

**Looking at the
Possible Meanings
of Faith**

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INTRODUCTION

The contents of this booklet are unique, because it investigates rationally and Biblically, the possible meanings of the word "Faith." Does it mean believing? Is it trusting? Or is it believing and trusting? Does it mean believing and trusting and obedience to God's Law? Or is it none of these? Could it be the word of truth, the Spirit of Truth, the reveal truths of the word of God? Just what does Faith mean?

Many are the claims made today by fallen Seventh-day Adventists and Evangelicals, but their expositions are so confusing, that a person cannot hold an intelligent view of Faith in his mind and thus understand how it works according to Scripture. Because of this, certain ideas as to the identity of Faith in some SDA writings has been investigated and shown to be erroneous when properly considered with the aid of the Holy Scriptures.

Faith as to its real meaning, as evidenced in the text of the Bible is clearly deduced, making no mistake and leaving no doubt as to the real teachings of the Bible. May all be blessed as they carefully study and consider this booklet, in Jesus' holy name. Amen.

Looking at the Possible Meanings of Faith

1. We are to study the Bible in such a way as God approves. 2 Timothy 2:15.
2. We are told that our **Faith** saves us. 1 John 5:4.
3. The **importance** of Faith is seen in that it is impossible to please God without it. Hebrews 11:6.
4. The Faith that saves us is identified in the Bible as the **Faith of Jesus Christ**. Romans 3:22; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9.
5. Again, that same Faith is called the **Faith of God**, (since Jesus is God). (Romans 3:3; 1 John 5:20).
6. It is this **same** “Faith of Jesus Christ” that we are to have as **our Faith**. James 2:1; Revelation 14:12.
7. However, the Scripture clearly identifies **our believing** as different from the **saving Faith** that is called the **Faith of Jesus Christ**. Romans 3:22; Galatians 2:16; Galatians 3:22.

8. In fact, the Scriptures show that our **lack of believing** does not make the Faith of God powerless. This means that God's Faith is what it is **apart from**, and **separate to** our believing. Romans 3:3.
9. We must recognize that this **Faith** which is the subject of our inquiry, we are told that coupled with love, it is **in** Christ Jesus (in a source—sense), not in us. 2 Timothy 1:3.
10. What **summary** have we gained from the Scriptures we have just understood? This is what we have seen:
 - i. The Faith that saves us is the Faith of Jesus Christ or God.
 - ii. This Faith belongs to Jesus Christ who is God.
 - iii. This Faith of Jesus Christ is **different** to our believing.
 - iv. This Faith of God is potent even though we have unbelief.
 - v. It is this **same** Faith of Jesus Christ that we are to have.
 - vi. This same Faith coupled with Love is in Jesus Christ as the **source** of it.
11. What we have seen so far to be NOT taught in the above Scriptures. What we have NOT seen.
 - i. That the Faith **of** Jesus Christ is Faith **IN**

Jesus Christ.

- ii. That Faith is the same as believing.
 - iii. That Faith is the same as **believing in Jesus Christ**.
 - iv. That the Faith of Jesus Christ (or if one prefers to erroneously say “faith in Jesus Christ”) is in the believer as a source.
 - v. Trusting in Jesus isn’t even referred to at all.
12. We must not take this to mean that we do not believe in “believing” “trusting,” and “believing and trusting in Jesus Christ.”
- a. The work of God is that **we** as individuals **MUST** believe. John 6:29.
 - b. We must **believe in** the Lord Jesus. John 6:40; John 11 25,26.
 - c. We must **trust in** Jesus/God. Proverbs 3:5; Hebrews 2:13.
13. Traditional Seventh-day Adventists has a wrong understanding about what “Faith” is, as used in the following Scriptures. Romans 3:22; Galatians 2:16; Romans 3:30,31; Romans 4:5,11,16; Romans 10:6.
14. Observe the concept of Faith ratified by an Adventist theologian.

“A due faith in Him is immoderate, absolute trust.” P.T. Forsyth, George R. Knight, **My Gripe With God**, p. 121.

15. Another top SDA theologian tells us what Faith is in different ways:

“‘Faith’ here means *faith in Christ* as the promised Lamb of God, faith in Christ’s righteousness as ours, trust in His merits as all-sufficient for us with God.” Hans Larondelle, **Christ Our Salvation**, p. 43.

“One must believe and trust Christ to be justified. The gospel is in its core not “do!” but “done!” Not “work!” but “believe!”” **Ibid**, p. 44.

“Our sincere self-condemnation and acceptance of Christ as the perfect representative of the Father is our act of faith that glorifies God ...” **Ibid**, p. 48.

16. A summary so far shows us that these men **do not** really understand the Biblical explanation of the **Faith of Jesus Christ**, or **saving Faith**. They tell us the following:

- i. Faith is “absolute trust.”
- ii. Faith is “faith in Christ.”
- iii. Faith is “believe and trust.”
- iv. Acceptance of Christ.

17. But one exceptional definition of Faith in highly philosophical and theological ways is found in the teachings of SDA minister, Jack Sequeira. He first clearly states to us:

“Faith is our human response to the objective facts of the gospel. In order to be genuine faith, this response must always be motivated by love, a heart appreciation of the gospel ... faith is our heartfelt response to God’s love ...”
Jack Sequeira, **Beyond Belief**, p. 90.

18. We have seen so far, the complete “self sourcing” of Faith according to Sequeira. In summary it states:

a. Faith is **our human response**. Which is:

- i. A **heart appreciation** of the gospel.
- ii. Our **heartfelt response** to God’s love.

19. But Mr. Sequeira clearly states what this **human response** is. He says:

“What is saving faith? It is **not** simply trusting Christ ... Although saving faith includes absolute trust in God, it involves much more. True saving faith is motivated by love and always includes three important elements:
i. knowing the truth as it is in Jesus;
2. believing the truth as it is in Jesus; and
3. obeying the truth as it is in Jesus.” **Ibid**, p. 91-92.

20. Thus we see that **saving faith** according to Mr. Sequeira is the following **Human response**:

- a. Knowing the truth.
- b. Believing the truth.
- c. Obeying the truth.

21. What does Mr. Sequeira mean when he says that part of faith is **obeying the truth**? He tells us the following nebulous and impossible philosophy.

“Third, saving faith involves total submission to the objective facts of the gospel. ... Thus a saving faith means that we will identify ourselves with that fact [... that when Christ died to sin on the cross, we also died there **in him**] ...” **Ibid**, p. 93.

22. Thus the **obedience to the truth** that is a part of faith is presented as:

- i. **Total submission** to the facts of the gospel.
- ii. **Self identity** with us dying to sin in Christ.

23. From all the wrong of these definitions we do NOT see how to explain the **Faith of Jesus Christ/God** to be the following:

- a. Jesus’ heartfelt response to God’s Love.
- b. Jesus’ knowing the truth.
- c. Jesus’ believing the truth.
- d. Jesus’ obeying the truth, which is:
 - i. Jesus’ total submission to the gospel.
 - ii. Jesus’ self identity with His dying to sin

for man.

24. It is the **Faith of Jesus Christ** that **justifies** us. Galatians 2:16.

a. Therefore we can NEVER be ...

- i. Justified by Jesus' heartfelt response to God's Love.
- ii. Justified by Jesus' knowing the truth.
- iii. Justified by Jesus' believing the truth.
- iv. Justified by Jesus' obeying the truth.
- v. Justified by Jesus' submission to the gospel.
- vi. Justified by Jesus' self-identity with His own dying to sin for man.

b. Finally, Mr. Sequeira says that this saving Faith is, not the faith of Jesus Christ, it is our **human response**. Thus it **cannot** be Jesus' Faith.

c. We also can NEVER see the **Faith of Jesus Christ** to be:

- i. Our human response **plus** the divine object of that response.
- ii. Our human response **IN** the divine object of that response.
- iii. The **divine object** of our human response (God), can NEVER be **our human** response as Sequeira says Faith is.

25. Despite all this, Mr. Sequeira rightly states this important truth.

“Some Christians believe and teach that our faith saves us. This *is* not true. Faith, in and of itself, can save no one. Nowhere does the Bible say that we are saved *because of* our faith or *on account of* our faith. If faith saves us, then it becomes a form of works that we can boast about. I can say, “I am saved because I believe in Christ. I have *done* something!” The Bible teaches that we are saved *by faith* or *through* faith. Faith is only the instrument or channel by which we receive Christ as our righteousness. It is Christ—His life, His death, His resurrection—that saves us, nothing else: The function of faith is to unite us to Christ.” **Ibid**, p. 95.

26. Before we advance on what exactly Faith possibly could be, we need to ask ourselves a few eye opening questions. The Bible speaks of **justified by faith**. Romans 3:28:30; Galatians 2:16.

27. The Bible speaks of the **Righteousness of God by faith** ... Romans 3:22; Romans 4:11; Romans 9:30; Romans 10:6; Philippians 3:9.

28. Now, is **Justified by faith** ...

- a. Justified by Believing?
- b. Justified by trusting?

- c. Justified by believing and Trusting?
29. Is **Justified by the Faith of Jesus Christ** ...
- a. Justified by the believing of Jesus Christ?
 - b. Justified by the trusting of Jesus Christ?
 - c. Justified by the believing and trusting of Jesus Christ.
30. Is **Justified by Faith** ...
- a. Justified by believing **in God**?
 - b. Justified by trusting **in God**?
 - c. Justified by believing and trusting **in God**?
31. Are we justified by ...
- a. Our mental acts?
 - b. God's mental acts?
 - c. Jesus' mental acts?
 - d. Jesus' and our mental acts?
32. What is Faith? is Faith
- a. Multi-composed?
 - b. Singled natured?
How does the Bible explain it?
33. How does the Bible explain it? Is Faith composed of ...
- a. Mere human ability?
 - b. Divine ability?
 - c. Divine and human ability together?

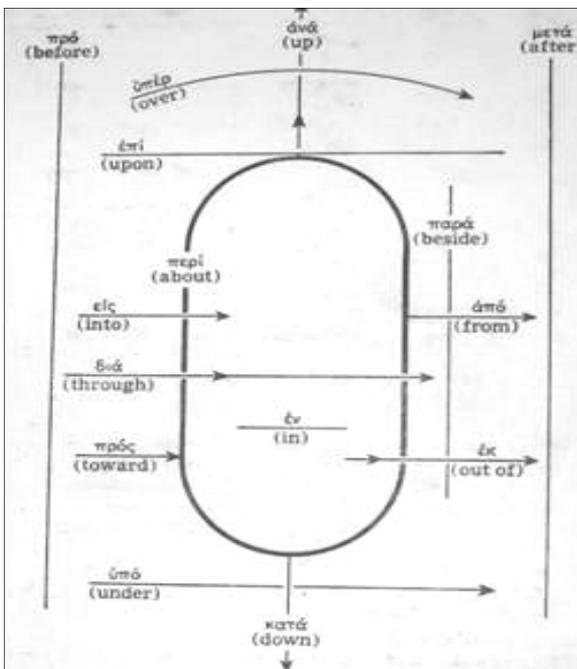
34. How does the Bible explain it? Is Faith ...

- a. Solely human?
- b. Solely divine?
- c. Divine and human together?

35. How does the Bible explain it? Is Faith ...

- a. God's Truth?
- b. God's Truth plus **our** believing and trusting?

36. We need to understand some of the prepositions that go with Faith and Justification and Righteousness to get a better understanding of what Faith possibly could be. The following chart shows us.



37. This helps us to understand a proper understanding of Romans 3:30.

“... justify the circumcision (ek) **out of** faith ...”

“and uncircumcision **through** (dia) the faith ...”

38. Concerning Galatians 2:16, we can now see clearly what it really says:

“... not justified (ek) **out of** the works of the law ...”

“... but (dia) **through** faith of Jesus Christ ...”

“... we might be justified (ek) **out of** faith of Christ ...”

“... and not (ek) **out of** the works of the law ...”

39. A proper translation of Romans 3:22 is.

“... the righteousness of God which is (dia) **through** faith of Jesus Christ.”

40. A proper translation of Romans 9:30 is as follows:

“... righteousness but the one (ek) **out of** faith ...”

41. In Romans 10:6 we get a proper translation.

“... The righteousness which is (ek) **out of** faith ...”

42. Concerning Philippians 3:9 we can clearly see a true translation.

“... not having mine own righteousness which is (ek) **out of** the law ...”

“... but that which is (dia) **through** the faith of Christ ...”

“... the (ek) **out of** God righteousness (epi) **upon** the faith.”

43. Thus while Romans 3:28 speaks about “... justification to faith...” and Romans 4:11 says “... righteousness of the faith ...”, the majority use of **ek** “out of” faith with regards to Righteousness, shows that Faith CANNOT be believing and/or trusting, because Righteousness does not come **out of** believing and/or trusting. Nor is Righteousness found **upon** believing and/or trusting.

44. The translated portions of versus show us that, as against works, Faith is really the instrument used by God to justify us, but the instrument that **contains, carries** or “**receives**” God’s Righteousness. This is not a **human** instrument, this is a **divine** instrument. Romans 9:30; Romans 10:6; Philippians 3:9.

45. We can specifically see that Righteousness is **out of God** and **upon the instrument of Faith** that is **imputed** or given to the penitent. (Philippians 3:9; Romans 4:5,9).
46. We can now test the sense of some of the explanation of what faith is.
- a. To say that Faith is believing and/or trusting, is to say that “justified by faith” is in fact “justified by believing and trusting.”
 - b. It is also to say “justified **through** believing and trusting.”
 - c. It is also to say “justified **out of** (ek) believing and trusting.”

The fundamental flaw with this concept is that justification happens **by virtue of human believing** and trusting. It also happens **out of** human believing and trusting as the trigger of our justification.

47. To say what one really means by justification by faith which is justified by believing and trusting, is that “you are justified by **God when** you believe and trust” is not an explanation of “justified by faith.”
- a. The concept thus presented is “justified by God because a person believes.”

48. We need to look at some more ideas here.

- a. The idea that to be justified by faith (believing and trusting) is really **God** justifying us **when** we believe and trust, does not show what change Justification brings **in** us, or what is **in** us when we are justified.
- b. This causes an **outside**, objective justification that affects only the records, or credit of the justified person, not his **inner life**. This is why Adventists tells us:

“Justification by faith in Christ is by biblical definition the divine *imputation* of Christ’s righteousness to the believer’s individual name. It is the legal “setting right” with God ...” Hans Larondelle, **Christ Our Salvation**, p. 46.

“The idea here is not that our confessed and forgiven guilt is destroyed or annihilated, as if God suddenly overlooks the whole problem of sin.” **Ibid**, pp. 46-47.

- c. No inner change can be seen from this system.

“Justification in Romans 3 does not mean “to make righteous,” but rather “to declare righteous ...” ... The new relationship that brings justification, it should be noted, does not make a person intrinsically righteous ...” George R. Knight, **My Gripe With God**, p.

72.

“R.C. Moberly was right when he wrote that in every individual the work of Christ must be “objective first, that it may become subjective.”” **Ibid**, p. 131.

- d. This causes a connective teaching of “two men”, (an old and new man), being in the person at his justification. Failure to be free from this old man causes the person to think he does not have **enough faith**, that is, enough **intensity** of believing and trusting.
- e. If faith is believing and trusting, then **strong** or great faith is strong believing and trusting or the rank or **intensity** of our believing and trusting. This is **Pentecostalism**.
- f. After trying to believe and trust with a personal inciting and **intensity** of believing and trusting, failure to deal with this **old man** from overcoming the **new man** leads to the following:
 - i. Doubt or skepticism.
 - ii. Backsliding.
 - iii. Apostatizing to Religions one is comfortable with
 - iv. Setting down in a lukewarm, irreligious or undevoted state while yet attending Church meetings.

- v. Developing a strong reactionary self-righteous spirit to make oneself holy.
- vi. Settling in a theology that justifies sin in the person while he is saved.

49. Thus whole **lukewarm** “plan of salvation” results from the false concept of faith. The plan basically says:

- a. Faith is believing and trusting (God).
- b. We are justified by believing and trusting.
- c. God puts righteousness to our account.
- d. We are given the Spirit with a resulting old and new man in us.
- e. This internal struggle is sanctification to overcome sin, it is a work of a lifetime.
- f. We must do the Law to be saved.
- g. When Jesus comes again, we shall then be free from sin.

50. All these points and the concepts that lead to them, especially about what Faith is, is **false** and must be given up. Faith is the revealed truths of the word of God. Romans 10:8.

Fin.



Notes





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