus Jesus as our Lord, He confirms us in all our partakings on His behalf.

Hebrews 3 verse 5-6

Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; 6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house - whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

This compares Moses with Jesus and the faithfulness of Jesus over His Father's house and we are that house as we hold fast our confidence and our firm hope until the end. We can trust God.

Hebrews 4 verse 1-2

Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

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Chapter 4 opens with yet another *therefore*. We can see then that just as we need faith to hear, we also need to hear to obtain faith, we cannot do anything on our own because God is the source of all faith and we can only come to Him for faith through Jesus.

Romans 10 verse 17

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

This scripture says it clearly.

Hebrews 4 verse 14-16

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The end of Hebrews 4 speaks again of our High Priest sympathising with our weaknesses, He also was tempted but did not sin because He obeyed His heavenly Father; we are encouraged to draw near to the throne of grace to find grace and mercy.

Hebrews 5 verse 8-12

Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. 9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, 10 Being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. 11 Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

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12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Jesus was made perfect so that we all would receive salvation. God's people had become deaf to the word of God, so much so that they were still spiritual babies.

Hebrews 6 verse 1-3

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do, if God permits.

The opposite of faith in God is unbelief, there are signs that follow believers and there are signs that follow unbelievers. Here are some signs of an unbeliever:

1. Boredom

At home, work and church. Such feelings and the expression of those feelings can often be found in boredom.

2. Lack of Joy

Only seeing things that are not perfect. The half full glass will be half empty to the unbelieving heart.

3. An Unforgiving Nature

Always finding fault and not having faith in God for a changed situation. Forgiving only on your own terms.

4. Lacking Enthusiasm

For the word of God, praying or going to the meetings.

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5. Always Making Excuses.

Why it is you do or don't do the things that you should.

Of course there are many other signs and nobody is perfect yet. But faith in God can radically change impossible situations. We are saved by faith, kept by faith and we are to live by faith.

Habakkuk 2 verse 4

"Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith.

Habakkuk 3 verse 16-18

I heard and my inward parts trembled, at the sound my lips quivered. Decay enters my bones, and in my place I tremble. Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress, for the people to arise who will invade us. Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, 18 yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. 19 The Lord GOD is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places.

King Asa had diseased feet, he had not been consistent in following God, Habakkuk had determined to put his trust in God come what may, should we do anything less?

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