

FAITH

“This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith” (1 Jn. 5:4)

This should be obvious. You cannot defeat a spiritual opponent with a physical weapon. A bullet or a bomb has no effect upon a spirit. That’s why Paul wrote: **“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of this world” (2 Cor. 10:3, 4). “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:12).**

In this regard faith is a powerful weapon, but it is not physical. You cannot feel it with your finger, paint it with a brush, or weigh it on a scale. Yet faith is the victory that overcomes the world.

Unfortunately, in recent years, faith has been redefined by many and deprecated as belief without evidence. On the modern campus, for example, it is increasingly considered an insult to be called a “person of faith”. To the “new atheist” a person of faith is someone who is unscientific and superstitious. This, however, is certainly not the way the Bible defines faith. Biblical faith is built upon evidence. John wrote his Gospel for the specific purpose of providing evidence and producing faith. Please consider: **“Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (Jn. 20:30, 31).** For the sake of emphasis, we repeat, Christian faith rests on evidence!

The Bible teaches that **“Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1 KJV).** The word translated as “substance” is “hupostaasis” which comes from “hupo” under, and “stasis” a standing. In other words, faith is like a foundation. The word translated as “evidence” is “elegmos” which denotes “proof” or a “test”. Thus faith is a foundation that can stand the test. When Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the Living God, Jesus said that upon this “Rock” He would build His Church (Matt. 16:16 – 18). Jesus is the “Rock”. He is the solid foundation that the gates of hell cannot prevail against. Certainly, **“The one who trusts in him will never be put to shame” (1 Pet. 2:6).**

If you go to a bank to borrow money you need evidence that you can pay back the loan. The more evidence you have the more money you can borrow. The same principle applies to Christianity. The more evidence we have the more faith we have. The more faith we have the more power we have. Some have faith so powerful that it can move mountains, and others don’t even have enough faith to read the Bible or go to church. How sad! James said: **“Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do” (Ja. 2:18).** The man who claims to believe and does nothing, is believing in vain (1 Cor. 15:2).

Hebrews 11 is called the “Faith Chapter” of the Bible. While faith itself is invisible, what faith accomplishes is not. Among MANY other things, faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, gained what was promised, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of flames, escaped the edge of the sword, turned weakness to strength, routed foreign enemies, and gave women their dead back to life again (Heb. 11:33, 34). Truly faith is the victory that overcomes the world!

THE THINGS WE SEE WITH HUMAN EYES ARE ONLY TEMPORARY

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Cor. 4:18). This Scripture helps us to understand our own world view and the importance of faith! Many atheists “believe” that matter is the ultimate reality. Even those who “believe” the universe began with a “Big Bang” strain to explain how all of reality has “evolved” without God. Remember! All of reality is not physical. For example, consciousness is not physical. Our thoughts are not physical. The meaning of words on a page is not physical. All the “evidence” at our disposal proves that words come from a mind. For example, you cannot understand the word “sun” by examining paper and ink under a microscope. Even atheist, Thomas Nagel admits this problem in his book *Mind and Cosmos*. The subtitle of the book is: “Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature is Almost Certainly False”. Common sense dictates that even a 3 letter word comes from a mind, but what about a word with over 3 billion letters. The fact that there are over 3 billion letters in the human genome caused the famous atheist Antony Flew to admit that it didn’t happen by accident. In 2007, he recounted his conversion in a book titled [*There is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*](#). Matter did not produce a word, a Word produced matter. The Bible teaches that in the beginning was the “Word”, and the Word was God, and the Word created everything (Jn. 1:1 – 3). The evolutionist believes that everything created words.

One trap set by the devil is to get us to focus on the temporary things we can see. After Jesus was baptized, for example, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where He was tempted by the devil. Luke wrote: **“The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, ‘I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.’ Jesus answered, It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’” (Lk. 4:5 – 8).**

Just think about it! All of those kingdoms that Jesus “saw” then are “gone” today! The things the devil tempts us with are temporal. They do not last. Aren’t you glad Jesus didn’t trade His soul for things that are only temporal? Many assume that the things we “see” are real and the things we do “not see” are imaginary. Exactly the reverse is true. God is certainly real and no man has seen Him at any time (Jn. 1:18). Jesus obviously made the right choice in choosing to please God. We need to make the same choice that Jesus did. While earthy kingdoms inevitably die and disappear, God is forever and His rewards are eternal! That’s why God encourages us to lay up treasure in heaven where moth and rust cannot corrupt and thieves do not break through and steal (Matt. 6:19 – 21). The early Christians joyfully accepted the confiscation of their property for a reason. They knew that in Christ they had lasting possessions (Heb. 10:34).

A man once came to Jesus concerned that his brother had not divided their inheritance with him. Jesus reminded him that a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. Then Jesus told the parable of a rich farmer who had a bumper crop. He decided to build larger barns to store his great harvest and assumed that he would have nothing to worry about for many years. He was dead wrong! While some may have admired him for his success, God said he was a fool. The “rich man” died that very night and someone else enjoyed all of his possessions. How foolish! Jesus said that this is the way it is with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God (Lk. 12:13 – 21).

Remember! **“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” (Matt. 6:24).**

UNSEEN TREASURES ARE NOT OUR FIRST CHOICE

Unfortunately, what we “see” has an advantage over what we do not see. That’s why the “lust of the eyes” is one of Satan’s greatest weapons (1 Jn. 2:16). It is not easy for men to invest their lives for something they cannot see, and yet this is precisely what Christ calls us to do. **THAT’S WHY THE LAW WAS GIVEN! IT WAS LIKE A SCHOOLMASTER TO BRING US TO CHRIST THAT WE MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH! THE LAW DID NOT MAKE MEN HOLY, QUITE THE CONTRARY. AFTER 1,500 YEARS OF LAW THE TEMPLE WAS A DEN OF THIEVES (MATT. 21:13) AND NEW CONVERTS WERE TWO FOLD MORE THE CHILD OF HELL THAN THE ONES WHO CONVERTED THEM (MATT. 23:15). THAT’S WHY PAUL DESCRIBED THE LAW AS A PRISON! THAT’S WHY AFTER 1,500 YEARS IN THE PRISON OF LAW SA LOT OF PEOPLE WERE CRAVING FREEDOM.**

Please consider: **“Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith.” (Gal. 3:23, 24).**

Jesus was born in the “fulness of time” (Gal. 4:4), and was sent by God to proclaim liberty to the captives (Lk. 4:18, 19). Those who understand the difference between law and grace understand that **“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free” (Gal. 5:1).**

Faith, as you know, is nothing new. It has been around since Eden. It was “by faith” that Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain (Heb. 11:4). It was “by faith” that Noah built an ark to save his family (Heb. 11:7). It was “by faith” that Abraham searched for a city whose builder and maker was God (Heb. 11:8 – 10). In spite of all this historical evidence, the Hebrew people lost their faith in God (Heb. 4:2). Their ancestors set a bad example by changing the glory of the Incorruptible God into images of mortal man, birds, animals, and reptiles. They foolishly chose to worship the things they could “see” rather than the “unseen” God Who created all things (Rom. 1:21 – 23). That’s why when Moses was up on the mountain the faithless Hebrews reverted back to idolatry (Ex. 32:1 – 6). It was a fatal mistake that caused 3,000 people to die! (Ex. 32:25 – 29)

As we have said, the Law of Moses was not given to save anybody. It was given that every mouth might be stopped and all the world become guilty (Rom. 3:19). It was given as a harsh guardian whose strictness would drive us in desperation to Christ that we might be justified by faith. The Law held us in custody! We were like prisoners locked up by the Law until faith came to set us free! One primary goal of the Law, as we have said, was to bring us to faith! For faith is the victory that overcomes the world!

THE LAW OF FAITH

“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith” (Rom. 3:27 KJV).

As you know, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain (Heb. 11:4). Apparently Abel was listening to God more carefully than Cain. When you do what God commands, however, you are still only an unprofitable servant and have no right to boast about anything you have done (Lk. 17:7 – 10).

To illustrate how the law of faith eliminates boasting let's consider a physical illustration. Let's consider the building of the Temple by King Solomon. Everybody knows that David wanted to build the temple but God forbade him to do so because he had shed much blood. Instead, David's son Solomon would be a man of peace and he would build the temple (1 Chron. 22:6 – 13).

- In 1 Ki. 6:1 we are told the specific year when Solomon began to build the temple.
- In 1 Ki. 6:2 we are told the dimensions of the temple that Solomon built.
- In 1 Ki. 6:14 we are told that Solomon built the temple and completed it.

But, what do we mean when we say that “Solomon built the Temple?”

Obviously King Solomon did not build the temple himself. Please consider: **“Solomon gave orders to build a temple for the Name of the Lord and a royal palace for himself. He conscripted 70,000 men as carriers and 80,000 as stonecutters in the hills and 3,600 as foremen over them.” (2 Chron. 2:1).**

Yes! Solomon built the Temple but he did so by giving commands that someone else obeyed! Even though he didn't build it himself, even though he had others build it for him, we still give Solomon the credit for building the temple. Since it was God's project through Solomon, no individual worker could boast about building the Temple. These thousands of workers only did what they were commanded to do. In the final analysis it truly was “Solomon's Temple”.

Now let's apply this same principle to the “Law of faith”. From the very beginning God has allowed people to work with Him as He did in Eden. Even today we can say with Paul: **“We are God's fellow workers” (1 Cor. 3:9).** Here are a few examples of men who believed God, worked with Him, and did what He commanded.

- Abraham worked with God and was justified by faith apart of the works of the Law (Rom. 4:1 – 5). Note the difference between faith without works, and faith without obedience. Abraham didn't just believe God, he obeyed Him. Isaac, for example, was not virgin born! Sarah did not become pregnant by faith alone! It was Abraham's faith that gave him strength to conceive a child when he was about a hundred years old and his wife had a dead womb. Obviously, Abraham never boasted about the birth of Isaac for he had only done what God had commanded him to do (Rom. 4:18 – 25). It was God who put life in Sarah's womb and Abraham knew it!
- Moses also worked with God to deliver the Hebrew nation from Egyptian bondage. When they were trapped between the Egyptian army and the Red Sea God commanded Moses to raise his staff and stretch out his hand over the sea (Ex. 14:16). When he did, the waters parted and the Hebrews went over on dry ground. After all the people were safely across, the Lord told Moses to **“stretch out his hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians, and their chariots and horsemen” (Ex. 14:26).** When Moses did what God commanded the Egyptian army was destroyed. Moses could not boast about defeating the Egyptians for he merely did what God commanded him to do. Exodus 15 contains the Song of Moses. This

song does not glorify Moses or any work of any man. The Song of Moses only glorifies God! This, as you know, is the same song believers will sing when we get to heaven (Rev. 15:1 – 4). We too will sing the Song of Moses. There will be no boasting in heaven!

- Naaman, the commander of the army of the King of Aram, was a leper. Elisha the prophet commanded him to dip seven times in the Jordan River in order to be healed. When Naaman obeyed he was healed, but all boasting was excluded because he had merely done what he was commanded to do. Naaman did not heal himself and he knew it. He said: **“Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel (2 Ki. 5:15).**
- Jesus once healed a man born blind by spitting on the ground, making mud with his saliva, and putting it on his eyes. Jesus then commanding the man to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam (Jn. 9:1 – 7). When the man washed he was healed, but he still had nothing to boast about. He had only done what he was commanded to do! It never dawned on this blind man that he had healed himself by washing in the Pool. He knew that Jesus had healed him! That’s why he believed in Jesus and worshiped Him (Jn. 9:38).
- When Saul of Tarsus was commanded: **“And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name” (Acts 22:16).** Saul immediately obeyed and his sins were washed away. But Saul never boasted or felt that he had saved himself by being baptized. He knew he was an unprofitable servant and had only done what he was commanded to do. In fact, years later he wrote these inspired words: **“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Eph. 2:8 – 10).**
- The “law of faith” excludes boasting, but not obedience. Those who do not obey Jesus have no right to call him Lord (Matt. 6:21 -23).

FAITH AND CREDIT

“Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness” (Rom. 4:3).

Many of our modern inventions are merely adaptations we have learned from creation. We learned about radar from bats, sonar from dolphins, velcro from the burdock plant, the suction cup from the octopus, scotch tape from the gecko’s foot, LED bulbs from fire flies, and the bullet train design from the Kingfisher. If we pay attention we can always learn something from God!

In this regard Abraham was centuries ahead of modern bankers. Over 3,500 years before automatic deposits his faith was “credited” to him as righteousness.

On Oct. 5, 1892 the Dalton brothers rode into Coffeyville, Kansas and tried to rob two different banks at the same time. They failed! Fifteen minutes later eight people were dead including four members of the Dalton Gang. In 2006 the robbery of the Banco Central in Fortaleza, Brazil made it’s way into the Guinness Book of World Records. Robbers tunneled under that bank and stole 3 tons of currency valued at an estimated 70 million dollars. The world’s greatest bank robbery, however, was in 2013. At this time robbers hacked into the computers of over 100 banks in 30 different countries. They literally stole billions of dollars without being shot at or getting dirt under their fingernails. God, of course, made this kind of transfer possible centuries before man dreamed of a computer.

Abraham is not the only one whose faith is credited as righteousness, this is true of every believer! No matter how evil we have been, we too can have faith that will credit us a being righteous. Yes indeed, faith is literally the victory that overcomes the world!

FAITH CAN BE PASSED ON TO OTHERS

Paul wrote to Timothy **“I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois, and in your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded now lives in you also” (2 Tim. 1:5).**

Since faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, Lois and Eunice used the Scriptures to transfer their faith to young Timothy. Paul wrote to Timothy: **“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim. 3:14 – 17).**

Timothy’s father was a Greek and apparently did not believe in Jehovah (Acts 16:3). At least, Paul only mentions his mother and grandmother as passing on to him his sincere faith. This ought to be encouraging to single mothers, and others whose husbands are not spiritual leaders. Timothy not only grew up without the influence of a godly father, but also in the vicinity of Lystra which was a citadel of of paganism. In fact, these fickle pagans first wanted to worship Paul and Barnabas as gods, and then changed their minds and stoned Paul and left him for dead (Acts 14:8 – 20). In spite of this, Lois and Eunice still passed on their faith to young Timothy.

Someone said that there is something worse than dying and going to hell. It is dying and going to hell, and then finding out that you brought you children with you! Remember, it is not education and wealth that overcomes the world, it is faith. Therefore, if you have any faith, please pass it on to others!

DO NOT SCOFF AT FAITH OR MAKE FUN OF THE GOSPEL

“Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?” (Heb. 10:28, 29)

It is a dangerous thing to make fun of God or His plan to save those who believe!

Please consider the way the Living Bible paraphrases these words of Ezekiel: **“Son of dust, your people are whispering behind your back. They talk about you in their houses and whisper about you at the doors, saying, ‘Come on, let’s have some fun! Let’s go hear him tell us what the Lord is saying!’ So they come as though they are sincere and sit before you listening. But they have no intention of doing what I tell them to; they talk very sweetly about loving the Lord, but with their hearts they are loving their money. You are very entertaining to them, like someone**

who sings lovely songs with a beautiful voice or plays well on an instrument. They hear what you say but don't pay any attention to it! But when all these terrible things happen to them – as they will – then they will know a prophet has been among them” (Ez. 33:320 – 33 The Living Bible)

No wonder Judah went into captivity!

Paul echoed this same sentiment when he spoke in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia. **“Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.” (Acts 13:38, 39).**

Sensing that many were really not interested, Paul gave them this warning:

“Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you: ‘Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish, for I am going to do something ion your days that you would never believe even if someone told you” (Acts 13:40, 41).

This warning is a quotation from Habakkuk 1:5. Habakkuk warned the people of Judah that God would raise up the ruthless and impetuous Babylonians to punish them. These pagans were a law unto themselves and their strength was their god. Their hordes would advance like a desert wind. They were more fierce than evening wolves and laughed at fortified cities.

Unfortunately, the Jews didn't believe it!

The Jews reasoned that as bad as thy were, they were still better than the Babylonians. Therefore, these arrogant Jews “scoffed” at the warnings of Habakkuk. Anyone familiar with history knows, however, that the warning of Habakkuk came true and Israel experienced the cruelty of the Babylonians and was carried away into captivity.

Paul warned the people in the synagogue: “take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you”. The same can be said today. God is not an over indulgent grandfather Whom we can treat any way we want to! He is a Jealous God Who cannot be trifled with!

THE DEBILITATING AFFECT OF UNBELIEF

Faith, as powerful as it is, can still be affected by an environment of unbelief. Take, for example, the unbelief Jesus encountered at His home town of Nazareth. When He spoke in their synagogue **“many who heard Him were amazed”**. They remembered Him as “the carpenter” and were familiar with His whole family. They were amazed at Jesus but they really didn't believe. Jesus lamented that a prophet is without honor in His home town and among His relatives (Mk. 6:1 – 4).

Then Mark records one of the most amazing facts in the entire Bible: **“He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their lack of faith” (Mk. 6:5, 6).**

Please note that even the miracle working power of Jesus was affected by their unbelief. They were more familiar with Jesus than anyone on earth for He had lived in their midst for 30 years. They knew, however, only a two dimensional Jesus. They were like the priests in the temple who could see the veil but couldn't enter into the Holy of Holies. They were in the presence of God and didn't realize it. Like their ancestors in the wilderness, they didn't enter in because of unbelief. Believers today of course, can go boldly beyond the flesh of Jesus and enter into the very presence of God (Heb. 10:19 – 22). The point is, if an environment of unbelief had this negative affect on Jesus, image what an impact such unbelief can have on mortals like you and me.

A similar story is recorded in Mark 8:21 – 26. It involves Bethsaida which was another citadel of unbelief. Jesus said that it would be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgement than for Bethsaida (Matt. 11:20 – 22). At any rate, when Jesus came to Bethsaida they brought a blind man to him for healing. Jesus didn't even try to heal him inside the village, but took him by the hand and led him outside of town. Apparently Jesus wanted to escape from the debilitating influence of their unbelief. Then, outside of town, Jesus spat on the man's eyes and put His hands on him. This is the only time mentioned in the Bible when Jesus failed to heal someone the first time. As you probably remember, initially the man's vision was only partially restored and he saw people like trees walking. Then Jesus touched him a second time and he saw clearly. Then Jesus commanded him: **“Don't go into the village”!** Again let us consider that if an environment of unbelief can cancel out the miraculous power of Jesus, it can also have a negative influence on us.

James taught that the prayer offered in faith would make a sick person well (Ja. 5:15). In order to create an environment of faith, however, he continued: **“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed” (Ja. 5:16).** Please consider that just as an environment of unbelief in Nazareth and Bethsaida had a negative affect on the prayers of Jesus, the presence of an unrepentant sinner praying for the sick might also have a negative affect. Therefore, James continued: **“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” (Ja. 5:16).** Obviously the prayer of an unrepentant sinner is not powerful and effective.

A RADICAL CHANGE IN OUR THINKING IS NECESSARY

Please consider that new wine needs new wine skins (Matt. 9:17; Mk. 2:22; Lk. 5:37). The following chronology will help explain how Jesus prepared His disciples for a radical change in their thinking.

- The disciples were convinced that the “Son of David” was going to establish an earthly kingdom like David did.
- It was less than a year before Calvary and Jesus was now going to tell them plainly for the first time that He had to die. This, of course, required a radical change in their thinking.
- At Caesarea Philippi He asked them who people were saying that He was. After hearing what others were saying about Him, Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God (Matt. 16:16).
- Based on this truth Jesus would build His church and the gates of Hades would not prevail against it (Matt. 16:18). The word “hades” is thought to come from “a” (negative) and “eido” (to see). It therefore refers to the unseen world where the dead are. The point is, that the gates (or strength) of death will not prevail over Jesus.

- **“From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.” (Matt. 16:21)**
- After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John to the top of a high mountain where He was transfigured before them. While there He conferred with Moses and Elijah about His death in Jerusalem (Matt. 17:1 – 8; Lk. 9:31).
- On the way down the mountain Jesus told Peter, James, and John not to tell anyone what happened until after Jesus was raised from the dead (Matt. 17:9)
- This undoubtedly created some jealousy among the other nine apostles as they soon were arguing about which of them was the greatest (Lk. 9:46 – 48; Matt. 18:1 – 11)
- David’s mighty men were considered great by their physical strength and how many they had killed (2 Sam. 23:8 – 39).
- **THIS IS WHEN JESUS EXPLAINED THAT THEY HAD TO CHANGE AND BE LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN IN ORDER TO EVEN ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!**

LITTLE CHILDREN AND FAITH

The purpose of this brief study is to emphasize that faith is the victory that overcomes the world. The validity of our faith does not depend on age, strength, or education. Nor does it depend on health, wealth, or social standing. Thus, the “victory” produced by faith is universally applicable to all the people of the world.

Just think how humbling it must have been for the apostles to think that a little child was greater in the eyes of God than they were. These were men who had left everything to follow Christ. These were men who had daily contact with Christ for many months. Their knowledge of Christ and His teaching made them intellectually superior, not only to little children, but also to the Scribes and Pharisees or anyone else. The concept of faith, however, is so radical that Jesus said the little children would see it before they did.

Even though faith had been around since Eden, it was apparently not given the priority it deserved by the apostles. Remember! Faith is the victory, not knowledge. Listen again to Jesus! **“I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children” (Matt. 11:25).** Those of us who are older often trust in ourselves more than children do. Perhaps it is our pride that prevents us from abandoning our own wisdom and becoming like a little child. To illustrate how little children adapt to new ideas more readily than older people, consider how quickly they adapt to computers. I’m not sure why children adapt to computers more quickly than their parents, but at least it is something to think about.

Please look again at Nazareth where Jesus spent most of His life. It was difficult to tell them anything new about Jesus for they had known Him for almost thirty years. They also knew His mother, His brothers, and His sisters. Yet Jesus could there do no mighty works because of their unbelief. Pride had so blinded the scholars of that day that Jesus said that the publicans and harlots would enter into the kingdom before they would.

Please consider this quotation from Elton Trueblood:

“Our religion is one which challenges the ordinary human standards by holding that the ideal of life is the spirit of a little child. We tend to glorify adulthood and wisdom and worldly prudence, but the Gospel reverses all this. The Gospel says that the inescapable condition of entrance into the divine fellowship is that we turn and become as a little child. As against our natural judgment we must become tender and full of wonder and unspoiled by the hard skepticism on which we so often pride ourselves. But when we really look into the heart of a child, willful as he or she may be, we are often ashamed. God has sent children into the world, not only to replenish it, but to serve as sacred reminders of something ineffably precious which we are always in danger of losing. The sacrament of childhood is thus a continuing revelation.”

FAITH IS NOT AN OPTION, IT IS ESSENTIAL

Do you want to overcome the world? If so, you must have faith! **“Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Heb. 11:6).**

This study was written by Boyce Mouton. No rights are reserved. You are encouraged to use this study in whole or in part for the glorification of Christ and the advancement of His Kingdom.