

WHAT IS FAITH?

1 John 5:4-5

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Christians are to overcome all that the world throws at them but that is not easy and sooner or later every Christian fails and falls into sin and other things that hinder one's relationship with the Lord such as lust of the eyes, of the flesh, pride, anxiety, boredom, depression, despair, fear, grief, loneliness and countless other things. However, no matter what comes into the Christian's life, there is a way through it and the result is "victory." The key to overcoming all that might come between a Christian and the Lord is found in a single word: "FAITH", so what exactly is faith?

I. JESUS DEFINED FAITH

1. Faith in a general definition:

- It is in general the persuasion of one's mind that a certain statement is true and can be trusted.
- It is a strong conviction or trust in something - Hebrews 11:1
 - *"...Now faith is being sure of what we hope for..."*
 - *"...and certain of what we do not see..."*
- One has faith that his/her parents are indeed his/her parents.
 - All based upon one's trust in the reliability of their word.
 - Such trust causes one to respond accordingly.

2. There is faith in Jesus, as the Son of God.

- Here Faith is a strong conviction or trust in Jesus:
 - WHO Jesus is:
 - What He claimed.
 - He is truly the Son of the living God.
 - Faith in what Jesus DID:
 - That He died on the cross for man's sins.
 - That His death is a sufficient payment, sacrifice for one's sins.
 - Faith in what Jesus SAID:
 - That He alone provides the way to eternal life.
 - That He alone is the way to God, the Father - John 14:6-7
- Peter professed his faith in Jesus - John 6:68-69
 - That Jesus has the words of eternal life.
 - That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God - Matthew 16:15-16
- When anyone has such faith in Jesus:
 - They will look to Jesus for the solution to any problem they face.
 - They have trust and are convinced that what Jesus says is the right answer/solution.
 - They are willing to act with trust and conviction on His word - Luke 6:46
- Those with an active faith in Jesus have their lives built on a solid foundation.
 - Like the the wise man who built his house on a rock - Luke 6:47-49
 - They are able to weather the storms of life because of their faith in Jesus.

II. FAITH IN JESUS IS TO BE DEVELOPED

1. Faith comes from evidence:

- Faith is not some sort of "blind" - "you just gotta believe" thing.
 - Faith is sometimes a strong conviction in something not yet seen - Hebrews 11:1

- However there are solid reasons for believing in what cannot be seen:
 - Who has seen George Washington? Was he a real person?
 - Who was present when YOU were born? Do you remember?
- Some think Faith is a gift from God for just a select few.
 - In one way it is a gift from God - Ephesians 2:8; Romans 12:3
 - No doubt God is the source of faith, but it is available for every Christian.
 - God wants everyone to be saved - 1 Timothy 2:3-6
 - God wants all nations to know what it takes to produce saving faith - Romans 1:16
- Faith comes from evidence which God provides Himself.
 - God provided signs and wonders so that people might believe in His Son - John 5:36; 14:10-11
 - The Apostles recorded signs that one might therefore believe - John 20:30-31
 - Believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.
 - Through this kind of faith in Jesus' name, one can have victory over the world.

2. Faith comes from the Word of God:

- ***"...So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God..."*** - Romans 10:17
 - Faith (trust and conviction) is founded upon what the Word of God reveals.
 - Especially concerning faith in Jesus - John 20:30-31
- The Word of God produces faith in Jesus by the evidence it provides:
 - The Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament.
 - Jesus' signs and wonders recorded in the New Testament (Gospels).
 - Testimonies of eye witnesses in Acts and the other Epistles.
 - Meditating upon the word of God regarding Jesus develops one's faith.
- Faith in Jesus which leads to personal victories must come from the Word of God.
 - The lack of a victorious life in a Christian is because of the lack of faith.
 - Some have a weak faith because they do not read/study the Word of God.
 - Some have a weak faith and often don't know that the teachings of Jesus can help them to overcome their difficulties.

CONCLUSION:

1. Faith in Jesus gives a person victory in overcoming his/her trials and difficulties in life.
 - Faith helps a person overcome sin which separates him/her from God.
 - Faith helps a person overcome sinful/evil thoughts which also hinders a relationship with God.
2. Remember! Victorious faith in Jesus comes from the Word of God.
 - Lack of knowledge of God's Word caused Israel's downfall - Hoseah 4:6
 - Those with no access to God's Word are weak - Amos 8:11-14
 - When tempted, even Jesus went to the Word of God - Matthew 4:4, 7, 11
3. Christian! God has given YOU the means of producing strong faith - His Word! Study it, apply it.