# **“BUILDING OUR FAITH THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD”**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Do we know What is faith?
2. What does it mean to believe...?
3. **Some Christians think** it just means all we need to have is a blind acceptance: in other words,….as in **…"You just gotta believe."**
4. However, on the other hand…. **Some skeptics agree:** "Faith is believing in something without any good reason to do so."

1. Both are mistaken; you see, such ignorance of the word of God and of faith leads to two important issues...
2. **The Shallowness of faith** among Christians which makes them weak

Christians, as in “babes in Christ” not ready for strong meat.

 b. It will build **Prejudice against faith** among skeptics.

[To avoid misunderstanding **“the nature of faith”,** and especially the **“nature of Christian faith”**, with this study we will attempt to examine both, beginning with...]

1. **THE BIBLICAL DEFINITION OF FAITH...**
2. Faith is in general the persuasion of the mind that a certain

 statement is true and the primary idea behind it is **trust!**

 2. In other words…It is a strong **conviction** or **trust** in

 something!

[**He 11:1**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%2011.1)Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

In laymen’s terms, we can say it this way….in two parts….

 a. "Now faith is **being sure** of what we hope for..." -

 b. "...being **convinced** of what we do not see."

1. **For example:** Please allow me to tweak your mind a little… you

have faith that your parents are indeed your Parents.

How do you know??? Can you be sure…? Did you ever do a DNA Test?

**Recently in the news …a woman who stole a baby from a hospital was caught after 17 years, she raised the baby till her current age. To the child, she had accepted her as her mother! But she didn’t know until her real mother came on the scene and the truth came forth!**

1. Based upon your confidence in the reliability of their word do you know if they are your real parents???
2. I guess, Such conviction or trust prompts you to respond

 accordingly

 4. We have such faith (trust, conviction) in many things!

 a. We believe in George Washington as a person of history!

 b. We believe in commercial aviation as a safe way to travel!

**--So then Faith is trust or conviction in something or someone**

 **Let’s look at “The Evidence portion of Faith”**

 1. Many people believe that faith is something blind ("you just

 gotta believe")

1. Yes, faith can be a conviction in "things unseen" –

[**He 11:1**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%2011.1)Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

1. Yes, we can "walk by faith, not by sight" –

[**2Co 5:7**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Co%205.7)(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

 2. But the main question here is… ***Can there be sound reasons***

 ***(or sound evidence) for believing in what you cannot "see"?***

 a. Just as you believe in George Washington, though you have

 never seen him yet you believe he existed.

 b. Just as you believe in who your parents are, though you

 can't remember who was there at your birth.

 3. Other people believe that faith is a special gift from God for

 a select few… is this true?

1. In one sense faith or technically speaking faith is indeed a "gift" from God!

**Two scriptures that need close attention are the following… when identifying faith….**

[**Ep 2:8**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ep%202.8)**;** 8For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: …is this scripture saying that faith is a gift from God? Or is it implying that salvation is a gift from God?

[**Ro 12:3**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%2012.3)3For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

1. What we need to understand is that the faith you have owes its ultimate source to God, and it is available to all!
2. For God desires all men to be saved!

[**1Ti 2:3-6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Ti%202.3-6) ***3For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;4Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.5For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;6Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.***

1. He desires that which produces saving faith to be

proclaimed to all!!!!

[**Ro 1:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%201.16)**; *16For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.***

**Ro** [**16:25-26**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%2016.25-26)***.. 25Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,26But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:***

1. The fact is that **faith** itself comes from evidence, provided by

God Himself!

**What Evidence???**

1. Evidence of His existence in the universe –

[**Psa 19:1-3**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Psa%2019.1-3)**; *19 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.2Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.3There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.***

[**Ro 1:19-20**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%201.19-20) ***19Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.20For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:***

1. Evidence of signs and wonders are in place so that we might believe in His Son, because the earth, Sun, Moon, Stars, or galaxies speak loudly of His existence and there isn’t a language, race ,being or thing that cannot understand and there is no valid excuse for not understanding this phenomenal evidence!

 - [**Jn 5:36**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%205.36)**;** [**10:37-38**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2010.37-38)**;** [**14:10-11**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2014.10-11)**;** [**20:30-31**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2020.30-31)

**Beloved, Faith in the Bible is not 'blind faith', it is trust based on**

**evidence!**

**Now let’s look at another form of faith!!**

1. **I Call This …A RATIONAL, INTELLIGENT TYPE OF FAITH...**
2. In other words,…God expects us to use our minds which is our intellect.–

**Why??**

[**Jn 8:32**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%208.32)32And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

 a. We do not have to commit **'intellectual suicide'** in order to

 have faith

1. I am grateful, because I now understand that "My heart

cannot rejoice in what my mind rejects!" My heart and my Mind must be on the same page!!

1. Beloved without fail, a weak faith is the result of the

heart trying to believe what the mind rejects!

**This poses the following questions????**

1. **Does this mean we can have 100% proof?** No, but...

 a. We often commit 100% with less than 100% proof.

 b. As when flying on an airplane (no 100% guarantee, but we

 commit ourselves to get on board 100% anyway)

 c. Because the safety of commercial aviation makes it a

 rational, intelligent decision.

 So the next question is:

**"Is there enough evidence to warrant making a 100% commitment to Christ?"**

**I believe there is...**

 a. Certainly enough to commit myself 100% for Him, rather than

 be 100% against Him!

1. Truthfully speaking…There is no other alternative …–Jesus said the following statement….

[**Mt 12:30**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Mt%2012.30) ***30He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.***

 c. Jesus is like an airplane; either we get on board totally,

 or we get left behind!

 **-- The Christian faith is based on making a rational, intelligent**

 **decision**

 Next there is an

1. **AN OBJECTIVE FAITH...**

 1. Faith (trust) in an object: **Jesus of Nazareth**

 a. Faith in **who He was**: The Christ, the Son of God

 b. Faith in **what He did**: He rose from the dead on the third

 day

 2. It does make a difference what we believe

 a. The old cliché **"It doesn't matter what you believe, as long**

 **as you believe in something"** is inconsistent with Christian

 faith

 b. It is not **faith in of itself** that is important

 c. But **in Whom** (the object) our faith is based upon.–

[***Jn 8:24***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%208.24)***; 24I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.***

[***Rom 10:9***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%2010.9)***That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.***

 **-- The Christian faith is trust or conviction in a Person (Jesus)**

 **D. AN EVIDENTIARY FAITH...**

 1. A faith (conviction, trust) based on evidence.

1. Hardcore Evidence such as **eyewitness testimony** is what will work-

[***Ac 10:39-41***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ac%2010.39-41)***; 39And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:40Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;41Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.***

***Ac*** [***13:31***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ac%2013.31)***; 31And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.***

[***1Jn 1:1-4***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Jn%201.1-4)***; 1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;2(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)3That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.***

[***2Pe 1:16-18***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Pe%201.16-18)***16For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.17For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.***

1. The same sort of evidence used in a court of law!!

Circumstantial Evidence will not work…just ask the jurors of the OJ Simpson Trial!! No eye witness or hard core evidence was available or presented! They placed their whole case on a bloody dried up glove and it failed!

 b. Basing convictions on the credibility of witnesses!

1. Evidence such as **fulfilled prophecy** –

[***Ac 17:2-3***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ac%2017.2-3)***; And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,3Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.***

***Ac*** [***18:28***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ac%2018.28)***; 28For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.***

***Ac*** [***26:22-23***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ac%2026.22-23) ***22Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:23That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.***

 a. Based on the improbability of **over 300** fulfilled prophecies

 being coincidence!

 **-- The Christian faith is based on such evidence!**

**CONCLUSION**

1. We have seen that the nature of faith, in particular the Christian

 faith, is...

 a. **Trust** that is intelligent and rational

 b. **Trust** in a person of history, Jesus of Nazareth

 c. **Trust** in who He is, what He did

 d. **Trust** based on solid and reasonable evidence

2. Faith (trust) does lead to believing in things not seen...

 a. Such as God who is invisible –

[***Jn 1:18***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%201.18)***; 18No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.***

[***1Jn 4:12***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Jn%204.12)***12No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.***

 b. Such as promises we hope to receive (resurrection, eternal life)

 -

[***Ro 8:24***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%208.24)***24For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?***

But **such faith is not blind credulity**. There is solid evidence for such faith, which in turn leads us to trust in things not seen. Only those ignorant of the evidence ridicule faith, or find themselves wavering in their own faith. **Examine the evidence, and believe...!**