

KEY VERSES

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:5-8 (NIV)

INTRODUCTION: In this study we will examine the concept of **faith** as it is taught in scripture. The foundation for a life of Christian character is faith. Our entire life as a Christian is built upon this. Everyone who believes in Christ has moved from *no* faith to *some* faith. Faith is the starting point. We want to grow this *some* faith into *great* faith. This series of studies will help you do that.

1. **Discuss** the idea that without some form of faith it would be impossible to exist in everyday life. What are some of the unique life situations that require a form of everyday faith?
2. **READ:** Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Peter 1:1
 - a. What do you think the difference is between everyday faith and *spiritual* faith?
 - b. What do you think the writer means that faith is a gift?
 - c. If it is a gift, whom does it come from?
 - d. Why would he call faith 'precious'? (NIV translation)
3. **READ:** Hebrews 11:6
 - a. What is the importance of faith?
 - b. What is the promise of faith?
 - c. Why does it take God's gift of faith to you, to believe that God exists?
4. **READ:** Hebrews 11:1
How would you explain this verse to someone who is trying to understand the concept of biblical faith?
5. **DISCUSS** the difference between positive thinking and biblical faith.
6. **READ:** Romans 10:17
Based on this verse, how does faith begin to grow inside a person?
7. **DISCUSS THIS STATEMENT:**
"Until you engage your faith, your faith is useless. Until you actualise your faith, it's just potential."
 - a. What does it mean for us to actively engage our faith?
 - b. What would that look like to you?
 - c. What situations would require us to act on our faith?

8. **COMMENT:** It seems that many people start out on a spiritual faith journey only to see that faith stagnate or grow cold.
- a. **DISCUSS:** The only thing that can defeat the faith that God has given you, is you!
 - b. What are some of the ways the faith God has given you can stagnate, grow cold or become non-effective? Why is that?
9. If you were coaching someone new in the faith what advice would you give them so that their faith could grow from *some* faith to *great* faith. How many supportive ideas can your group come up with?
10. a. What type of support **do you need** so that you can create a life environment where your faith can grow?
- b. Where are you vulnerable to setback or defeat?
 - c. What plan can you put in place to ensure maximum spiritual growth?
 - d. How could your group support each other in the journey of faith?

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

It seems that we can easily allow distractions and lack of personal honesty to stifle our faith. What routines or disciplines do you need to put in place to ensure you stay on track? In what areas of your life do you need to be honest with yourself? Where are you vulnerable? How can you put supports in place to ensure your personal vulnerabilities do not defeat you "precious" faith? When will you move forward with your plan?

FOR ENCOURAGEMENT: In 2 Peter 1:8 Peter talks about having the qualities of faith in "ever increasing measure". The faith journey we are on is not a journey to a destination where we finally arrive. The faith journey is all about the journey and to Peter the measuring stick is not arrival but incremental growth. Be encouraged that all God requires of us is to be growing. This is not a contest, or comparison between people. It makes no difference who may be ahead or who is behind. All that matters is that we are making spiritual progress. Some times progress is slow other times it is fast. Sometimes we see immediate results sometimes we don't see those results for while. Keep going. Keep on track. Keep doing the spiritual disciplines necessary for growth and you will be excited to discover that you are not the same person you were yesterday, last week or last year. You are becoming a person of Christ-like character.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: As you pick up your **income tax receipts** over the next few weeks please take a few moments to read the enclosed brochure. We recognise the opportunity presented there is not for everyone. If you feel this is not for you, would you participate by using the handy bookmark to remember to pray for the Lord to provide for the finances of our church? Remember he is Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord who provides.