

A Different types of faith:

❖ Faith and signs.

- A sign is a distinctive mark or demonstration given to confirm an inspired message or to support divine authority. Although a sign is generally understood to be a miraculous event—like the wedding at Cana (John 2:11)—the fact that Israel camped before Mount Sinai to worship God (Exodus 3:12) was also given as a sign.
- The Pharisees asked Jesus to show them a sign of any kind that could prove that He was the Messiah, so that they could believe in Him (Mark 8:11).
- Jesus was exasperated when they asked for a sign to justify their lack of faith (Mark 8:12). When someone doesn't want to believe, no sign will be able to convince them.
- God has given us sufficient evidence in His Word and in nature for anyone who wants to believe, to believe. However, there is always room for doubt. That is why Jesus gave a special blessing to “those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29).

❖ The measure of faith.

- There are different measures of faith:
 - (1) The faith of the apostles: “How is it that you have no faith?” (Mark 4:40)
 - (2) Peter's faith: “You of little faith!” (Mt. 14:31)
 - (3) The father's faith: “Come to the aid of my little faith” (Mark 9:24)
 - (4) The faith of the Canaanite woman: “Great is your faith” (Mt. 15:28)
 - (5) The centurion's faith: “I have not found such great faith even in Israel” (Luke 7:9)
 - (6) Stephen's faith: “a man full of faith” (Acts 6:5)
- It is clear that faith can grow as the roots of unbelief are uprooted. Conviction must gradually replace doubt. Our request should be: “Increase our faith” (Luke 17:5).
- Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the study of the Bible, and our experience with God we will be able to observe that “your faith is growing” (2 Thessalonians 1:3).

❖ Faith and feelings.

- Is faith a feeling or a rational act?
- The answer to this question is important. It's not the same to say "I FEEL saved" as to say "I KNOW I am saved."
- But let's start from the beginning. What is the origin of faith? Faith comes from God and He gives it to us as a gift (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 2:8).
- When we respond positively to that gift—when we begin to exercise faith—that faith produces in us feelings such as joy; tranquility; a sense of spiritual relief; ...
- But faith itself is not a feeling; it is “certainty” and “conviction” (Heb. 11:1). It is not something that depends on our mood. When I feel weak, or feel that my salvation is far away, that is when I must exercise the most faith.

B What is faith?

❖ Definition and development of faith.

- Hebrews 11:1, 3, and 6 offer us a broad definition of faith. Faith has much to do with our concept of God. It leads us to believe in Him as Creator and Rewarder.
- In the rest of the chapter, Paul elaborates on the faith of many men and women who serve as an example and encouragement for us not to lose heart while we await the reward.
- As we've seen, we don't all have the same level of faith. How can I develop whatever faith I have, whether it's a little or a lot?
 - (1) Exercise faith, however small it may be (Mt. 17:20)
 - (2) Study the Bible (Rom. 10:17)
 - (3) Ask God to increase it (Luke 17:5)
 - (4) Do not give in to doubt (Mark 9:23-24)
 - (5) Do not base my faith on the faith of others (Mt. 25:8)
 - (6) Responding to the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22)
 - (7) To habitually practice my faith (2 Cor. 5:7)

❖ The faith of Jesus.

- We, the faithful who live close to the return of Jesus, are distinguished by two things that we must "keep" (that is, obey or preserve): the commandments and the faith of Jesus. (Rev. 14:12).
- The Law (the commandments) and the Gospel (faith) are intertwined. You cannot obey without having faith, nor believe without obeying. But what does "the faith of Jesus" mean?
 - (1) Be obedient to Jesus and His Word
 - (2) Having a daily experience with Jesus
 - (3) Making Jesus the center of our lives
 - (4) To live in accordance with our faith
 - (5) To base our faith on Jesus
 - (6) Reflecting Jesus in our lives
 - (7) Accept the gift of His grace
- By having faith in Jesus we are justified (Rom. 5:1), sanctified (Acts 26:18), and become children of God (Jn. 1:12).