

Am I Really in Faith?

If we don't guard it, our faith can become nothing more than religious jargon, or a cliché'. It's good from time to time to check ourselves to make sure we are actually walking out the steps of Faith.

Below are listed some key elements that must be present to be in Faith.

- 1) *What does the Bible say about the thing we're believing for? (General Promise) Faith comes by hearing the Word. (Romans 10:17) No Word - No Faith.*

There are times I have taken a General promise / scripture and stood on it for a situation and it has produced. However, in my own experience, most of the time I've needed a fresh word from God for what was currently happening. ("Give us THIS DAY our DAILY bread" - Matthew 6:11). If I didn't take the time to pursue God for a Fresh word from him / Rhema word, many times I haven't received what I was believing for.

- 2) *Has that promise come to life inside of us? Another way of saying it: has the Holy Spirit taken the General Promise and spoken it to our heart concerning our situation. (A Rhema word is or a specific promise spoken to us - I Corinthians 2:12-14). When this happens, it is known as the "Word of Faith" (Romans 10:8, 17), or the kind of Word that produces Faith.*

If that hasn't happened yet, we must pursue it. God will give those spoken words to us, but we will need to pursue God for them. Spend time in his written word, ask him for specific spoken words for your particular situation. Listen for and expect him to speak to you. He will give us the promises we need for our specific situation. He will give as many spoken / Rhema words as we need to be able to stand in faith in our situation.

- 3) *When we receive a Rhema word, the Word/scripture is now working to produce Faith in us, it will begin to manifest itself as 'Hope'. (Romans 15:4) First will come Hope, then Faith. (Hebrews 11:1) We know we have hope because there is "A joyful confident expectation of some thing good" (Greek definition of Hope) about the situation that is beginning to boil on the inside of us. Now we are in the position to cultivate Faith. (Hebrews 11:1)*

In Psalms 119:130 (NKJV) it says "the entrance of your words gives light". Don't mistake the Hope you are now feeling for Faith. It is not. It is Hope. It is a 'Joyful, Confident' (emotional) feeling that says this thing could / will turn out OK. There's an excitement and expectation that goes with the entrance of his word. It gives life where there was death. (John 6:63)

4) *The substance of Faith is built as we focus on those Rhema Words and turn the expectation (Hope) into being sure. Faith is beyond a joyful / emotional expectation. FAITH KNOWS. (Hebrews 11:1) We're so convinced by the Spirit of what's right, it takes the form of a spiritual substance inside of us. (John 16:10; Hebrews 11:1 - KJV) That substance of Faith can be great (Mt. 8:10), or small / little, (Mt. 17:20; Mt. 6:30) weak (Rom. 4:19; 14:1), or strong, (Rom. 4:20). We can have no faith (Mark 4:40), or we can be full of faith (Acts 6:8), and abundant in it (I Tim. 1:14). Faith can be made void in us (Rom. 4:14) if we don't guard our hearts (Proverbs 4:23).*

We've all been given the measure of faith (Rom. 12:3), and what we do with it to allow it to grow (II Thess. 1:3), or diminish and die (James 2:20). It's up to us. It can be increased (II Cor. 10:15), or we can be lacking in it (I Thes. 3:10). But whatever that proportion of faith is - we are to operate in it and not go beyond it because of pride (Rom. 12:6). Be real with yourself about how much you are really KNOW in your heart how this is going to turn out.

For our Faith to be strong, healthy, and productive - we must guard it via guarding our heart. (Proverbs 4:23; Phil. 4-7) To guard our heart, we must stay strong in our spirit and maintain control of our soul (Luke 21:12-19; specifically vs. 19). To stay strong in our spirit we will need to be:

- Strong in our Bible reading. (Remember to stay alive spiritually, we need to eat of his word. (Matthew 4:4)*
- Strong in our Prayer. Strong in our Praise and Worship. Strong in Thanks giving. Strong in dying to the old nature and living free of sin. It is not possible to have Strong Faith by living a weak christian life. (Matthew 16:24-26; Mark 8:34-35)*

I am not trying to give a list of things you have to do to have Faith. I am listing the things that will be there WHEN WE HAVE FAITH.

5) *As this takes root in our heart, our life begins forming around it. (Prov. 4:23) This is especially true concerning our words. (Matt 12:33-35; II Corinthians 4:13) There will be an automatic expression of our Faith via our Thinking, Talking, Planning, Behavior, etc. Our life will begin to reflect what we are convinced is coming to us. We are fully persuaded of what the scripture is saying to us and we're acting like it. (Philippians 1:27; Hebrews 13:7)*

6) *Since sin and weights (affects of sin) will entangle, or beset our faith, we need to stay sensitive to the Holy Spirit's conviction/convincing concerning them. (John 16:8-9) Obviously, if any thing in our life is pointed out to us (even the tiny things), it must be taken care of. Repent,*

and make the changes necessary to stop the sin or get out from under the weights. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

7) Expect your answer. Since you Know it's coming (You're Convinced) and your Expectation is high (you have Hope), you should constantly be looking for the promise to begin manifesting. (Romans 4:18-24)

8) Keep speaking (or Calling) it into being. Calling the promise to manifest. Speaking to the situation - commanding it to align with the promise/scripture. (Romans 4:16-17)

A word of caution here: we don't need to be telling everyone what we believe about our situation to have faith. Sometimes people feel they need to tell everyone what they believe will happen - or they're not in faith. That is in error. (Ex. > I don't need to tell everyone that when I jump in the air, I will come back down - for it to work, or to have faith. I already know it will work, that's why I have no fear of jumping. I have faith I'll come back down. I KNOW. Telling others doesn't increase our faith, nor is it a sign of us having faith.

From my own experience, most of the time it's been better if I only tell the people I know will be in agreement with me about what I am believing for. Too often, other people will question what we are doing, or even try to talk us out of it. I've found it's easier to stay in faith when a lot of people don't know what I'm believing for. It frees me from their input, and the mental / emotional battles that can go with it.

9) Since you Know it's yours by Faith. Thank God for what he's doing and for the answer. (Luke 2:38; I Corinthians 15:57; II Corinthians 2:14)

10) Persevere. If the answer comes slowly, DO NOT GIVE UP OR QUIT. Too often we'll quit believing before God has had a chance to rearrange the situation, do the healing, or get the answer to us. If we quit, we're guaranteed failure. (Galatians 6:7-9; Hebrews 10:35-36)