



Gift of Faith

Biblical

1 Corinthians 12:9 – faith

pistis (πίστις, 4102), “faith,” has the secondary meaning of “an assurance or guarantee,” e.g., Acts 17:31; by raising Christ from the dead, God has given “assurance” that the world will be judged by Him (the KJV margin, “offered faith” does not express the meaning). Cf. 1 Tim. 5:12, where “faith” means “pledge.” See BELIEF, FAITH, FIDELITY.¹

Wagner on Faith:

Peter Wagner states that faith has four facets: Saving faith is the basic prerequisite to all other facets. Believing in Jesus as Savior and Lord restores the fellowship with the Father. The second faith is sanctifying faith. This faith is the fruit of the Spirit, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit always manifest himself in good works. That’s why faith without works is dead. Life in the Holy Spirit is a life filled with his fruits: love, joy, peace, patience, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, and faith (Gal 5:22-33). Whereas there are no degrees of saving faith – either you are saved or you are not – there are degrees of sanctifying faith. Babies in Christ have all the saving faith they need, but very little sanctifying faith. The Christian life is a continuous challenge to develop more sanctifying faith and thereby live a more godly life and be a better witness for Jesus Christ.

The third facet of faith I call possibility-thinking faith, from Robert Schuller’s book *Move Ahead with Possibility Thinking*. This is faith for setting goals. A somewhat mysterious but important dynamic is released through intelligent and courageous goal setting. Hebrews 11 is a textbook on possibility-thinking faith. It defines faith as, “the substance of things hoped for”. Things hoped for are neither past or present. When we look to the future and put substance on what we see there, we exercise this kind of faith. This is what is involved in goal setting. Later, this same chapter says, “without faith it is impossible to please God.” This is setting goals and believing God for reaching the goals. Abraham did it when he left Ur of the Chaldees. Noah did it when he built the huge ark on dry ground. It is faith that subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, and stopped the mouth of lions (Heb 11:33).

The fourth facet of faith is “fourth-dimension faith,” taken from *The Fourth Dimension*, a book by Paul Yonggi Cho. This is believing God for supernatural miracles, signs and wonders. This type of faith is found in Matthew 17, when the disciples tried to heal the epileptic, and couldn’t. Jesus said they were unable to do this because of their unbelief (Matt 17:20). He said no larger than a mustard would have been necessary. At that time the

¹ Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). In [Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words](#) (Vol. 2, p. 43). T. Nelson.



disciples did not have fourth dimension faith necessary to see a miracle happen. Later on, they did demonstrate that faith, particularly after Pentecost.

Fourth dimension faith is called the “shield of faith” as part of the full armor of God described in Ephesians 6. This is the faith which can withstand the attacks by principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness of this age

Derek Prince on Faith:

The three main forms of faith may be defined as follows:

1. Faith as a gift
2. Faith as a fruit
3. Faith to live by

The third form of faith is a continuing personal relationship that links the believer directly to God and affects every area of his life. It provides the motivation, the direction, and the power for everything he does. It is, in fact, both the sole and the sufficient ground for righteous living. For this reason, I call it “faith to live by.”

The gift of faith is distinguished from the other forms of faith by the fact that it is a sovereign, supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit working through the believer. The two key words are sovereign and supernatural.

In Matthew 21 and Mark 11, we read that Jesus, on His way to Jerusalem with His disciples, came to a fig tree by the wayside. Jesus was seeking fruit. When He found that the tree contained only leaves, but no fruit, He pronounced a curse upon it, saying, “*May no one ever eat fruit from you again!*” ([Mark 11:14](#)). The next day, as Jesus and His disciples passed the same tree, the disciples were astonished to see that within twenty-four hours it had withered from the roots up. “*Rabbi, behold,*” Peter commented, “*the fig tree which You cursed has withered*” (v. 21).

To Peter’s comment, Jesus replied, “*Have faith in God*” (v. 22). This is how it has been translated into English. However, what Jesus actually said, in its most literal form, was, “*Have God’s faith.*” This statement highlights the special kind of faith we are speaking of here, that is, faith as a gift. Faith has its origin not in man, but in God. It is an aspect of God’s own eternal nature. Through the gift of faith, the Holy Spirit imparts a portion of God’s own faith, directly and supernaturally, to the believer. This is faith on a divine level, as high above mere human faith as heaven is above earth.

In saying, “*Have God’s faith,*” Jesus challenged His disciples to receive and exercise this kind of faith, just as He Himself had done. He went on to tell them that with faith of this kind they would not only be able to do what they had seen Him do to the fig tree, but they would be able to move a mountain by simply speaking: “Truly I say to you, if you have faith, and do not doubt, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, “Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it shall happen. [Matthew 21:21](#)’ [2]

Jesus was not speaking merely to the disciples when He said, “*If you have faith,*” for we see in [Mark 11:23](#) that He used the word whoever, extending His promise to all believers: “Truly I say to you, whoever says to this

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mountain, *'Be taken up and cast into the sea' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it shall be granted him*" [Mark 11:23](#)

Jesus set no limit to the scope of this kind of faith. The phrases He used are all-inclusive: *"Whoever says...what he says...shall be granted him."* There is no restriction concerning the person who speaks or the words that are spoken. All that matters is the nature of the faith; it must be God's own faith.

In [Luke 8:22-25](#), we see that, as Jesus and His disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee in a boat, they were suddenly overtaken by an unnaturally violent storm. The disciples woke Jesus, who was asleep in the stern, saying, *"Master, Master, we are perishing!"* (v. 24). The biblical record continues, *"And being aroused, He rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped, and it became calm"* (v. 24).

Obviously, the faith that Jesus exercised here was not on the human level. Normally, the winds and the waters are not under man's control. But at the moment of need, Jesus received a special importation of His Father's own faith. Then, by a word spoken with that faith, He accomplished what man would consider impossible: the instantaneous calming of the storm.

When the danger had passed, Jesus turned to His disciples and said, *"Where is your faith?"* (v. 25, emphasis added). In other words, He asked, *"Why couldn't you have done that? Why did I have to do it?"* He implied that it would have been just as easy for the disciples to have calmed the storm as it had been for Him—if they had exercised the right kind of faith. But in the moment of crisis, the impact of the storm on the disciples' senses had opened the way for fear to enter their hearts, thus excluding faith. Jesus, on the other hand, had opened His heart to the Father and had received from Him the supernatural gift of faith needed to deal with the storm.

Here we note that the gift of faith is the third in the list of gifts from Holy Spirit, and peace is the third in the list of fruit of the spirit. To the extent that we lack peace, or have fear, we are unable to walk in The Faith of God. God is love, and there is no fear in love. Perfect love casts out fear. And in perfect love, without any fear, we are able to walk in the Faith of God.

Later, Jesus confronted a storm of a different kind: a boy rolling on the ground in an epileptic seizure and an agonized father imploring help. Jesus dealt with this storm as He had dealt with the one on the Sea of Galilee. He spoke an authoritative word of faith that drove the evil spirit out of the boy. When His disciples asked Him why they had not been able to do this, He told them plainly, *"Because of the littleness of your faith"* ([Matthew 17:20](#)). Then He went on to say, *"If you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible to you"* (v. 20).

Here Jesus used a mustard seed as a measure of quantity. In [Matthew 13:32](#), we are told that a mustard seed is *"smaller than all other seeds."* In other words, Jesus was telling us that it is not the quantity of the faith that matters, but the quality. If a person has the right kind of faith in even the amount of a mustard seed, it is sufficient to move a mountain!

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Near the climax of His earthly ministry, outside the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus once more demonstrated the power of words spoken with the right kind of faith. He cried out with a loud voice, *"Lazarus, come forth"* ([John 11:43](#)). This brief command, energized by supernatural faith, caused a man who was both dead and buried to come walking out of his tomb, alive and well.

The original pattern for supernatural faith is found in the act of creation itself. It was by faith in His own word that God brought the universe into being. *"By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath [literally, spirit] of His mouth all their host....For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast"* ([Psalm 33:6, 9](#)). God's spoken word, energized by His Spirit, was the effective agent in all creation.

When the gift of faith is in operation, a man becomes, for a time, the channel of God's own faith. The person who speaks is no longer important, but only the faith that is expressed. If it is God's own faith at work, it is equally effective whether the words are spoken through God's mouth or whether they are uttered by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of a human believer. As long as a believer operates with this divine faith, his words are just as effective as if God Himself had spoken them. It is the faith that matters, not the person.

In the examples that we have considered up to this point, this supernatural faith was expressed through a spoken word. By a spoken word, Jesus caused the fig tree to wither. By a spoken word, He calmed the storm, cast the evil spirit out of the epileptic boy, and called Lazarus out of the tomb. In [Mark 11:23](#), Jesus said this about any word spoken in faith: *"Whoever says...what he says...shall be granted him."*

Sometimes a word spoken in prayer becomes the channel for the gift of faith. In [James 5:15](#), we are told that *"the prayer of faith shall save [or, restore] the sick"* (KJV). There is no room left for doubt about the effect of a prayer of faith. Its results are guaranteed. Prayer prayed with God-given faith is irresistible. Neither sickness nor any other condition that is contrary to God's will can stand against it.

As an example of someone who prayed "the prayer of faith," James referred to Elijah. By his prayer, Elijah withheld all rain for three and a half years, and then caused rain to fall again ([James 5:17-18](#)). Scripture indicates that the giving and withholding of rain is a divine prerogative, exercised by God Himself. (See, for example, [Deuteronomy 11:13-17](#) and [Jeremiah 5:24; 14:22](#).) Yet, for three and a half years, Elijah exercised this prerogative on God's behalf. James emphasized that Elijah was *"a man with a nature like ours"* ([James 5:17](#))—a human being just like the rest of us. But as long as he was enabled to pray with God's faith, the words he uttered were as effective as God's own decrees.

However, faith of this kind does not need to operate through a spoken word only. It was by this same kind of supernatural faith that Jesus was able to walk on the stormy Sea of Galilee. (See [Matthew 14:25-33](#).) In this case, He did not need to speak; He merely walked out onto the water. Peter began to follow the example of Jesus and to exercise the same kind of faith. This enabled him to do precisely the same thing that Jesus was doing. But when he looked away from Jesus to the waves, his faith deserted him, and he began to sink!

The comment that Jesus made is very illuminating: *"O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"* ([Matthew 14:31](#)). Jesus did not reprove Peter for wanting to walk on the water. He reproved him for losing faith in the middle of doing so. Don Basham, author of several books on the power of the Holy Spirit, has pointed out that there is a divine urge implanted in every human heart to step out in supernatural faith and to walk on a plane above the level of our own ability. Since God Himself placed this urge in man, He does not reprove us for it. On the contrary,



He is willing to give us the faith that will enable us to do these things. He is disappointed, not when we reach out for this kind of faith, but only when we do not hold on to it long enough.

This supernatural kind of faith is given in a specific situation to meet a specific need. It remains under God's direct control. It must remain so, for it is God's own faith. He gives it or withholds it at His discretion. This kind of faith is included with all the other supernatural gifts, concerning which Paul said, *"But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills"* ([1 Corinthians 12:11](#)). The key phrase here is at the end— "just as He wills." God Himself determines when and to whom He will impart each of the spiritual gifts. The initiative is with God, not with man.

This was true even in the ministry of Jesus Himself. He did not curse every fruitless fig tree. He did not calm every storm. He did not call every dead man out of his tomb. He did not always walk on the water. He was careful to leave the initiative in the hands of His Father. In [John 5:19](#), He said, *"The Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner."* Again, Jesus said in [John 14:10](#), *"The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works."* The initiative was always with the Father.

We must learn to be as reverent and as careful in our relationship with the Father as Jesus was. The gift of faith is not ours to command. It is not intended to satisfy our personal whims or ambitions. It is made available at God's discretion to accomplish ends that originate in God's own eternal purposes. We cannot, and must not, wrest the initiative from God. Even if God should permit us to do so, it would ultimately be to our own loss.

Pictured as a mustard seed, the gift of faith is similar to two of the gifts of revelation: the word of wisdom, which is directive, and the word of knowledge, which is informative. God has all wisdom and all knowledge, but, fortunately for us, He does not burden us with all of it. However, in a given situation in which we need direction, He supernaturally imparts to us a word of wisdom—just one little "mustard seed" out of His total store of wisdom. Or, in a situation in which we need information, He imparts to us a word of knowledge—a little "mustard seed" out of His total store of knowledge.[2]

So, it is with the gift of faith. God has all faith, but He does not impart it all to us. In a given situation, in which we need faith on a higher level than our own, God imparts to us a "mustard seed" of faith out of His own total store. Once the special need has been met, God withdraws His faith, and we are left once again to exercise our own.[2]

As we saw earlier, the gift of faith is associated with the other two gifts of power: the gifts of healing and the working of miracles. In practice, the gift of faith often serves as a catalyst to bring the other two gifts into operation. This is illustrated by the ministry of Philip in Samaria, as described in the book of Acts.[2]

And Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing. For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was much rejoicing in that city. [Acts 8:5-8](#)

In the first phase of his ministry, Philip cast out evil spirits. As we have seen from the example of Jesus, in [Matthew 17:14-21](#) and elsewhere, evil spirits were cast out by the spoken word through the exercise of the



gift of faith. In the second phase of Philip's ministry, the other two gifts of power, miracles and healings, came into operation. As a result, miracles were performed, and the paralyzed and the lame were healed.

In [Acts 21:8](#), Philip is called "the evangelist." Only two patterns of the ministry of an evangelist are presented to us in the New Testament: that of Jesus Himself and that of Philip. In each case, there was a strong emphasis on the casting out of evil spirits, which was followed by miracles and healings. The three gifts of power—faith, miracles, and healings—together constitute the supernatural equipment that is endorsed by the New Testament for the ministry of an evangelist.

The gift of faith is one of nine gifts of the Holy Spirit listed by Paul in [1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#). Each of these gifts is a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in a believer and operates through him. Through the gift of faith, the Holy Spirit temporarily imparts to a believer a portion of God's own faith. This is faith on a divine level, far above the human level. It is not the quantity that matters, but the quality. A "mustard seed" of this kind of faith is sufficient to move a mountain.

The gift of faith operates frequently, but not exclusively, through a spoken word. Such a word may be spoken in prayer. Through this gift, Jesus caused a fig tree to wither, calmed a storm at sea, drove an evil spirit out of an epileptic boy, called Lazarus out of his tomb, and walked on the stormy waves.

God has implanted in man an urge to exercise this kind of faith. Therefore, He does not reprove us for doing so. Rather, He is disappointed if we let go of it too soon. However, as in the ministry of Jesus, the initiative must always be left with God.

The gift of faith can serve as a catalyst for the related gifts of healings and miracles. These three gifts combined are the equipment endorsed by the New Testament for the ministry of an evangelist.

Wigglesworth on Faith

There are two kinds of faith. There is the natural faith. But the supernatural faith is the gift of God. In Acts 26:19, Paul is telling Agrippa of what the Lord said to him in commissioning him. "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me."

Is that the faith of Paul? No, it is the faith that the Holy Ghost is giving. It is the faith that He brings to us as we press in and on with God. I want to put before you this difference between our faith and the faith of Jesus. Our faith comes to an end. Most people in this place have come to where they have said, "Lord, I can go no further. I have gone so far and I can go no further. I have used all the faith I have, and I have just to stop now and wait."

As I look into the 12th chapter of Acts, I find that the people were praying all night for Peter to come out of prison. They had a zeal but seem to have been lacking in faith. They were to be commended for their zeal in spending their time in prayer without ceasing, but their faith, evidently, did not measure up to such a marvelous answer. Rhoda had more faith than the rest of them. When the knock came to the door, she ran to it, and the moment she heard Peter's voice, she ran back again with joy saying that Peter stood before the gate. And all the people said, "You are mad. It isn't so." But she constantly affirmed that it was even so.



You ask, "What is faith?" Faith is the principle of the Word of God. The Holy Spirit, who inspired the Word, is called the Spirit of Truth, and, as we receive with meekness the engrafted Word, faith springs in our heart-faith in the sacrifice of Calvary- faith in the shed blood of Jesus; faith in the fact that He took our weakness upon Himself, has borne our sicknesses and carried our pains, and that He is our life today.

Examples of Faith of God

Elijah and the altar of Baal

Elijah told to go to the city of Jezebel's father, where he would be taken in by a widow.

Shadrack Meshach and Abednego into the fire of Nebuchadnezzar... "but even if"

Moses touching the rock, and water coming out... pretty much all of Moses' miracles were from faith

Abraham's faith that he would have a son

Thoughts

1. Faith that is works
2. Faith that is control, magic
3. The fine line between faith and stupidity

Discernment

Bibliography

- [1] C. P. Wagner, *The third wave of the Holy Spirit : encountering the power of signs and wonders today*. Ann Arbor, Mich. : Servant Publications, Vine Books, 1988. Accessed: Nov. 08, 2021. [Online]. Available: <http://archive.org/details/thirdwaveofholys00wagn>
- [2] D. Prince, "Faith as a Gift – Derek Prince | HopeFaithPrayer." <https://www.hopefaithprayer.com/faith/faith-gift-derek-prince/> (accessed Sep. 29, 2021).
- [3] S. Wigglesworth, "God-Given Faith," *God Given Faith*. <http://www.smithwigglesworth.com/index.php/smith-wigglesworth-sermons/faith-that-prevails/god-given-faith> (accessed Oct. 01, 2021).
- [4] S. Wigglesworth, "I Am the Lord That Healeth Thee," *Smith Wiggleworth*. <http://smithwigglesworth.com/index.php/smith-wigglesworth-sermons/ever-increasing-faith/i-am-the-lord-that-healeth-thee> (accessed Oct. 01, 2021).

