

## Let's Talk about FAITH And BELIEF – Student Copy

(Reliance upon and trust in God; a central emphasis of Christianity).

Christianity is largely characterized by its emphasis on faith and beliefs. Christians are commonly called "believers," and a commitment to Christianity typically involves a confession of faith. The centrality of faith in Christianity reflects the biblical significance of faith. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith also demonstrates the Bible's emphasis on faith. At times, however, this emphasis on faith has degenerated into a checklist of beliefs that disregard a person's life and practices. The biblical concept of faith is not meant to boil Christianity down to a set of religious ideas.

### Biblical Senses (of the words)

- To believe (trust) — verb. to have faith; put one's trust in something.
- Trust (faith) — noun. strong confidence in, and reliance upon, someone or something; often with the object of trust understood.
- To believe (accept) — verb. to accept as true; take to be true.
- Gospel content ⇔ faith — noun. the content of what is (and should be) believed about the good news of Jesus' way of salvation.
- Believer — noun. a person characterized by trust in Jesus as the Messiah for salvation.
- Trust (confidence) — noun. complete confidence in a person or plan.
- Female believer — noun. a believer who is a woman.
- To be believed (accepted) — verb. to be or become accepted as true; be taken to be true.
- Assurance ⇔ faith — noun. an unconditional commitment by someone that something will happen (so as to evoke trust and confidence in others).
- Belief — noun. any cognitive content held as true.
- Religion (faith) — noun. a strong belief in a supernatural power or powers that control human destiny.

Therefore, faith comes from God in the form of a gift (Ephesians 2:8). Faith in God is trust in Him, based on a true understanding of who He is, as revealed in the Bible.

Faith in God is not a blind leap without any evidence or, even worse, contrary to the evidence. Faith is simply trust. The Christian trusts in God.

### The Three Dimensions of Faith

There appear to be three distinct concepts of faith in Scripture:

1. Covenantal Faith: Faith as Covenantal Commitment
2. Epistemological Faith: Faith as Spiritual Perception
3. Eschatological Faith: Faith as the Living Eschatological Expression of Christian Hope