

Saving Faith

Key Verse

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..." Acts 16:31b

Basic Biblical Understanding

For a basic understanding of biblical faith, read the PDF entitled [Faith](#) first. Assuming you've read that PDF, let's proceed with two questions: (1) What does it mean to believe in Jesus? (2) What does it take for a person to believe in Jesus?

Scripture clearly teaches that believing in Jesus is the only means of salvation (Ephesians 2:8–9; John 3:16, 5:24, 6:47; Romans 10:9). While that teaching is clear and consistent in Scripture, it's important to understand what it means and how it happens. There are three essential aspects to saving faith: content, conviction, and trust resulting in reliance. Let's describe each one.

By content, a person understands the claims of the Gospel. The Gospel tells us that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin, that He physically rose again on the third day, and that He offers eternal life to those who repent of their sin by placing faith in Him. If someone does not understand the basic content of the Gospel, they cannot exercise saving faith.

By conviction, a person has assurance that the content of the Gospel is true. It's possible to intellectually understand the content of the Gospel and still not believe the Gospel. That person would say, "I understand what you're saying, but I don't believe it." Saving faith requires that a person believes the Gospel message is true.

By trust resulting in reliance, a person relies completely upon the Gospel as his or her only means of salvation. Knowing and believing are not enough. James 2:19 tells us that even demons believe and tremble. Saving faith happens when we rest upon or rely upon what Jesus has done on our behalf. For this individual, it's Jesus or nothing. There is no plan B. They understand what Jesus has done, they believe in what Jesus has done, and they rely upon what Jesus has done.

B.B. Warfield, a noted theologian, said, "The saving power of faith resides thus not in itself (it's not faith in our faith), but in the Almighty Savior on whom it rests (it is faith in what God has done on our behalf and offers to us by grace)..."

Verses (ask God to show you how they apply to your life)

- "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17 (NKJV)
- "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you...by which you are saved... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures..." 1 Corinthians 15:1–4

Helpful Questions and Application

1. Have you exercised saving faith in Jesus? If not, which of the three essential aspects of saving faith has become a struggle for you?
2. Do you understand the Gospel message? For a little more explanation, read the PDF entitled *Gospel*. If you're still struggling to understand how the Gospel impacts you, who can you go to with your questions? What's holding you back from contacting that person today?

Additional Resources

Scripture references: Mark 16:15–16; John 8:24; John 14:6; Romans 10:9

WordTruth articles: ["Life's Most Important Decision"](#)
["Good Works are Not Good Enough and Do Not Work"](#)