

Faith Acts on Truth

"If a random sample of one thousand American Christians were taken today, the majority would define faith as a belief in the existence of God. In earlier times it did not take faith to believe that God existed – almost everybody took that for granted. Rather, faith had to do with one's relationship to God – whether one trusted in God. The difference between faith as 'belief in something that may or may not exist' and faith as 'trusting in God' is enormous. The first is a matter of the head, the second a matter of the heart. The first can leave us unchanged, the second intrinsically brings change."

Brennan Manning – The Ragamuffin Gospel

Belief merely sits on Truth, but faith acts on it.

Faith: Fixing our Eyes on Jesus

Hebrews 12:1,2

1. "so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us"
 - a) This does not imply that we are being watched
 - b) It means that we are to be encouraged and strengthened by a tangible (cloud) example of the faithful – Romans 15:4
2. "let us also lay aside every encumbrance"
 - a) KJV – "laying aside weights"
 - b) "all inordinate affection and concern for the body, and the present life and world." (Matthew Henry)
 - c) We can never say yes to Jesus, without saying no to something else!
 - d) 2 Timothy 2 – what extra baggage are we caring with us on our journey with Jesus?

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3. "the sin" – definite article
 - a) The sin of UNBELIEF! This is THE sin of all sins!
 - b) Unbelief always assaults our position "in Christ"
 - c) Temptation is always an attack of doubt on what God has said! (Matt. 4)
4. "fixing our eyes on Jesus" (looking away unto Jesus!) the Key to faith!
 - a) to turn away from all distractions and to focus on just one thing – or Person: Jesus
 - b) The bigger Jesus becomes to us, the deeper our faith in Him grows! – Matt. 13:5,6
 - c) The great witness from the past saints can only inspire us, but only Jesus can empower us to venture out in faith!

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"Faith ... is by its very nature scarcely conscious of its own existence. Like the eye which sees everything in front of it and never sees itself, faith is occupied with the Object upon which it rests and pays no attention to itself at all. While we are looking at God we do not see ourselves--blessed riddance. The man who has struggled to purify himself and has had nothing but repeated failures will experience real relief when he stops tinkering with his soul and looks away to the perfect One. While he looks at Christ the very things he has so long been trying to do will be getting done within him. It will be God working in him to will and to do."

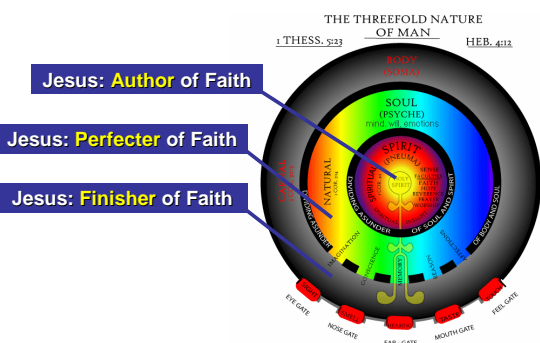
A.W. Tozer – Pursuit of God

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Hebrews 12:1,2

5. "Author" – Pioneer, Trailblazer, Captain!
 - a) He has blazed the way for us and is now seated – there is nothing more to be done – ever!
 - b) Jesus is THE WAY
 - c) We have complete freedom to live and walk with Him in every moment of our lives – a love fest.
6. "Perfecter"
 - a) Jesus "perfected" the way of faith since He reached its end successfully
 - b) If we are "in Him" then He is completely responsible for perfecting our faith! 2 Tim. 1:12!

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“Faith is not in itself a meritorious act; the merit is in the One toward Whom it is directed. Faith is a redirecting of our sight, a getting out of the focus of our own vision and getting God into focus. Sin has twisted our vision inward and made it self-regarding. Unbelief has put self where God should be, and is perilously close to the sin of Lucifer who said, *‘I will set my throne above the throne of God.’* Faith looks out instead of in and the whole life falls into line.”

A.W. Tozer – Pursuit of God

“Faith is not the holding of correct doctrine, but personal fellowship with the living God.”

William Temple, Sr.