

# Faith - the Key to Everything

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Luke 5.17-26

It is hard to overstate the role of faith in the lives of Christians. We are saved by faith. We walk or live by faith. Faith is the central issue for Christians. But what is it?

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV) says, "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

This parallel statement breaks into two things:

- Faith is confidence in what we hope for.

Faith is a conviction. It is "knowing" at some level. It is a foundation that we move from.

- Faith is assurance about what we do not see.

Faith points to the future, to what we believe is true.

Another way to say it:

Faith is living out what we are convinced of as we live into what we believe.

So, salvation by faith means I am convinced that God exists and that Jesus is the One sent by God. That is the foundation of my faith. That foundation points me toward something, that He will rule over God's Kingdom and so I live into that. So, I walk by faith in the present toward the future.

This definition of faith is dynamic.

- It dynamically directs our behavior.
- It grows dynamically in our lives as we live it out.

What does it mean to encounter God by faith?

The journey of faith has unexpected moments that offer the opportunity to expand one's faith. These moments are encounters with God by faith. These moments are the things we pray about. These moments are the ways and means by which God acts in our lives. They broadly fall into three categories:

### 1 Misdeeds of my own making

These are foolish and selfish choices which generate difficult consequences. More often than not, we must endure the consequences and learn from them.

### 2 Sovereign moves of God

These are rare. They are not coincidences but God's sovereign activity to advance His purposes

### 3 Prayers offered in faith

Making it practical: What is it you want God to do?

- Are there misdeeds of your own making?
- Is your situation a combination of your misdeeds and something else? Ask God for illumination and guidance.
- Are there others around you for whom you can offer a prayer of faith?