

Petaluma Valley Baptist Church

That's FAITH - 2

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. (NLT)

Hebrews 11:6a *You see, it is impossible to please God without faith. (NLT)*

1 John 4:19 *We love Him, because he first loved us. (NIV)*

1 John 4:19-10 *This is how God showed his love to us: He sent his one and only Son into the world so that we could have life through him. This is what real love is: It is not our love for God; it is God's love for us. He sent his Son to die in our place to take away our sins. (NCV)*

Hebrews 11:1 *Faith is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. (NLT)*

Romans 1:17 *The righteous person will live by faith. (NLT)*

WHAT IS FAITH?

Faith is what connects us with God.

Hebrews 11:6b *Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that there is a God and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. (NLT)*

REWARD for seeking God: It's God.

The purpose of faith in our life is not just to connect us with God, but to allow us to connect others with God.

Good News

- ♦ **1 John 5:13-15** – We can be confident that he will listen to us whenever we ask him for anything in line with his will. And if we know he is listening when we make our requests, we can be sure that he will give us what we ask for. (NLT)

- ♦ **Luke 19:10** – *The son of man came to find lost people and save them.*

Our God is the God who follows.

Have you sensed him following you?

He is the one who came to seek and save the lost.

Have you sensed him seeking you?

Have you felt his presence through the kindness of a stranger? Through the majesty of a sunset or the mystery of romance? Through the question of a child or the commitment of a spouse? Through a word well spoken or a touch well timed, have you sensed him?

God gives us himself. Even when we choose our hovel over his house and our trash over his grace, still he follows.

Never forcing us.

Never leaving us.

Patiently persistent.

Faithfully present.

He uses all his power to convince us that he is who he is and he can be trusted to lead us home.

~Max Lucado

More Good News

- ♦ **Ephesians 3:20** – Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. (NL7)

“Bad ” News

- ♦ **James 4:2-3** – And yet the reason you don’t have what you want is that you don’t ask God for it. And even when you do ask, you don’t get it because your whole motive is wrong – you want only what will give you pleasure. (NL7)

Guideline #1

God will release His power through us when our motivation and focus is to serve and bless others.

Guideline #2

Don’t seek more power in your life until you’ve effectively used what you have already been given.

#1. Faith grows in a heart that is not self-absorbed.

Key understanding: It is better to give than receive.

#2. Faith motivates us to go beyond the call of duty.

Key understanding: Faith is more than just believing in God.

#3. Faith doesn’t guarantee a problem-free life.

Key understanding: It’s not just committing to Christ when everything is going right, but surrendering to Christ even when we do not understand!

#4. Faith sometimes is asked to believe against all odds.

- ♦ **Matthew 17:20** – Jesus told them. “I assure you, even if you had faith as small as a mustard seed you could say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.” (NL7)

What mountain would you like to see God move? _____

THOUGHT QUESTION: In what capacity are you using the power of your faith to bless others?

- ♦ **Philippians 4:13** – I can do all things with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need. (NL7)

FAITH IS ENGAGING GOD AND ASKING HIM TO MAKE YOU AVAILABLE TO INFLUENCE SOMEONE’S LIFE WITH THE DEMONSTRATION OF YOUR BELIEF.

- ♦ **Jude 22** – Show mercy to those whose faith is wavering. (NL7)
- ♦ **Galatians 5:6** – What is important is faith expressing itself in love.

FAITH CAN ONLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OTHER PEOPLE’S LIVES IF IT HAS MADE A PROFOUND AND POWERFUL DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE.

CLOSING THOUGHT