

Understanding Faith

A Biblical Interpretation

Hebrews 11:1 - King James Version

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 - American Standard

Now faith is assurance of [things] hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 - GOD's Word

Faith assures us of things we expect and convinces us of the existence of things we cannot see.

Hebrews 11:1 - New International Version

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Based on Scripture in its entirety, I consider the King James Version to be the more accurate definition of Faith. The KJV defines Faith as solid and real—not an abstract quality that anyone can claim to have to justify any belief they desire. The words “substance” and “evidence” do this beautifully. The other three versions fit the view I see expressed by today’s Christians by changing these words to forms of “assurance” and “conviction”—allowing a “view” of the Truth that can be molded to fit a lie if necessary. **Look closely and recognize that these three definitions can apply to a lie as well as the Truth.** The New American Standard Bible I have does have the words “assurance” and “conviction” noted, and the reader can look at the note (in fine print) to find the KJV interpretation of these words. The newer NIV doesn’t reference the words at all. **What does this tell you?**

Is it possible for someone to believe in something that is true without having the substance and evidence Faith is? **Yes!** We can accept something as true just because we desire it to be true—self-serving; and all of us probably do this, or have done it, in varying degrees at different points in our spiritual growth. Believing any truth without understanding the substance and evidence supporting that truth is not Faith. To do so is to by-pass the Seven Steps of Spiritual Growth revealed in Genesis 1 and repeated through the Law and the many examples throughout the Bible. This pattern of spiritual growth is so essential that Jesus’ death and resurrection were timed to produce a living example of how a portion of the pattern works—i.e. three days and three nights.

A simple, shadowy example of Faith in action: It would be an act of faith for me to go to Australia. I have never been to Australia, but I have faith that it is there. My faith’s substance and evidence, relative to the fact that Australia will be there when I go, is as follows:

- 1) I have a broad history of testing Man’s record of this world and following maps to destinations I have never been before. There was always a first time when I went on faith and my faith was confirmed to become truth for me when I arrived.
- 2) I have seen and heard people on TV who say they have come from Australia.
- 3) I know people who have said they have gone to Australia.
- 4) I have seen movies that were filmed on location in Australia.
- 5) I could probably go on and on describing a few more reasons supporting my faith that I would arrive in a real Australia if I decided to go.

The spiritual reality is even more real than Australia because Australia depends on the spiritual reality for its existence. Since this is true, the physical reality shadows the spiritual reality—allowing us to interpret the shadows and grow in an understanding of the spiritual reality. To do this, we must go through the Seven Steps of Spiritual Growth, first revealed in Genesis 1, over and over again—resulting in the growth of our Faith. Therefore, we cannot have Faith in a lie or in a truth we accepted as true for self-serving reasons; rather Faith is the substance and evidence of the Truth we are capable of expressing from the Love (agape) in our heart.

With this concept in mind, is it any wonder that Jesus would many times begin his parables (stories) with, “The kingdom of heaven is like”, and then use physical world examples to describe the higher reality we cannot see? Was he telling us something we should be doing everyday as we observe what is happening around us?