

What is Faith?

The word *believe* (*pisteuo*) is #4100 in Strong's Greek Concordance. It comes from #4102 (*pistis*), *persuasion*, which is derived from #3982 (*peitho*), meaning *to convince*. #4100 means *to follow*, as the rich young ruler was to do in Mk 10:21. But after one hears the many other words as to what he must do (Mk 10:17; Acts 2:37,40-42,44-45), to believe those words means to have been persuaded to do them. It means that upon you the good news prevailed by persuasion (Mt 28:14, KJV).

Faith is #4102, *persuasion* — being persuaded, which comes by hearing (Rom 10:17). To *believe* means to have been persuaded by the Divine Spirit of the truth, with absolute confidence in the heart. And *heart* is #2588, the very most essential nature of man. To *believe* means one has been persuaded in his heart, and that without wavering.

What is faith, or what is saving faith? What does it mean to be persuaded to put one's trust in the Savior of the world, to believe as Jn 3:16 says? It is the same word *believe* as in Acts 2:44, where "all who believed were together." To believe upon Him in Jn 5:24 is only as 1 Jn 3:14 explains what it means to pass out of death and into life. This is as 1 Jn 5:12 (NAS) says (just as Acts 5:20 speaks of "this life"), which is followed by verse 13 (note the differences between versions):

¹² *He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.* ¹³ *These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 Jn 5:12-13, NAS)*

¹² *He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.* ¹³ *These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. (1 Jn 5:12-13, NKJ)*

¹² *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.* ¹³ *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, **and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.** (1 Jn 5:12-13, KJV)*

(The NKJ version incorrectly puts "continue to" in verse 13.)

So the First Epistle of John was written for the sole purpose of making sure His disciples knew what it meant to have believed on the Son or to have the Son. The life he was speaking of is the life expounded upon in the whole five chapters of his letter. It is as Acts 2:44 expresses about “all who believe.” They “are together and have all things in common.”

John wrote his letter so those who read it could know whether they really had received saving faith from him. They themselves could judge it by his whole letter, but especially by 1 Jn 3:14,16,23. This determined whether the love of God had actually been poured out into their hearts (Rom 5:5), in order that they could love as the Master had commanded. By this they would know whether Jn 5:24 was actually reality for them or mere doctrine on the pages of the gospel that he, John, had recorded. To have passed out of death and into life is more than a fantasy of belief, as one believed in Santa Claus until reality struck him.

So 1 Jn 5:12-13 struck home to some who had *believed* on the name of the Son of God, but after reading the letter could not really *confess* that they knew that they had eternal life. After the rude awakening of his letter, some realized they couldn't confess it and surrendered their life to the one John knew. 1 Jn 5:20 speaks of the “true one” John had proclaimed to them many years before. But as usual many were not truly connected to the Father as John described in the first chapter of his letter.

There were those among the communities who claimed what 1 Jn 1:6 said, but were not in fellowship with *Him* — the One in 1 Jn 1:1-3 — and they were not in fellowship with John who *was* in fellowship with the Father in His Son, Yahshua. John, of course, learned these things from his Master as He spoke Jn 14:26 and 15:4-7. John knew, he remembered what the Master had told him in Jn 16:25-31.

Do you now believe? Believe in the Son in whom dwelled the Word who came into the world in Him (Heb 10:5). The disciples believed in Him as to who He was, as He said in Jn 18:37, which gives His whole nature in both His humanity and in His divinity.

This is who John was proclaiming (or had proclaimed) to them in 1 Jn 1:1-3. He was the one who was received through John according to our Master's words in Jn 13:20.

So John in 1 Jn 1:1-3 used the word *fellowship*, or *koinonia*, which is #2842. This is the word translated *fellowship* in Acts 2:42, "the apostles' teaching and fellowship." It would seem that many were not continuing or had not continued steadfastly in John's teachings and fellowship. 1 Jn 1:6 — "If we say we have fellowship with Him but are as 1 Jn 2:4, then we are liars, and the truth is not in us."

So when John's readers read this, they had to evaluate their walk as 1 Jn 1:7 and 2:6 said. If they said they had fellowship with the Master and the Father, but did not have fellowship with John, his letter would have been discarded as "an epistle of straw," as Martin Luther regarded the letter of James. But John was a branch on the Vine, a branch that was in fellowship with the Vine and with the Vinedresser/husbandman. 1 Jn 1:3 — The "us" was obviously the rest of the branches who were in fellowship with the Vine and the Vinedresser.

So the man who abides not in Jn 15:6 is as 1 Jn 1:6. *Abide* is #3306, meaning to remain, dwell, be steadfast, remain under, be patient, endure. Paul was the example of this. But in Jn 15:6, "if a man abide not in Me" could describe anyone who is or who claims to be a disciple, but is cast forth "as a branch" and withers. We have seen many withered who would not reveal their withered condition and be healed (Mt 12:10,13; Mk 3:1,3; Lk 6:6,10). They would not stretch forth their condition and reveal it before all. They would not stand forth, but shrank back.

Faith or Fantasy?

Is "saving faith" just a saying? Is it just a preference? What is the nature of one's belief? Is it just a fantasy? After the Billy Graham Crusade, you went down at his beck and call — was it anything more than a hallucination? Was his message a fanciful design or invention, or was it a creation of the imaginative faculty in your mind, just

imaginative fiction, in which heaven is a fantasyland, an imaginary place you go to when you die?

Billy Graham has a spirit that causes an imagined wonderland — an imagery of an unreal-type of Utopia, a fabrication — to appear real in your mind. It's just as real as the thought that when we get there we will see Elvis in all his radiant glory with Jesus (Rom 8:17). So many who attend his crusades are rainbow-chasing mythological visionaries and are already members of a mystical "Body of Christ," which, having no spiritual reality is neither apparent to the senses nor obvious to the eye or intelligence. Therefore, it has the nature of only subjective reality, which is no reality.

Actually, Billy Graham introduces an experience of a mystical union through subjective experience. In reality it is just a vague speculation, just a belief without sound basis. It is only a mere theory postulating the possibility of this hope. Christianity is what has been turned into (or has become enveloped into) a myth of having only an imaginary or unverifiable existence, not as Jn 13:35 or 17:23. The word *believe* in Jn 3:16 is *not real* except in the reality of Acts 2:44. In any other context or setting, it is not efficacious, lacking the power to produce the life of Acts 2:44, which is the life of 1 Jn 5:12-13.

Christianity today is like a tasting party where everyone is concerned with whose flavor is the best according to his own taste buds *and* arguing over what tastes the best. But we could say it in another way, "Whose fish stinks?" Isa 50:2 — They all stink, because there is no water of life and they die of thirst (Rev 22:17; 21:6-8; Jn 7:37-39; 4:14).

The best flavors — if one can choose the best one, since only God knows — will grant one the greatest castle in heaven. But it is a little funny that there is only one anointing behind all the flavors. As John said, let no one teach you except the one anointing, which every one of the flavors has received. That must mean one Spirit, since all of the flavors must abide in Him (1 Jn 2:27), and all of every flavor of the one recipe

are in the perfect bond of peace and oneness of the one Body (Eph 4:3-6). All the different flavors in Christianity have no differences of opinion, just as the Father and the Son have no difference of opinion (Jn 17:23). Could they denominate or have any different preferences or opinions or flavors? We know Christ can't be divided (1 Cor 1:10) and in any place or township the elders are one (Acts 20:17). But because of Acts 20:28-30, this fellowship is that of a different flavor. All who have the same taste buds follow the one who is persuasive in promoting the best flavors. 1 Cor 1:13 — Would Christ be divided? So what is 1 Cor 1:12? Could that be considered different flavors? Surely Paul, Apollos, Peter, and Christ are all one. Whose taste buds are salivating? Whose flow of saliva was the greatest to lead the church into four different flavors, but supposedly having the one Spirit and teaching all *the same thing*?

Eph 4:4-6 — The one Body is held together by the one anointing (1 Cor 1:10). And in every place (1 Cor 1:2) all who call upon the one Lord, one faith, and one baptism have one faith, which expresses itself in Eph 4:32. All who believe, as Acts 2:44 says, live together and share all things in common. This is the faith which was once for all delivered and received and lived out in works of love that Jude 1:3 speaks of (Eph 4:16; 2:10; Rev 19:8). This is the faith of Abraham (Jn 8:39), the one seed of Gal 3:29, which is not *seeds* — since Christ can't be divided and thereby plant different denominations in every place with different faiths, different baptisms, and different bodies.

As 1 Cor 12:12-13 reads, the Body is one, as our Master said in Jn 17:11,21-23 and 10:16 — that is, not numerically one (as we are many communities), but one in essence. Our oneness is maintained by walking as Eph 4:1-3. *Endeavor* means to make every effort, to do our utmost, every one of us (the “us” of 1 Jn 2:27). We endeavor in our calling to walk worthy (as in Rev 3:4) of this vocation, fulfilling Eph 2:10 and 4:12-16, allied in a common cause, compatible as in a dogsled race.¹

¹ See *Just Like a Dog Sled Race* (2000.02.00-T06).

To live by faith is to be led by the Holy Spirit, which means to be persuaded by Him to go where He wants us to go, to do what He wants us to do, to say what He wants us to say, to be all He wants us to be. This characterizes the “us” that we are to be in Him (Rom 8:14). If we are all being led by the Holy Spirit, we will each do our part (Eph 4:16), just as in a dog sled race.

Schism

1 Cor 12:12 — The human body has one head, and all the members are in perfect harmony. They are in unity, oneness, with no conflicting preferences and flavors, for that could only be the flesh. 1 Cor 12:25 says that there should be no schism in the Body (1 Cor 12:27). *Schism* is #4978, which is a flavor, a different taste preference and understanding of Scripture, not according to the one Spirit and the one Head of the one Body. 1 Tim 2:8 prevents schisms (Mal 1:11; 1 Cor 1:2) in every place.

Schism is a division in taste or mind, by which finally, by the power of fleshly desires, one goes towards chocolate and one towards vanilla, etc. Schism is sentiment which goes over into factions (Tit 3:10-11; 1 Cor 1:10; 11:18; 12:25). Schism, and now division, comes from different preferences. One goes for chocolate and one for vanilla.

Sentiment is an opinion or feeling, a certain delicacy towards something, a sympathy. Sentimental means emotional, having one's own perspective about something, or having his own anointing, his own response (2 Cor 11:3-4,13-15), his own sentiment, taste, feeling, delicacy, sympathy. All who had their own taste were as those in Rev 3:4.

The word *schism* is what led to division, which “re-crucified” Christ, so to speak, but this time in His Body, to which He came (Jn 14:18; 12:26; 1 Jn 4:2-3). Heb 6:4-6 — This held Him up to public shame and disgrace, as if to say that Christ were a useless Savior.

The word *schism* is a word that makes a distinction between the different tastes of the Scriptures, but usually in just what one believes, not in what one does. All

denominations look the same, work the same, act the same, and love the things of the world the same.

Schisms could be defined as disjunction, dissent, a split, heterodoxy, faction, sect, and as Christians justify it today as “diversity in unity” or “unity in diversity.” They call it diversity, and claim it is schism in oneness — just as God is one and the Father and the Son are one, so is the Body. According to Christians, Christ’s Body, the Father, and the Son have unity in diversity, without discord or dissension, and in every place 1 Tim 2:8 is lived out.

Pr 6:19 — Strife or discord is one of these seven things that God hates (1 Cor 3:16-17). Discord between the Father and the Son (Jn 17:23) would mean incompatibility, variance, and dissension between them. The divided church is at cross-purposes. In fact, it is a house divided against itself (Mt 12:25-26) — and you had better believe it has fallen.

The Roman Church, Greek Church, Anglican Church, Reformed Church, etc. are breaches. Schisms are all caused first by one’s sentiment. It’s how one feels, and it’s according to how charismatic one is who has a different attitude (Phil 2:5), thoughts, judgments — all prompted by one’s feelings. Sentiment is an idea colored by emotions or taste and then colored by one’s disjunctive nature. A *disjunctive* man makes his own formation of his own logical disjunction by expressing an alternative, in opposition to the anointing of the one Spirit. He expresses this by presenting mutually exclusive alternatives, causing breaches in unity — or disunity.

A *disjunctive conjunction* is what oppositional thinkers bring to the Body. A disjointed structure is that which is felled — one having no unity and nothing in common (Acts 2:45). Col 2:19 speaks of a disjointed Body. Only a Body that has grown with a growth that comes from God is *the* Body. Anything lacking coherence or orderly sequence is disjointed, as Christianity has an incomplete and disjointed history (Mk 9:11-12; Isa 49:6; Mt 21:43; and Isa 58:12).

Disjoint is marked by outward separation, which negates unity, and outward separation begins with sentiment within — a delicacy, taste, sympathy or feeling one has. The Body seemed to have come apart at the joints, or seams, very long ago. So to believe you will go to heaven when you die — is this the saving faith Jms 2:14-19 speaks of? Or did you just get caught up in the excitement of a youth rally, or a Billy Graham Crusade? Is the belief of billions just a fantasy? Is *belief* to think something is true? What does taking on the name *Christian* mean? What are you saved from, since no one can judge 1 Jn 2:15? So what do our Master's commandments mean? (Jn 14:15,21) Mt 6:31-33 — What is the difference between the two? What type of Christianity do you believe in? Rom 10:9-10 is useless without a sent one (verses 14-17).