



Growing Together In Christ

Growing Our Faith in the Face of Doubt (Part 1) 16 Nov 2021

Without Faith We Cannot Please God

Heb 11:6 And **without faith it is impossible to please him**, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Heb 11:8 **By faith Abraham obeyed** when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Heb 11:11 **By faith Sarah herself received power** to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised.

Heb 11:17 **By faith Abraham**, when he was tested, **offered up Isaac**, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son,

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1. The Truth about Doubts

Ever Since Day 1—Doubt Exists

“Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’ ”
(Gen. 3:1)



The Greatest Saints Were Plagued with Doubts

- Rom 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”
- See Abraham and Sarah’s doubts in Gen 12:13, 18:13-15, 20:2

Truths:

- Justifying Faith does not preclude doubt.
- Doubt does not disqualify a believer as God’s people
- For we are saved and kept safe by the strength of God, not the strength of our faith

The Meaning of “Israel”

- Gen 32:24 And Jacob was left alone. And **a man wrestled with him** until the breaking of the day.
- Gen 32:28 Then he said, “**Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel**, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.”
- Gen 32:30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, “**For I have seen God face to face**, and yet my life has been delivered.”

To Doubt Is Being Human

“Adam and Eve doubted. Abraham doubted. Moses doubted. David doubted. Elijah doubted. Habakkuk doubted. Job doubted. **John the Baptist doubted**. Peter doubted. Jesus doubted. Doubt is a part of the process for many Christians, and it is a part of being human.”

- Ben Young, [*Room for Doubt: How Uncertainty Can Deepen Your Faith* \(Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook, 2017\)](#).

**For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face.
Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I
have been fully known. (1Co 13:12)**

Faith Is Anchored to What God Has Revealed

Deu 29:29 “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

Take Up the Shield of Faith

- Eph 6:16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;

Faith doesn't preclude doubts.
Rather true faith will extinguish their flames.



But Know What Faith Is Not

- Mat_17:20 He said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”
- Mat_21:21-22 And Jesus answered them, “Truly, I say to you, **if you have faith and do not doubt**, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even **if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ it will happen**. And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.”

Understanding the Nature & Anchor of True Faith

- What is genuine covenantal faith that thrives amid doubts as oppose to a psychological make-believe that will collapse like a house of cards when assail by doubts?
- How is “doubt” different from unbelief?

True faith is based not on our presumption but on God as revealed to us in His word.

2. Doubts Assailing Us

Doubts Assail Us

Spiritually

- Am I a sham Christian?
- Does His Spirit really dwell within me?



Emotionally & Physically

- Does God care when I'm suffering or in pain?
- Is God really in control of the world I see around me?



Mentally & Intellectually

- Is it wrong to ask for more evidence and more assurances?
- Is the Christian faith based on reason, evidence or spiritual experience?

2a. Assurance—Overcoming Spiritual Doubts

Being Sure of Our Salvation

- Am I a sham Christian?
- Does His Spirit really dwell within me?

On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'

And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' (Matt 7:22-23)

Assurance of Salvation

The 4 kinds of people in the world are:

- 1) those who are saved and know it,
- 2) those who are saved but do not know it,
- 3) those who are unsaved and know it, and
- 4) those who are unsaved but do not know it.

- Sproul, R.C.. Can I Be Sure I'm Saved? (Crucial Questions) (p. 18). Reformation Trust Publishing. Kindle Edition.

Assurance on a Continuum

- “No, I don’t,”
- “I don’t think so,”
- “I don’t know, but I hope so,”
- “Maybe,”
- “Yes, I believe in God,” or
- “Of course I believe in God.”

Sproul, R.C.. Can I Be Sure I'm Saved? (Crucial Questions) (p. 19). Reformation Trust Publishing. Kindle Edition.

Assurance Is a Scriptural Truth

- For **I know that my redeemer lives**, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 19:26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. (Job 19:25)
- “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, **I will fear no evil: for You are with me**; Your rod and Your staff they comfort me”? (Psalm 23:4)
- “**You will keep him in perfect peace** whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You”? (Isaiah 26:3)

Assurance Is Found in the Gospel

- *For I know my transgressions, and **my sin is ever before me**.* (Ps. 51:3)
- But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, **as the foremost**, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. (1Ti 1:16)
- “*Truly, I say to you, **today you will be with me** in paradise.*” (Luke 23:43)
- There is therefore now **no condemnation** . . . (Rom 8:1)
- For **by grace** you have been saved (Eph 2:8)

Assurance Requires Persevering Diligence

- Heb 6:11 And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end,
- Heb 6:12 so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.
- Heb 10:21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,
- Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Assurance Is God's Will for Us in Christ

- "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." (1 John 5:13)
- Whosoever believes on Him shall not be ashamed." (Romans 10:11)

"... assurance of salvation lies in the strength of our God, not in the strength of our faith."

If Faith Is Life, Assurance Is Health

“**Faith is life** . How great the blessing! Who can tell the gulf between life and death? And yet life may be weak, sickly, unhealthy, painful, trying, anxious, worn, burdensome, joyless, smileless to the very end. **Assurance is more than life. It is health, strength, power, vigour, activity, energy, manliness, beauty.**”

- Ryle, J. C. The Complete Works of J. C. Ryle (Best Navigation and Bible Links) . E4 Group. Kindle Edition.

Assurance Looks Downward, Backward and Forward with Confidence

- 2Ti 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.
- 2Ti 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
- 2Ti 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

What Produces Assurance? Rom 8:1-29

A Trinitarian Relationship—Rooted in Christ

1. A Person **Rooted in Christ, Freed by Him**

- Rom 8:1 There is therefore now **no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

2. A Life **led by the Spirit**

- Rom 8:14 For all who are **led by the Spirit** of God are sons of God.

3. A Heart **longing for the Father**

- Rom 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, **by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”**

A Changed Life—the Testimony of the Spirit

A mind Set on Christ

- Rom 8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit **set their minds on the things of the Spirit.**

Bears the Life & Peace of the Spirit (His fruit)

- Rom 8:6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the **Spirit is life and peace.**

Seeks to Please God

- Rom 8:8 Those who are in the flesh cannot **please God.**
- Rom 8:9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Receive Inner Testimony of the Holy Spirit

- Rom 8:16 The **Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit** that we are children of God,

An Ultimate Hope—Given by God

• Willing to Suffer with Christ

- Rom 8:17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided **we suffer with him** in order that we may also be glorified with him.

• Longs for Christ's Return

- Rom 8:23 And not only the creation, but **we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly** for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

• Becoming more like Jesus

- Rom 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also **predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son**, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.



Q&A