

Increase Your Faith and Persevere

How to increase your faith

We can increase our faith by hearing. **Romans 10:17** says “Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.” The KJV reads “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”

We have all been given a measure of faith. The Bible says even a small amount like a mustard seed is enough to move mountains. Even you have enough faith to do everything our Lord asks you to do. It’s time to quit using, “I don’t have enough faith” as an excuse and exercise the faith God has given you.

Faith brings the unseen into being and makes the unfelt things real to the senses. It pleases God when you look only at his Word, and it pleases him when you base your faith and actions on his promises. In **Hebrews 11** the ancients were commended for this kind of faith and you will be too.

It’s when we line up our thoughts and beliefs with what God says in the Bible, that we grow in faith. How do we line up our thoughts and beliefs? We do this by inviting God to show us specific verses that address the situation we’re facing. Repeat these verses many times daily, so that they go from your head to your heart. We refer to this process as “standing in the Word, standing in faith or standing on the promises of God”. Soon you will realize that you have become what the Word says —you are delivered, set free, made whole, blessed etc.— and discover yourself walking in faith.

Some examples of using the scriptures to stand in faith are:

♦ **For Healing: 1 Peter 2:24**

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

♦ **For Strength: Psalm 118:14**

The Lord is my strength and my song.

♦ **For Encouragement, Philippians 4:13**

I can do all things through him who gives me strength.

♦ **For Hope: Jeremiah 29:11**

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.”

♦ **For Fearfulness: 2 Timothy 1:7**

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self discipline.

When the Lord reveals his Word to you and you apply yourself and commit the verse to memory, it causes the Word to come alive in you. God reveals his character to you so that your faith or trust in him develops and grows. God loves to hear his Word spoken back to him by his children and as you do this, you invite the very presence of the Lord into the place you are. By repeating the scriptures many times daily you will begin to believe for that which you are confessing over yourself. In this process the Word becomes alive in our spirit so they will no longer be just words on a page but living and active, sharper than any double edged sword, mighty for the tearing down of strongholds.

Remember, **Romans 10:17** states that faith comes by hearing, so the more we hear it, the easier it will be to

identify the lie and replace it with the truth of God's Word. No matter which scriptures you are standing on be careful that you are not adding to them.

In **James** we read that faith alone is not enough. God also requires obedience and action. By stepping out to use our faith, we will experience God's faithfulness and see our faith grow. God does not want us to keep our faith to ourselves. He wants us to pray prayers of faith, share testimony of faith, and transform the church by exercising our faith.

Ask yourself these questions:

- ✦ Do I get into the Word daily to hear the message?
- ✦ Do I encourage your faith through hearing the Word preached on Christian radio or TV, reading books or having conversations with fellow Christians?
- ✦ What scriptures can I stand on? If none, will you now invite God to reveal specific scriptures to you to stand on for your situation?
- ✦ Am I putting God's Word into action by stepping out in faith?

We Must Persevere in Faith

James 1:2-8

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

In **John 20:27** Jesus said to Thomas, "Stop doubting and believe." The opposite of faith is more than a lack of faith, it's doubt. Doubt questions that God will do what he promises in his Word to do. So, when doubts come, they must be cast off, and the Word of God repeated to keep standing in faith.

Hebrews 11:6 says "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Think about this: without faith it is impossible to please God. Do you want to please God? Yes, of course!

God wants us to be filled with faith is not wavering in the wind, to move mountains with our faith, and help others see him and build his kingdom. When we miss one faith opportunity (maybe because we believed our senses and circumstances instead of God's Word), God will bring you another opportunity.

When we learn from our mistakes and acknowledge our faithlessness in missing God, he is full of grace and forgiveness for us, longing to have us succeed and become persons of greater faith.

God is big enough to handle our questioning and doubts and he wants us to examine with him what we are questioning or having a hard time believing. Our heavenly Father is so patient that he will walk with us through our well-meaning ignorance and mistakes without condemning us. He has provided us with much needed truth in the Bible, where we can see it, study it, and line up our lives with it. Becoming a person of faith involves taking our doubts and questions to God so that he can reveal his truth to us.

When we pray a prayer of faith and call on God for what he has promised to do in his Word, we must leave

the results with him, knowing that according to his Word it shall come to pass. Many people believe that the prayer of faith should always mean an immediate answer. The Bible shows us examples of both immediate answers and of answers as people go on their way in faith believing God to complete his work. Remember, Elijah had to lay on the dead widow's son three times, and the ten lepers received while they went. Many fail to receive what they believed for because they have dictated to the Almighty Lord just how and when they want to receive his blessing. Remember the account of Naaman found in **2 Kings 5:1-15b**. He may have missed his healing by resisting instructions to dip in the Jordan River seven times.

God's Word is just as true in hard times as it is in good times. We need to persevere in faith even though it can be difficult to believe in hard times because our feelings or circumstances may be telling us the opposite, like:

- ✦ God's Word says we are healed, yet we feel pain.
- ✦ God's Word says he provides our every need, yet we see poverty.
- ✦ God's Word says we are one in Christ, and yet there's division.

So to have faith in hard times, we must be ready and prayed up in the Word. We must stand firm.

1 Timothy 6:12a says: *Fight the good fight of faith.* It says a good fight, and a good fight is the fight we win. Holding on to God in faith at times is a battle, so being prepared before the faith battle comes is vital. We prepare for the battle first by putting on our armor, then by spending time daily hearing the Word, meditating on it, praying and praising God. In doing so our faith will not waver and we will walk in faith through hard times to victory! If you have already failed in this, and we all do, simply go to God in repentance and begin again.

Ask Yourself

- ✦ Do I consider it pure joy when I face trials?
- ✦ Do I cast off doubt and unbelief with the Word of God or take and ponder them in my mind, playing tapes of possible scenarios, thus giving Satan entry through the realm of doubt and unbelief?
- ✦ Am I praying the prayer of faith? Am I dictating to God how and when I want his answer?
- ✦ Am I fighting the good fight of faith, persevering through the hard times to victory?
- ✦ Do I want to be so in touch with God, so sure of the truth of his Word, so faith filled, so trusting in God that I step out in faith to do all he has called me to do?

Then today as an act of my will I choose to place my faith, in God and his Word, knowing that **as I step out in faith, he is faithful!**

It's important for us to combine faith with the Word of God preached to us.

Hebrews 4:2

For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.

People have always confused faith and works, thinking they can earn their way to heaven instead of receiving God's way through faith in Jesus Christ. People still strive to be righteous on their own by trying to live a good life. When we do this we miss the whole walk of faith that is opened up by understanding who Jesus is and what he lived and died for. We want to be people who demonstrate both faith and corresponding action in the power of the Holy Spirit, not in our own strength and ability.