

Growing My Faith



**Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and
the message is heard through the word about Christ.**

Romans 10:17

Jack County Cowboy Church

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Growing your Faith

Through the years I have seen many people going through trials and could not figure out why. They would say things like I've confessed God's Word. I've sown seeds. I've fasted. I've prayed. I've done everything! Why hasn't my situation changed? Oh God, why?!!!"

Many people are agonized like this over their seeming inability to change their situation. Yet, in **Matthew 17:20**, Jesus made this statement clear. He said "When you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, nothing shall be impossible unto you." So, why do many of God's people pray, fast, cry, sow seeds, confess Scriptures and still experience frustrations and even tragedies in their finances, health, jobs, marriages and businesses. Why do they always end up questioning, "Oh God, why?"

Many who find themselves asking this kind of question or who find themselves in such situations have one major problem: They haven't learned how to make their faith work. Apart from their ignorance of how to put their faith to work, some Christians find their faith coming under attack and weakened by adverse circumstances. Like Peter, they take their eyes off the Word and gaze in fear at the boisterous winds and billowing waves, they eventually begin to sink when they should actually be walking on the water.

Jesus said in the last days men's hearts shall fail them for fear in **Luke 21:26**, yet this is not the portion of the child of God. **Proverbs 24:10** says, If you falter in a time of trouble, how small is your strength!

Unfortunately, it is at such times of adversity that some take their eyes off God's Word. They neglect their faith, allowing it to be stifled and rendered ineffective by circumstances which the same faith should have dominated. Any child of God can rise above any situation, time and time again, if he'd only learn how to make his faith work. This study is the result of the urgent need by the Spirit of God to teach God's children how to make their faith work. I'll encourage you to make certain that you follow very carefully all the thoughts I share with you in this study. You need to know how you can receive everything that rightfully belongs to you in Christ, and live the glorious, victorious, successful, joyous and prosperous life God has called you into.

Hebrews 11:1-3, Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

It's very important that we have a clear understanding of what faith is before we proceed any further. In one of the most popular portions of Scripture, faith is defined as the substance of things hoped for. If you have hope for anything, faith is what gives it substance. Faith gives you every reason to affirm something is yours before you see it with your physical eyes. Why? Faith is the substance of things hoped for, it calls real those things that are not physically observable. It calls them done NOW! Faith is also defined as the evidence of things not seen, that is, the evidence of unseen realities.

I do not see those things with my optical eyes but they're real to me. They're so real you can't take them away from me. Faith is the evidence of unseen realities. That means it is proof of the existence of something that is not tangible to the senses.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a title-deed is 'a document containing or constituting evidence of ownership.' If somebody requests for a proof of ownership, you can simply pull out your title-deed to the land and show them as proof of ownership. That's the evidence of unseen realities. The

land is real, but because you can't carry it around with you, they may not see it in your office. However, you have your proof of ownership – the title-deed; – something they can look at and say, “Yeah, you’ve really got that land.”

Faith is not in the realm of the five physical senses, since it is the proof of things we do not see and perceive by our senses. It also transcends the realm of reasoning and the mind. It's a spiritual force, an attribute of the human spirit. That's why I always like to define faith as the response of the human spirit to the Word of God. Today's English Version of Hebrews 11:1 says, “To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see.” Faith makes a certainty of things we don't see with our optical eyes. Therefore, faith is not an irrational leap in the dark but a leap on God's Word. It is believing what God's Word has said concerning anything and acting that way.

Now let me quickly point out here that there's a difference between faith and believing. Many people don't understand that difference. Someone who's suffering from a form of sickness might cry, “Oh God, I believe! Oh God, I really know You can do it. Do it for me today! Heal me Lord!” He doesn't realize it but that's not faith. All he's doing is expressing his believing. That fellow might be discouraged and unhappy if he doesn't receive healing, because he'll think to himself, “If I've ever had faith in my life, that was one time I had faith!” He'll be wondering, “Oh God, why didn't I receive?” not knowing that what he had was not faith at all. Faith is the corresponding action to what you believe.

I said earlier that faith is the response of the human spirit to the Word of God. For the one who is sick, when he hears the Word that says “By whose stripes ye were healed” and believes it, his response or corresponding action to that Word will be to begin to declare “By the stripes of Jesus, I was healed!” He should start acting as one who's been healed and as a result, begin to do the things he couldn't do until now, due to that sickness. Now, when he declares that he is ‘the healed’ by the stripes of Jesus Christ, his declaration is not going to be based on his feelings, but on the Word of God that says he was healed.

James made reference to this aspect of faith when he said, “My friends, what good is it to say you have faith, when you don't do anything to show that you really do have faith? Can that kind of faith save you? If you know someone who doesn't have any clothes or food, you shouldn't just say, “I hope all goes well for you. I hope you will be warm and have plenty to eat.” What good is it to say this, unless you do something to help? Faith that doesn't lead us to do good deeds is all alone and dead!...Well, our ancestor Abraham pleased God by putting his son Isaac on the altar to sacrifice him. Now you see how Abraham's faith and deeds worked together. He proved that his faith was real by what he did.

This is what the Scriptures mean by saying, “Abraham had faith in God, and God was pleased with him.” That's how Abraham became God's friend. You can now see that we please God by what we do and not only by what we believe.” For faith to be faith and not just believing, it's got to have some action to it. That's what James is telling us here. Your faith in God is demonstrated by your action.

Hebrews 11:6 says, And 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. The Bible unequivocally states that “without faith it is impossible to please him (God).” It didn't say “without love” or “without prayer” or “without holiness;” neither did it say “without righteousness.” I'm not saying these aren't important, for the Word of God lets us know they all are. What I'm saying is, it'll take faith to activate and appropriate these and many more blessings that are in the Word of God to your life.

Some have tried religiously all their lives to be holy, to walk in love or to pray, yet they couldn't please God because they haven't learned to walk by faith. It's impossible to walk in any of these successfully without faith. You're not expected to pray yourself into faith. How else would you be able to pray to the God you don't see? How do you know He's really up there listening to you? It's got to be by faith! So, you see, you do have faith.

But now you have to learn how to make it work. **Romans 12:3** says, For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. You believe the Bible is the Word of God and you study it, but you weren't there when it was written. You simply have faith that it's really God's Word. That's where it all begins. Faith is fundamental, it's the foundation, for without faith you can't even be born again. It takes faith to come to God. Remember **Hebrews 11:6** earlier were it says, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews 11 lets us know that by faith the elders obtained a good report. This is referring to men who have gone before us as examples, the patriarchs of faith such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah and Elisha. **Hebrews 11:2** says, This is what the ancients were commended for. **Hebrews 11** is popularly referred to as faith's hall of fame. It's a rich, inspiring and challenging catalog of men and women who had fantastic testimonies of how they pleased God and did exploits in their generations because they walked by faith. They obtained a good report from God. He scored them highly for their faith, by the things they did and said, Hallelujah!

The Bible specifically exemplifies Noah as a man greatly blessed of God because he walked by faith in a generation that didn't acknowledge God. By his unwavering faith in God, he condemned the sinful world he dwelt in at the time. One day, God looked upon the earth and was appalled at what He saw. The Bible says in **Genesis 6:5-8**, The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. So the LORD said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

God was ready to destroy the whole earth along with every last man and beast in it, but one man, Noah, found God's grace, because he was a man of faith. God told Noah He was going to destroy the world and gave him specific instructions on how to build an ark and select pairs of animals that will be preserved from the deluge. Being a man of faith, Noah followed all of God's instructions to the letter. No wonder the Bible says in **Hebrews 11:7** that he, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

Another great example of faith is Abraham. God spoke to him one day and told him to get out of his father's house and leave his kindred and country to a land that He would show him. **Genesis 12:1-4** says, The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

God didn't tell Abraham where to go, yet the Bible says he launched out of his country, having no idea where he was going. He left by faith! **Hebrews 11:8** says, By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

Abraham lived as a pilgrim throughout his life because he knew by revelation that the Promised Land God spoke of wasn't a physical one but a spiritual one. Also, when the Lord promised to give him a son in his old age, he believed. **Romans 4:20-21** says, Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. When God asked him to offer that son as a burnt sacrifice, he simply obeyed because he knew "that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead" as it says in **Hebrews 11:19**.

That's what faith is all about, responding swiftly to God's instructions and doing everything He tells you. That's how you can please God in your life. Abraham was called 'the father of faith' and 'the friend of God' because he lived by faith in God's Word. This is the life to which we've been called as Christians, the faith life! **Hebrews 10:38** says, But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back. The King James bible says in **Hebrews 10:38**, the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Everything in the Kingdom of God functions by the principle of faith. That's why the Bible says the just shall live by faith. It didn't say the just shall live by holiness or righteousness, but by faith. This shows just how important faith is and why the 'faith message' should be taken very seriously by anyone who desires to live a successful life in God's Kingdom. Everything about your life is hinged on your understanding of this important subject of faith. You can't understand righteousness without faith, just as it's impossible for you to demonstrate the God-kind of love without faith.

The Bible says in Galatians 5:6, The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love, so love also works by faith. Without faith, you wouldn't function well on your job, in your business, family, academics, finances, health or ministry. In today's world, where there's so much evil and wickedness, you can only walk in love and live peaceably among all men as the Bible instructs to do, by faith. It takes faith to listen and not respond in bitterness when someone speaks evil of you. It takes faith to remain unruffled and still love those who criticize and despitely use you. It takes faith to hold your head up and not let what your critics say cause you to react negatively. It takes faith not to wish evil for those who hate, mistreat and misjudge you. You see, the faith way is the way, the only way for the Christian. **Romans 12:3** says, For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

The bible expressly instructs the Christian to have faith in God. The reason is quite simple, The just shall live by faith. To the Christian, faith is a lifestyle. It is the New Testament principle of life for the believer. If you are born again you have faith. God has given to every one of us in the body of Christ a measure of faith. What you need do is grow your measure of faith. As I said, when you're born again, you have faith! God imparts into your spirit a measure of faith. However, that measure is given to you small. God doesn't give you big faith, He gives you little faith to enable you grow your faith. It's your responsibility to build your faith strong.

The Bible talks about weak faith, little faith, great faith and strong faith. I'm going to be dealing with that in more detail here in a bit but for now the point I want you to note is that you already have faith, and that faith is given to you as small initially.

You may say, “Oh, now I’ve discovered why my faith hasn’t been working, it’s because the faith God gave me is very small.” But before we go further with that thought, let me remind you of the words of Jesus in **Matthew 17:20**. He replied, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.

In other words, with your faith, the small measure of faith God has given to you, you should be able to do the impossible. You have in you the power to do anything. We were all given that small measure of faith to start, but what matters is what we do with it.

Why then do some Christians’ faith not work or yield result? Could the problem be sin? When you study the Bible carefully, you’ll discover that the reason Jesus came to die was to deal with the problem of sin. As a believer, sin is no longer your problem. Many Christians struggle with sin in their lives because they are ignorant of God’s Word.

You may say, “But so-and-so calls himself a Christian and still commits sin!” Yes, he may still commit sin, but you see, his problem is not the sin he’s committing, but his ignorance. The devil sometimes tries to take advantage of this; he uses it to deceive God’s children into believing that the reason they’re not receiving from God is the sins they’ve committed. He makes them feel there are certain blessings they can’t receive because of sin.

When you come to understand the nature and character of God, you’ll discover He doesn’t answer your prayer or bless you because you’re living right, neither does He refuse to bless you because you’re not. Living right is the desire of every child of God, for no true child of God will deliberately want to live in sin. Every child of God desires to come out of anything that’s wrong. That’s one of the signs by which you can identify a child of God, he’s uncomfortable with sin and doesn’t want to continue in it. That’s why when God looks at you He doesn’t see your imperfection. As far as He’s concerned, you’re holy and righteousness. **Colossians 1:21-23** says, Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. **Romans 3:22** also says, This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

You may not feel righteous or holy all the time but this is the truth of God’s Word about you. Your problem is not sin. You must understand this truth and let it soak into your mentality, otherwise it will be difficult for you to develop your faith and make it work.

That means we should take advantage of God’s unmerited favor! He has qualified us by Himself to be blessed. It is not our works but His own work on our behalf that has qualified us for this special place. That’s what grace is all about, and Paul the Apostle encourages us to take advantage of it. **Colossians 1:12** says, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. In other words, you’re qualified to receive God’s best, not because of your own works of righteousness but through the grace of Jesus Christ.

Receiving Is By Faith. **Hebrews 11:6** says without faith it’s impossible to please God. Faith is the response of the human spirit to the Word of God. In other words, it’s the step you take as a result of the Word of God that’s come to you. God is a ‘faith God.’ Now, that’s different from saying He’s a ‘faithful God.’ When I say God is a ‘faith God,’ I mean He lives and operates by faith, and He expects us, His

children, to do the same. God is a Spirit, and we are spirit beings as well. But we live in a physical and material world. Hence we must walk by faith.

I said earlier that when you pray, God answers you. **1 John 5:14-15** tells us, This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

In other words, having prayed or asked God for something, your role is to begin to act as though He's done what you asked for because He's actually done it. That's the way to receive! You receive by accepting that God has done what He says He has done, and that you already have what He says you have. That's faith! And having confidence is how we grow our faith.

Stop believing that God is going to do what you've asked Him; rather see that He's already done it and start acting that way. That's how to receive from God; that is faith. Remember that true faith always works. If it didn't work, it wasn't faith. Whenever you respond to God by faith you'll surely receive a miracle.

I sometimes see people look at me like I lost my mind after I pray. Say I hear news of someone not feeling well or going to hospital for illness. First thing I do is pray, thank God and then say it going to be okay. I have confidence when I pray not because of who I am but because of who I'm praying to.

Many of God's people need to realize this truth. Crying and worrying day and night about something isn't going to change anything. What you need is to act your faith. God didn't say the 'crying or worrying' of a righteous man avails much, but the 'prayer.' **James 5:16** says, The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Now, don't get me wrong, I know about crying in prayer, but that's not what I'm talking about here. I know there are times you pray and find yourself crying profusely in worship and supplication to God. That's a different thing all together.

The more we stand in confidence the greater our faith becomes. So let's talk about the types of faith for a moment. Remember that I said when we speak generically of faith, we can say there are two kinds of faith. The God kind of faith and the human kind of faith, which in the light of the scriptures, is really not faith.

However, for the God-kind of faith, there are actually four different categories the Bible recognizes. These four kinds of faith are, little faith, weak faith, great faith and strong faith. The Lord Jesus talked about great faith and little faith. **Matthew 8:26** Jesus told his disciples, You of little faith. And on another occasion in Luke 7:9, He commended the Roman Centurion, whose servant was sick, for exhibiting great faith. He said to him, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

The Apostle Paul talked about the other two: weak faith and strong faith. In **Romans 4:19**, talking about Abraham, he said, Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead. Then in **Romans 4:20** the next verse it says, Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God.

Remember that if you're born again, you already have faith. In **Romans 12:3** Paul declares, For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but

rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

I want you to observe that in this verse of scripture, the Apostle Paul is not writing to sinners or the world but to Christians. God has dealt to every born-again believer a measure of faith. Now, that deposit of faith is given to you small, but God expects you to grow it. It's your responsibility to increase the measure of faith God has given to you, and the way to do that is by learning more of God's Word. Your faith will increase as you hear God's Word. **Romans 10:17** says, Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. The more of God's Word you hear, the more faith you'll have. The less of God's Word you receive into your spirit, the less faith you'll be able to express when you're faced with the challenges of life. The reason fear grips people in the face of adversity is that their faith is little. The Bible says in **Proverbs 24:10**, If you falter in a time of trouble, how small is your strength! Here, the Bible is not talking about your physical strength or muscles; it's referring to your faith! When your faith is little you'll faint; you'll give up in the day of trouble.

In **Matthew 8:23-27**, Jesus was in a boat with His disciples one day when a violent storm arose. The Bible tells us He was sleeping while His disciples battled the waves pouring in and threatening to sink the boat. After they'd tried all they could and the storm seemed to get worse, they rushed to Him and shook Him awake, shouting, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" When Jesus woke up, He was unruffled. He didn't jump up in fear. He simply got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and said, "Peace be still!" and there was a great calm! Then He turned to His disciples and said to them, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?"

When your faith is little, you'll be oppressed and tormented by fear of circumstances, hence your faith will not work. Faith and fear don't go together. Fear hinders faith, but faith destroys fear. The reason some Christians find themselves doubting God's Word is that their faith is little. Remember, little faith will not get the job done. It may get it started, but it won't get it done!

What do I mean? I'll illustrate with this example. Jesus had just finished preaching in the desert and performing the miracle of feeding five thousand men, women and children not counted, with five loaves and two fishes. Then He instructed His disciples to go ahead of Him by ship to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Shortly after they set out, their ship ran into contrary winds and was tossed about by the waves. To worsen things, at about the fourth watch, between 3 and 6 a.m., they saw a figure approaching them on the water. The Bible says when Peter and the other disciples saw this, they all screamed in fear because they thought they had seen a ghost. **Matthew 14:26-29** says, When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

Notice this statement Peter made to Jesus: "If it's You, ask me to come to You on the water." Jesus called to him and said "Come!" Peter came out of the ship and walked on the water to Jesus. He didn't swim in the water to meet Jesus, he walked on it! As a fisherman, he could swim, however, this time he did something supernatural, he walked on the water. He stepped out of the boat, right on the water and took his steps toward the Master, because the Master had said to him, "Come!" That's faith!

I would like to draw your attention to verses 30-31. In **Matthew 14:30-31** it says, But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

Peter saw the contrary wind and became afraid. As a result, he started sinking right in the presence of Jesus. Why did Peter begin to sink? What happened to the faith that got him out of the boat and started him out walking on water? The answer is in Jesus’ response to his cry for help, Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

Peter’s faith was little, that was why he began to sink. Remember, I said little faith will not get the job done. It may get it started, but it won’t finish it. It got Peter out of the boat and put him on the water, it even started him walking on it but couldn’t sustain him when the winds became boisterous.

When the contrary winds and adversities of life begin to blow in your face, your strength will fail if your faith is little. Little faith achieves very little. When your faith is little you can be terrorized by fear. You’ll always fear adversity and be uncertain about the future. This is what happened to Peter. Fear and doubt gripped his heart when he saw the boisterous winds. But thank God he had enough sense to cry out to Jesus for help and immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him.”

Jesus attributed the reason Peter began to sink to doubt. After saving him from drowning, He said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” In other words, if Peter had not doubted, he would have completed his walk on the water to Jesus and back to the boat. Doubt and fear are the result of little faith. If your faith is little, what is responsible for it and what can you do about it?

Little faith is the result of insufficient information. **Hosea 4:6** says “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” God Himself said this about His own people. He said His children, Christians, are destroyed, that is, they suffer, are impoverished, punished, brought down, crushed and perish because they lack the knowledge of His Word.

Remember **Romans 10:17**, Paraphrasing, the more of God’s Word you hear, the more knowledge you have, and faith comes to you in the Word. The less of God’s Word you hear, the less faith you have.

So let’s talk about great faith for a moment. Great faith is tenacious faith. It is faith that will not give up in spite of opposition. It is faith that responds with knowledge. This type of faith is endorsed by God.

Listen to **Matthew 15:22-28**. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.” Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.” He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said. He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

When Jesus tested the woman’s faith by telling her that what she desired could not be hers, as circumstances would many times tell you, she responded with knowledge. She spoke back words of faith. When Jesus heard her informed answer, He said to her, “Woman, you have great faith!”

On another occasion, Jesus said the same thing about a Roman Centurion in **Luke 7:9**, When Jesus

heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, “I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.”

Remember, the more accurate information you have, the better. And when you act undauntedly on this information, you will be demonstrating great faith or ‘much faith’ as it were.

So you see, when you don’t have enough spiritual information from the Word about a particular issue, your faith will be little as your faith is according to God’s Word that you’ve heard. The cure for such little faith therefore is simply to learn more of God’s Word. The Scripture we read in **Romans 10:17** tells us how faith comes, by hearing God’s Word. If you have any situation that seems hopeless, get into the Word! Become a student of the Word by careful and diligent search and study on the scriptures.

Don’t underestimate the power of God’s Word. When you face challenges, read or listen to the word! Listen or read until your thinking, ideas and perspective change! That’s the cure for little faith. That’s how to grow your faith big.

The cure for little or weak faith is acting on the Word, acting on the information you’ve received. If you want your faith to be great and strong, **START DOING THE WORD!**

For example, the Bible says in **1 Thessalonians 5:18**, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. So what should you do? Start practicing that scripture in your life, give thanks in every situation! Let your life become an unending stream of praise and thanksgiving to God. regardless of what happens, you’ll always say “Thank You Jesus;” you praise Him in everything! That’s acting on the Word! You see, the more you exercise your faith, the stronger your faith gets, and the way to exercise your faith is by acting on the Word.

You tell yourself, “The Word of God says, that’s acting on the Word. You take God’s Word as the only truth and final arbiter in every circumstance of life. You refuse to be deterred by anything that’s not consistent with God’s Word. For your faith to become strong and not weak, and to produce results, you must be a doer of the Word, you must practice the Word. **James 1:22** says, Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

As Christians, we’re Word-practitioners. We practice the Word because God’s Word is practicable. So when the Bible says, for example, in **Philippians 4:6-7**, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.,” you practice it. You practice exactly what that Word says in your life.

First, you say to yourself: “I refuse to fear, I reject anxiety.” Then you go ahead and make your request known to God and receive peace into your heart. From then on, you refuse to complain, murmur, act or think as if the devil has the upper hand in anything that concerns you. Everyday, you give God praise because you know He’s granted your heart’s desires. That’s faith! That way, you’re exercising your faith and building your faith muscles.

Some people know how to build their physical shape. Have you ever seen some of those well-trained, very athletic macho looking guys? They spend a lot of time in the gym keeping in shape and building their muscles by exercising frequently. They run, jog, do press-ups and push-ups, all in the bid to build a strong, healthy, fit and agile physical body. Do you realize this is the same manner you build your spirit as well? Just as lack of physical exercise makes your muscles weak, so also does lack of the faith

exercise makes your faith muscles weak. Without exercising yourself, your body may be big but weak. The same way, your faith may appear much but weak, if you don't exercise it by doing the Word. You must become a Word practitioner.

For instance, Jesus said in **Mark 11:24**, Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

That means, when you pray or ask God for anything, all you need do is believe that you've received them, and they are yours. In other words, having prayed and asked God to grant you a particular request, you should immediately begin to testify and give God praise because your request has been granted.

But here is the kicker, **James 4:3**, When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. This is where a lot of people get it wrong. We can ask for anything but is it going to help further God's kingdom or be in God's will?

Here is an example. Look at how Solomon began when he became king after his father David died. **2 Chronicles 1:7-12**, That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." Solomon answered God, "You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me king in his place. Now, LORD God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?" God said to Solomon, "Since this is your heart's desire and you have not asked for wealth, possessions or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king, therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, possessions and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have."

Hebrews 13:8 says, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. So he has not changed on the ask for anything since the beginning. It all depends on the motives!

That's what the Word says. This is the kind of attitude you must have after praying and asking God for anything. Some people, after praying, instead of rejoicing and giving God praise for answering their prayers begin to look long faced and depressed as though they were whipped by God for daring to ask Him for something. That's not the faith attitude. Remember I said earlier, there's a faith attitude, and that's the attitude that tells whether or not you received whatever it was you asked for when you prayed.

The way to develop your faith and build it strong is by putting it to work that's how to exercise your faith muscles. Until your faith is strong, it won't produce much results; and for your faith to be strong you must exercise it by acting on the Word, you must act your believing! When you start out acting on God's Word, you may find yourself making some mistakes, but I want you to know that God has made allowance for your mistakes. He knows you're learning. So, don't get discouraged or frustrated about the mistakes you make in your journey of faith with God. Keep acting on the Word.

Don't get discouraged. Keep exercising your faith muscles in that area by telling the gospel you have learned again and again at every opportunity. There are Christians who have never told or led someone to Christ, and they've been Christians a long time. To me that's sad. Why? Because if they haven't told anyone about Jesus or even had a discussion about Jesus, they are not exercising their faith.

Don't debate within yourself whether or not to speak; don't ask yourself "How do I start?" Just start! You say what if I make a mistake? Make it; but start. That's how to exercise your faith and put it to work; you dare to take your step according to God's Word!

I remember when I was a teenager I was learning to weld. I was not perfect in any way, I made a few mistakes. One of those mistakes was don't look at the welding ark. I couldn't see for two or three days. But as time went on I became very good at welding. By the time I was 15 years of age I was welding in my own shop and by 18 years of age I was a Certified construction welder.

It is the same with faith. A learner does not become perfect without mistakes, but work your way to perfection. Tell yourself, I'm going to trust the Holy Spirit, I'll depend on Him to help me. Then you'll remember that the Bible says in **Psalms 81:10**, Open wide your mouth and I will fill it. Jesus also said to the disciples in **Matthew 10:19-20**, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

So, you go ahead, open your mouth and begin to speak. You'll be amazed because the Holy Spirit will give you the right words to speak. He will also help you minimize your errors as you allow Him guide you. Start winning souls, and as you do, your faith will be strengthened. When you begin talking to people about Jesus, your faith will become stronger for the next time. Seize the next opportunity and talk to someone about Jesus, you'll be amazed how your faith has become strengthened overnight. Start doing the things you really want to do that are in line with God's Word. The more you do them the stronger your faith will become.

You develop and strengthen your physical muscles by exercising them. You just can't keep sleeping and eating and expect your muscles to get stronger. They will never get strong that way. They only get stronger by exercise. That's the same thing with faith. Your faith will become great and strong and produce greater results because you're exercising it.

Have you ever seen a big fellow with weak muscles? He's huge but he's weak. What's he supposed to do? Eat more? No! He got that big from eating. Now his body is big but that doesn't mean it's strong. You tell him to run a few yards and he can't. He can't do anything a little exerting without panting heavily, but he's big. How can he become fit and strong? He needs to be engaged in more physical activities; he needs to involve himself in physical exercises. That way, his big, weak body will become strong.

The way that guy grew large from eating is the same way your faith increases by hearing and eating God's Word. By feeding on God's Word you grow your faith big. Know that even though your faith is great, it can't do anything if it's weak faith. For your great faith to work, it's got to be strong faith.

God tells us something beautiful about Abraham in **Romans 4:19-20** which we read earlier. He says, And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was Strong in faith, giving glory to God.

This portion of scripture lets us know the kind of faith Abraham demonstrated that made him God's friend and the father of faith! He demonstrated strong faith in God's Word. He staggered not at the promise of the Word of God, through unbelief. He was "strong in faith, giving glory to God."

This immediately lets us know that one of the characteristics of strong faith is, it gives glory to God. When your faith is strong, it's very easy for you to believe whatever God tells you in His Word. This is the faith that never fails. You cast yourself on God, taking His Word as the absolute truth. You hinge your believing on His eternal and unfailing Word only. When this becomes your resolve and the way you live your life, your faith will be strong and productive! Strong faith is the faith that works.

Strong faith is the faith that speaks, and it comes to pass! That's the faith God used in creating the heavens and the earth. The Bible says in **Genesis 1:1-3**, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." He did it by speaking words of faith! He spoke, and what He said came into being. Everything that exists, everything that we see today, the sun, the moon, the stars, all, except man, came into existence that way. When He said, "Let there be light," light came into existence. Every Word God spoke during the creation came to pass because He spoke in faith. God is a faith God. He believed; He knew that whatever He said would come to pass. That's strong faith.

Jesus defined strong faith in **Mark 11:23** when He said, Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. In your spirit, you know that the words you've spoken with your mouth will surely come to pass. Strong faith does not give consideration to the outward appearance of things.

First, I said it gives glory to God. Secondly, it doesn't consider the circumstances. The Bible says in **Romans 4:19**, Abraham Considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither did he consider the deadness of Sarah's womb, He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was STRONG IN FAITH, giving glory to God.

Abraham was a hundred years old when God told him he was going to have a son and call his name Isaac. Though he was already well stricken in age, he refused to consider his body as dead; as being unable to reproduce! Neither did he consider the fact that Sarah's womb was dead. He was undeterred by every physical and natural evidence that challenged the ability of God. Everything that he knew in this world, told him it was impossible for him to have a child. His body as far as reproducing was concerned, was dead. He was about a hundred years old, Sarah had been pronounced barren. Yet, Abraham didn't consider the deadness of Sarah's womb. What then was Abraham considering? He was considering the Word. He gave thought, attention and focus only to the Word that God had spoken to him. As far as Abraham was concerned, God said it and He was well able to bring it to pass. That's strong faith when you refuse to consider anything else but God's Word that has come to you.

Faith doesn't mean that you don't feel the pain. Faith doesn't mean that you can't see the trouble. Faith means "I see the trouble alright, but I refuse to consider it; I refuse to let it dictate the circumstances of my life or my existence. I refuse to let it dictate how I'm going to behave." You tell yourself, "I'm not going to let what I see, how I feel and everything I know that's contrary to God's Word run my life. I refuse to consider anything but God's Word!" That's strong faith! Faith that can move mountains.

Like Abraham, refuse to stagger in unbelief. All you need do is refuse to stagger at God's Word. Set your gaze on the Word. Become fully persuaded.

You know, doubt is a spirit. Fear also is a spirit and they try to attack people. When fear or doubt attacks you, go on your knees before God, put your Bible right in front of you! Don't only read or meditate on the scriptures, but also begin to quote them out openly. Begin to say them until you're fully saturated. When your faith is strong, you're fully persuaded about God's Word.

You know, you can't be fully persuaded when you're listening to the wrong stories from people. You can't build the faith that works when you listen to everything else but God's Word. Fear will dominate you. Men talk fear. But God talks faith! For you to build your faith to that level, where you're fully persuaded and convinced about God's Word to you, you need to keep listening to the Word. Keep getting the Word of God into your system.

Don't allow information from the newspapers, which are always laden with fear and unbelief cause you to stagger at God's Word. When you keep listening to the news on television, you'll hear a lot of words that inspire fear. But when you dominate and control your mind with the Word of God, you will become fully persuaded. Until you're fully persuaded, you may stagger. You'll be unsure and unconvinced about God's Word.

That's when you start asking yourself "I wonder if this Word that I've been confessing for so long is really going to come to pass?" Realize that as you keep bombarding your mind with the Word of God, you'll become fully persuaded about God's promise to the point it becomes the only thing you think and talk about. That's when doubt and fear become completely subdued in your life.

James 1:6 says, But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

Doubt or fear is the greatest thief of God's blessings. Jesus tells us that when you don't doubt in your heart, anything you say with your mouth will come to pass. Remember what Jesus said in **Mark 11:23-24**, Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

In **John 16:33**, Jesus said to His disciples, I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

For our faith to work, we must learn to speak like Jesus. Every word Jesus spoke when He walked the face of the earth came to pass. Nobody ever spoke like Him. Every time He opened His mouth to speak, He spoke words of faith that produced results. This is what the religious folks back in the days of Jesus didn't like about Him. They crucified Him because of His words, nothing else! He confessed Himself to be the Son of God, and the religious folks hated Him for that.

When He spoke, blindness left, deaf ears were unstopped, the lame got up to walk, maimed limbs were made whole, and the dead were raised. His Words were different; they were not ordinary. Whenever He spoke, significant changes took place in the lives of His hearers. Demons cried in horror and scampered in terror. It wasn't His touch that produced the miracles but His words. Words that were full of power.

Here, in **John 16:33**, Jesus made a powerful confession and said to His disciples, "Cheer up! I have overcome the world." Nobody ever talked like Jesus! How could He say, "I have overcome the world" when He hadn't even gone to the cross, much less risen from the dead! He said these words before He went to the Cross, before His death, burial and resurrection. Therefore, we ought to find out how He overcame the world because it's obvious He did something you and I can do. Jesus overcame the world by speaking faith filled words.

The Bible says in **John 1:3**, without Him was not anything made that was made. There was nothing in the system of this world that wasn't subject to Jesus. He exercised dominion over all things. He tamed them by His words, faith-filled words! He spoke to maimed limbs, corpses, deaf ears, blind eyes, crippled limbs, demons of darkness, fishes, trees and they obeyed Him. He tamed the laws of nature and transcended them. He was never a victim. He walked on water, spoke to the wind and calmed the storm! When He encountered the leprous and said, "Be clean!" the leprosy disappeared. He knew who He was! He was never afraid of anything. Everyone wondered at Him when He spoke. He didn't mince words in declaring His identity. He said I and my Father are one in **John 10:30**. He walked in union with the Father. Just like Jesus, the words we speak are spirit and they are life. **John 6:63** says, The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.

That means our words are not empty. They're potent, they have conquering, overcoming and prevailing power over devils, adversities and every negative circumstance of life. This is why it's so important that we talk like Jesus by releasing faith-filled words.

No wonder John cried in **1 John 5:4**, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Our faith is the victory that overcomes the world. Our faith has supernatural power to conquer, tame and subdue the world.

Hebrews 11 gives us a catalog of great men and women of faith who subdued and tamed their world by faith. It tells of many who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong.

The book of Hebrews paints the picture for us of how these men and women subdued and conquered their world through faith.

Did you ever read about Samson? He tore a lion apart with his bare hands. David did the same thing. How about Daniel? He was thrown into the lion's den, and guess what he did? He didn't think about killing the lions, rather he tamed them! Then he sat with them and put his hands upon them. I'm showing you how some of the guys from our lineage of faith subdued their world! They dominated and conquered their world, to the point the world wasn't worthy of them anymore. **Hebrews 11:38** really says, the world was not worthy of them.

By their faith, they completely overcame this physical world to the point they just couldn't stay here anymore. Men like Enoch, who the Bible says "... walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" in **Genesis 5:24**. That doesn't mean God took his life or that he died, but that he walked by faith and subdued this world to the extent he was literally translated out of the world into heaven. How? By faith!

So I will close this study with two questions? The first one is, Is Faith important? Yes, so important that most people do not even understand how important. It is the key to Life in Jesus.

The second question is the main question, and what this study is all about. Is your faith, little, weak, strong or great? By now you ought to know which it is and how to grow your faith into a great faith. A Faith of action! The question of faith's strength is a profound one. Faith can manifest in various ways and intensities, influenced by personal experiences, beliefs, and values. Here's a reflection on the four types of faith mentioned.

Little Faith might refer to someone just beginning their spiritual journey or struggling to find conviction in their beliefs. It's a starting point, and with nurturing, it can grow.

Weak faith might be characterized by doubts and uncertainties. It's not about the absence of faith but about its fragility. People with weak faith might question their beliefs frequently and struggle with consistency in their spiritual practices.

Strong faith often provides a sense of stability and conviction. Individuals with strong faith might find comfort and guidance in their belief in God, helping them navigate life's challenges with more confidence.

Great faith could be seen as a profound, unwavering trust in one's beliefs or in Jesus. It's not just about conviction but also about the depth of spiritual experience and the impact of faith on daily life. People with great faith might exhibit remarkable resilience, compassion, and wisdom.

It's a personal and dynamic aspect of an individual's spiritual life, influenced by their relationship with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.