

The Just Shall Live By Faith



Looking at faith from its biblical definition, you'll see that HOPE is a component of FAITH. However, there is still a fine line between having faith and merely hoping. If we were to contrast faith and hope, we would say that HOPE is a positive expectation towards the future, whereas FAITH is the conviction that whatever you are hoping for will happen. There are times in life when it's so easy to have a positive expectation, and there are times when it's harder. It's so easy to be hopeful when resources are pointing to an expected outcome. But it becomes more difficult to remain hopeful when everything is against you, and there seems to be no light at the end of the tunnel.

Let's look at Abraham for instance, he was very old, and his wife was also well advanced in age. If he was promised to have a child at 25 years old, he would have hoped for a child and have some sort of confidence in the fact that he was young. But at age 90, all odds were stacked against and he couldn't rely on anything physical, and that pushed Him to believe in a miracle that's beyond his strength. The book of Romans 4:18 says "Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations". So basically even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations.

So when the Bible says 'THE JUSTE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH' it implies that you believe in God as the one that will make it happen for you. Just like Abraham, he didn't look at his age, but he believed in God to fulfil what He said He would do. The struggle that many people face with regards to the things of God is that they AGREE but don't necessarily BELIEVE. So some live in simple agreement, but don't believe. In this case, living in agreement means to give mental consent or acceptance to a certain idea.

So some agree that Jesus died on the cross and process it as good information. But someone of faith goes beyond agreeing to believe in the cross, and because they believe they live by it. You can agree with what the word of God says in your mind without having faith in it. That's because faith is not a product of the mind but of the heart.

Faith is produced in the heart, and this goes beyond mental consent. When you try to perceive spiritual things through mental consent is like using the eyes to see sound or using the tongue to taste colour. It's only by faith that you can inherit all the spiritual blessings.

Since faith is a lifestyle, we can say that there's an attitude that comes with it. This attitude has two components, which are LOOKING AWAY FROM and LOOKING TO. Looking away [from all that will distract] to Jesus, Who is the Leader and the Source of our faith [giving the first incentive for our belief] and is also its Finisher [bringing it to maturity and perfection]." -Hebrews 12:2 (AMPC). Living by faith means that you decide to look away from certain things, and fix gaze on Jesus.



Your faith causes you to look away from the NATURAL REALM, which holds the visible impossibilities. The natural realm comprises EXTERNAL and INTERNAL factors.

EXTERNAL FACTORS are shreds of evidence around you that are demoralizing like not having money, a job, connections of some sort, or not having a lucrative income. And INTERNAL FACTORS are human limitations that make you feel inadequate like not being strong enough, not being smart enough, not spiritually strong or restriction set by the law.

We find an example of external and internal factors in the book of Ezekiel 37:1-3, where the prophet is in a valley of dry bone. The external factors that are obvious in the story are the many and very dry bones. To add to the evidence stacked against him, he was in a valley. A valley is in between two mountains, which makes it challenging because you can't seek help. An internal factor in his case was that he was a man. When God called him "son of man" he responded by saying "Almighty God you alone know". So Ezekiel's limitation was that he was a mortal and finite being. Ezekiel was in a situation that only divine intervention would change.

A similar example is found in the book of Judges 6:12-15, where Gideon is presenting to God the natural realm that has evidence stacked against him. He complained that they were continually harassed by the Midianites during harvest season. And when the Angel presented to him his task, he didn't feel as if he was fit to do it and he gave many excuses. It's amazing how the natural realm (external and internal factors) can affect us if we give it so much attention. They can reduce how you see yourself to a point where you see yourself as a grasshopper in the eyes of others (see Numbers 13:33). If you focus so much on the shreds of evidence against you, you'll be drawn away from your faith standing because you'll question God's presence. Your eye and mind can become an obstacle to your faith.

So eyes that prevail in faith are those that look away from the natural realm and look to Jesus. We look to Jesus because He is the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith (see Hebrews 12:2). Him being the author of faith refers to Him being the chief leader, the One that takes the lead, the source from which our faith originates or is obtained. As the finisher of our faith, He is the One that perfects it, the One who raises our faith to its perfection and makes it complete. Looking to Jesus in faith is the practice of counting and waiting on Him. As you keep your eyes on Him, He trains you to not be distracted by the world so that you stand in faith.

The Bible says in Matthew 14:30 CEV: But when Peter saw how strong the wind was, he was afraid and started sinking. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted". When Peter's eyes were fixed on the natural realm, he began to drown, and when he called out to Jesus He received help. The natural realm will always seek to drown you with challenges, but walking in faith brings about breakthroughs and miracles. Walking in faith minimizes the impact of what our physical eyes may see. That's why God leads man with faith, whereas Satan controls man with fear.

So choose FAITH, and you'll live in the PROMISES and BLESSINGS of God.

