

# **FOUR DIMENSIONS OF FAITH**

Four Pillars a Christian must have if he must enjoy  
Christianity

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All Bible References are from

New International Version of the Holy Bible, unless otherwise stated.

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## Introduction

**T**his book is not one of the many books on faith. There are many wonderful materials and books dealing with how to walk in faith, and you will do well to read them.

This book is on a very vital Christian doctrine, Faith towards God. My intention is to open up *on* this basic key to every believer. The teaching I gave inside this book has been shared for more than twenty years now as I minister among church leaders across the globe. It is part of the basic subjects we teach in the School for Deliverance and Spiritual Warfare. My students have persistently asked for a handout which I have never been able to put together.

I thank God that it is here now.

Happy reading.

## Chapter one

### What is Faith?

**T**he commonest definition of faith is found in Hebrews 11:1

*“Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see”. Heb 11:1 NLT*

*“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see”.*  
*Heb 11:1*

*“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”. Heb 11:1 NKJV*

NLT called Faith, The Confidence that gives us assurance that the reason for our hope will eventually materialize.

NIV says that Faith is to be sure and certain

NJKV says, Faith is the evidence and substance; it is the proof that what you hope for is there.

It means that the proof that what you are asking for will materialize is the faith you have in your soul. That means that if you are not able to lay hold of that thing within your soul, there is no other way to lay hold of it. I believe that is what the bible means here.

"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." Mark 11:23-24 NIV

If you do not doubt; that is if you don't lose the grip. If you lose the grip in your soul, you may be standing praying but you have lost it. On the other hand, if the grip is there, you may not have something before you, but with that grip, it will be sure to materialize.

Now, this brings us to the question, “Is Faith abstract or tangible? Can faith be felt and touched?

Faith can be touched, it can be felt. It is not abstract. Another substance similar to faith which people call abstract is Love. Love can be handled, it can be felt. If faith and love are not there, the person concerned knows it. The hand that touches faith is the hand of the inner man. When that hand of your inner person touches the object of the faith, it registers in the soul that it has grip of the object of the faith. That is what creates confidence and persistence and perseverance, If you get to a door and you are sure that that is the door you are looking for; you are not wondering whether you are right or wrong, it creates stamina to continue to stand at that door while putting pressure on the keys to surrender. But if for any reason, you have some level of doubt, you will be inhibited in your effort. You may not know it, but the effort you put forth have been limited because of the doubt that comes with the fear that you maybe doing the wrong

thing. That is why it is said that doubt kills faith. You cannot have faith and doubt at the same time. They are inversely proportional; as faith increases, doubt diminishes, and Vis versa.

That brings us to the object of our faith. What we mean here is what your faith is built on. This question is important because your faith is as strong as where you placed that faith. In my teachings in churches, I always bring two chairs, one weak and the other strong. I let my audience see that my faith does not change or influence where I placed the faith. If I place my faith on a weak chair while trusting that the chair can carry me that will not improve the composition of the chair. No amount of positive thinking will change the matter composing the weak chair. If I put all my weight on the chair, it is likely to give way, not because I am too heavy but because it does not have capacity to carry me. The reverse will be the case with the strong chair; my feelings and doubt does not reduce the strength of the chair. I may not take advantage of the composition of the chair, so that I lean partially on the chair while supporting myself partly on my skeleton because I have doubt about the strength of the chair to carry me. The chair still has the capacity to carry me, I am the one that have not taken advantage of the available strength of the chair. I am likely to suffer some pain while trying to carry myself, not because the chair is weak but because I am not able to use the strength of the chair due to my doubt.

So faith actually should not be in faith itself but in the object on which you are exercising your faith. I have seen a lot of people having faith in faith without object. I have also seen people place very great faith on weak objects. They both will fail.

## Chapter Two

### The Character and Reputation of the Object of your Faith

**W**e said earlier that we lay hold on faith with the hands of our inner man. In actual sense it is on the object of our faith that we lay hold but since it is the hand of faith that enables us to hold the object, we may say that we lay hold of the hand of faith which in turn lays hold on the object.

We have also seen people for one reason or the other, take hold of an object that cannot support them. Take for example Islamic extremists who believe that if they endanger their life for the course of Mohamed that Allah will give them virgins in paradise. As unreasonable as that sounds, people believe that and are dying for it. How about the atheists, who claim there is no God? Only recently a man was so mad with USA president, Donald Trump he went on a suicide mission to kill all Republican parliamentarians. He killed a few but died in the process. He will resurrect on the last day to discover he was only a fool. Somebody set himself ablaze to score a political point; he died but he did not consider his life after death. These are few examples of very strong faith placed on the wrong objects.

As Christians we are called on to place our faith on God. It is necessary to find out why we should place our faith on God. This also applies to every other thing, person or institution we are likely to surrender our faith to. It is necessary we try to find out what is the reputation or character of that person, thing or course is. That is the way to know if we are wasting our faith on a useless thing. Remember that we said earlier that your faith does not change the reputation or strength of the object. The bible does not contain every information about God but it is a sound manual to guide us to know very important things about God. It can answer questions with regards to how God operates and relate with His people. This on its part will help us to know how safe we are as we trust God with our life and future.

#### **He turns chaos into beauty**

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.....God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ..... God saw all that he had made, and it was very good” Gen 1:1-2, 28, 31.*

Things wouldn't have been worse in Gen1; it was a terrible and intimidating situation, yet God brought in order, beauty and Glory out of it all.

#### **He is a God of covenant**

*“Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.” Deut 7:9.*

We all praise Abraham for his faith but often forget the blunders he made. Do you know it is treachery for Abraham to have given out Sarah the second time to another king, even after God had visited and eaten in his house? What other god will be able to bring testimony out of the blunders of Abraham. Take a look at Israel, what horde of rebellious people, yet God had to keep His covenant because He committed Himself to it

### **He never fails to keep his word**

*“The Lord said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled." Jer 1:12.*

There were many before us who had dared to put their future in His hand, some even venturing in to great danger in the faith that God will see them through and He did. Some have put the future of their children and loved ones in His custody as they closed their eyes in death. With time God fulfilled His promises to them. Even when they were not there to remind Him. Barren wombs have been made fruitful, death have lost its grip on those whose friends dared to trust, and intercessors have joined with the patriarch to announce, “You have kept all your words to us, oh Lord”.

### **He judges**

There are occasions his people were unjustly treated and the human courts were too weak to do anything about their situation, but God have taken over the case and granted righteous judgement. Jephtha cried that day, “May God judge between you and us”. The only son of Gideon left after a family pogroms carried out by those who should protect and reward, pleaded his case before the God of justice. Men have done as is their culture, paying back evil for good and strutting about as winners. God judged the case and paid evil to those evil was their due.

### **He will not forget forever**

He never forgot Noah in the ark nor did He forget his promises to Sarah. It may seem that He left us to ourselves for decades, but one day He will remember. When He remembered Joseph, even the shackles of the prison could not hold him from ascending the throne.

### **He is the God that humbles the proud**

Imagine Pharaoh the greatest ruler in his days begging Moses to leave and yet imploring him for prayers. Who else could have been able to bring that arrogant king to that point? Imagine Nebuchadnezzar falling down before a conquered slave to worship because the God of Israel showed up. Where is Emperor Nero? Where is Hitler? Where are all those who vowed that Christianity will never reach their land? See how they lie silent in their graves while churches flourish.

He has all wealth

He is the fourth man in the fiery furnace

He shuts the mouth of the lions

He frustrates the craft of the wicked

He is the God of Moses and Elijah

He is a provider

He is the warrior King

That is the God I have decided to serve. I can count on His words. Those who worshipped before I came have documented proof in the bible, that if I put my trust in Him I will not be put to shame. So I keep trusting.

## Chapter Three

### How do we get Faith?

***“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.” Rom 10:17***

**F**aith comes from hearing....

As believers we often become narrow minded in the interpretation of this scripture. We just stop at hearing the word of Christ. We fail to see that if we hear something else, our faith also inclines to whatever we have heard. The simple principle is followed by Muslims, Hindus and any other religion and even the communists. They keep repeating their teachings and opinions to their hearers. Soon these hearers accept these views and develop faith in them and begin to act on them. Hence, you hear of suicide bombers and a young girl who committed suicide because her parents were trying to reprogram her mind from negative gay beliefs. Jesus Christ also warns about how we tilt our ears to hear because in the process, we may lose what we had unknowingly.

***“Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him.” Luke 8:18.***

What I am trying to point out is that all faith is not positive faith. Some faith is positive because it is built on the right course and on God. Some other faith is wrong because it is built on the wrong things. There are those who lost the direction of their lives because they attended a Grail Message or Eckankar seminar and received some words in their soul and developed negative faith or faith in a false doctrine. The faith of the believer is built on Christ, and this kind of faith comes through the word of Christ as written in the bible.

#### **Believe in God or Believe God**

To believe in God is what is known as universal faith. Almost everybody believes in God in a way. Bible says that even demons believe in God.

***“You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder.” James 2:19.***

This kind of belief or faith lacks commitment. This is the faith that is abstract; you don't expect anything from this faith because it has not committed itself to anything. When somebody tells you that everybody believes in God, this is the kind of faith he is talking about. Unfortunately, some people in the church operate on this kind of faith. Their faith in God does not make them consider their action or lifestyle. They still live like the man that has not seen a church hall, they still go the way they go, do the things they do and meet where they meet.

To believe God, on the other hand, is active and committed faith. This is the kind of faith that Abraham had.

***“Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness”. Gen 15:6.***

***“What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Rom 4:3.***

He does not stand in a place to announce that he has faith rather he takes action because he has faith.

***“Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.” James 2:21-26.***

## Chapter Four

### The Trial of Faith

**H**ere we come to a very important principle with regards to faith; trials. It is impossible to prove the presence of faith in the absence of pressure. It is easy to talk faith when everything is working well. But such faith cannot be trusted because we are not even sure it is there at all. It is when the faith is stretched that we can see if it is able to endure. If it is not able to endure, then it is the other kind of abstract fact.

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything”. James 1:2-4.*

I put it this way, trial of your faith produces elasticity; that means you can go far under very difficult circumstances. What makes you go far is because of this grip in your soul, this hold with the hand of your inner being which says, “I know what I believe is real even though my physical eyes cannot see it, I can grasp it with the hand of my spirit”. That is perseverance, moving forward in the face of adverse situation; still standing when everything has given way. The reason you are standing is because you are sure of what you hope for and that inner assurance is the evidence of what you are yet to see. That is what is called faith.

Now, the scripture above says that perseverance works on faith to bring the faith to maturity and fullness. How does it happen? The faith is subjected to pressure, the pressure generates elasticity thereby enabling the possessor of this faith see his hidden potentials which he might not have observed under normal circumstances. Take note of divine wisdom; as perseverance is putting pressure on faith, the expectation of the possessor of this faith is for God to interrupt the pressure as he begins to cry. But that does not happen because God has a motive and agenda. His motive and agenda is to produce maturity and fullness. So, perseverance must be given time to finish its work.

#### **The Saint (Righteous or Just) shall live by faith.**

*“For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” Rom 1:17.*

Animals breathe in oxygen and give out carbon dioxide; plants do the reverse. No other gas will help a suffocating person if not oxygen. Immediately man stops taking in oxygen, the next thing is death. We say then that man shall live by oxygen. In the same, a born again child of God cannot function outside the realms of faith. Our whole life should be life of faith; if we stop living and walking by faith, the next thing is spiritual death. Note that the bible said, For the wages of sin is death... Rom 6:23NIV. This death is not the natural death but spiritual death which paralyses the whole course of a believer’s life. The child of God loses control to the

elements and becomes a puppet in the hands of the devil, his demons and the forces of nature. The slightest challenge makes him run helter-skelter. The least illness will make him go to places he had never gone all his life. The slightest threat from the enemy will make him lose his peace. One may ask, "What is his offence? What sin has he committed?"

***"But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin." Rom 14:23.***

Everything! There is no time in your Christian life that you are allowed to walk in any other way but the way of faith. There is no stage in your Christian walk when you have to use your senses; you have to live by faith, otherwise you begin to die.

We say this because there is a school of thought that teach that God gave us brain so we can think, so we should use our commonsense. Yes, agreed, God gave us brain so we can think. If your Dad bought you a bike at the age ten, and later gave you a sports car at the age of twenty five. Would you continue to use your bike to go as far as the office at the age of twenty five, just because it came from your Dad? Of course not. In the same way, your senses won't carry you far in this level of your Christian walk. Your senses are in the opposite direction of your spirit man. Bible says that you should walk by the spirit (Gal.5:16-17). Your senses are in the realm of the physical and bible says that physical things are temporal but spiritual things are eternal (2Cor4:18)

## Chapter Five

### Supplements of Faith

***“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.” 2 Peter 1:5-9KJV***

***“In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God’s promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge” Vs. 5 NLT***

**W**e have to borrow a term from NLT here; Supplements of Faith. NIV would rather say that we add to our faith – additives of faith. Even though they mean the same thing but we have a modern idea of food supplements that contain those nutrients that help us balance our diets. Without them we can still eat our food, but there are chances we will not be healthy without the supplements. These spiritual supplements are like enhancement vitamins that help to make our faith stand the test of time. We ought not to see faith as an end in the sense we say, “Now I have faith; I am going to wait here for God to do His part”. The scripture suggest that even in a position of faith, there are efforts to make. You are not making those efforts so that your faith will grow but because you already have faith. Like we said somewhere that faith have to be proactively active to be considered living faith. Faith that stands aloof is dead faith. So we are advised to add to our faith....

1. Goodness or virtue – New Living Translation calls it pursuit for moral excellence. In our walk of faith, we should also make it our goal to pursue moral excellence. We should not be like those who use faith as a license to sin
2. To goodness, Knowledge. You have to be active in building up what you know through more studies on the word of God, attending seminars and teachings. You have move further by reading books of other people who had walked in faith
3. Self-control – This is often restricted to mean resisting temptation to sin but there is another very important area. The temptation to waste time; the temptation to do nothing. Most of us are witnesses to the fact that our flesh wants to sleep while we should be awake, rest at home when we should be on the street, idle our time away when we should be writing a book. It is in such situation we should control our self by forcing our bodies to move forward and do something. We have to control our self by not allowing the day pass by without giving an account of what we did with it. A life without self-control is a life without direction, and a life without direction is a life without purpose. A

directionless life is double minded and that one should not think he will receive anything from God

4. Where other versions used patience, NIV said perseverance. Perseverance is moving forward in the face of adversity. You don't have to celebrate limitations and use them as excuse to be stagnant. It is ok you have faith, but like we said earlier, the faith has to be a fighting faith. You have to keep pushing because you have faith that God will meet you in the battle field. In 1sam14, Saul had faith and declared a fast as he prepared to confront the enemy, Jonathan and his armor bearer had faith and attacked the enemy. Saul's faith led to confusion but Jonathan's faith led him to victory through God's assistance. It is obvious which of the two that God approved
5. Godliness is another term restricted in our understanding. It is not only avoidance of sin but doing things the way God does them. Jesus says that heaven is never idle; my father is always at work. God blesses good and bad. God succeeds and God is a God of advancement and prosperity. There is no grumbling and complaining in God. God has focus and follows it to logical end. Godliness is doing it God's way.
6. Brotherly kindness – We have to accept the fact that some believers may make mistakes and even hurt our feelings. The brotherly kindness will enable us to forgive and move on. It will enable us not to take advantage of one another. It will enable us to work for the good of the whole Christian family. Make efforts to add it to faith, so other people's weakness will not terminate your spiritual life
7. Love – When we do things without love for God and our fellow man, bible says we gain nothing.

Note, what this scripture says, there is no end to adding these virtues; we need them in ever increasing measure. We need to keep adding them. If we are active by always developing our faith by putting these bulwarks it will keep us from being barren or fruitless. Once, we stop adding, fruitlessness and death sets in. you see such believers living without purpose and start asking questions about issues that have been settled in the heavens.

The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins. 2Pet1:8-9 NLT.

### **We don't Need Great Faith to Do Great Things**

*“And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.” Luke 17:5 KJV*

This was the cry of the disciples of Jesus while He was here on earth, but funny as it is, this remains the cry of many children of God. Some who have not been able to discipline themselves feel that if they had greater faith, they would be able to do great things.

It is not like that. Jesus thought that faith of the smallest size can perform wonders.

***“And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.”  
Luke 17:6 KJV.***

All we need is faith; not a big one, not a great one. Faith of any size will carry out any size of task. The reason is that it is not the faith that does it but the object of the faith. That brings us to the question, “On what is your faith?”

## Chapter Six

### The Four Dimensions of Faith; Four Pillars of Established Christian Faith

Let's return to our illustration of two chairs, one strong and the other weak. This time we look at the strong chair with four legs. If for any reason one of the legs of that chair is broken, one can still manage to use the chair but with great precaution. If at any instance something happens that forces the man sitting on the chair to lean on the side of the broken leg, the obvious will happen; he will fall.

In the same way, the Christian faith is built on four pillars, and every Christian who will make his Christian life count must be firmly established on this for pillars.

*"a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.' Rom 1:17.*

Faith from first to last.

#### 1. Faith for salvation –

There is one entry point into Christianity as a faith not religion. What I mean is that a good number of persons have joined the Christian religion but have not connected to the Christian faith through the Holy Spirit. One may be a member of a church but not a member of the Body of Christ. There are simple rules to observe and you will qualify to be a member of a church. Pay your church and burial dues, pay your tithe and offerings. Join the men or women wing of the church and try to be regular in church, at least three Sundays a month. In some congregations, there are articles of creed to memorize offhand and in others there are tenets of faith to confess at a given point in the Sunday service. In other congregations, you will need the picture of the church founder in your house and church membership sticker at your door post.

All these are not wrong but it is necessary to point out that none of these guarantees you a place among Christians in the presence of God.

But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. Rom 10:6-10 NIV

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God John 1:12 NIV

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast Eph 2:8-9NIV

You cannot receive God's salvation through Christ Jesus through any other effort on your side but to look at salvation only as a gift from God and accept it. Furthermore, you just have to accept the fact that Christ died on the cross of Calvary and that He died for your sins. You have to welcome His death as something done in your place. Having believed that, you now declare that you are approaching God on the account of His sacrificial death. You lay hold of this with the hand of your inner man through faith. You receive it in your heart that because you have done what He requested of you, He in turn has given you the right to be a child of God.

You hear the gospel – You accept the testimony presented – You believe it – God forgives your sins because of Jesus – You are saved (Born again) – you are a child of God.

As simple as this appears, it is still very difficult for two sets of persons; self-righteous people and legalistic believers.

Self-righteous person - It is difficult for him because he cannot see why he needs forgiveness. He thinks he is far better than most other people and by his own assessment, God has no problems with him

Legalistic believer – It is difficult for him because he cannot see how God who is a righteous God, whose eyes cannot behold iniquity, will just accept a sinner into His Holy Kingdom and family without making sure the man will not sin again. So he helps God with basic rules before sinners will enter the Kingdom of God.

One rule is that the sinner must promise never to make another mistake. He must sit for new converts' class for a period of time, he must show his seriousness by memorizing some scriptures offhand. If he does all this without any mistake, then he will come for an interview, and if he is lucky enough to pass the interview, he may be considered for baptism that is if there is no bad report about him. After baptism, he receives a membership card and a new convert is born

Fortunately, God does not look at things the way the self-righteous man and legalistic believer look at them.

This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Rom 3:22-26 NIV

The self-righteous man is a sinner because he was born a sinner. He is not so called basically because of what he has done. All men sinned in Adam and are pronounced guilty. This kind of sin is not within the power of the self-righteous man to amend. In fact, his efforts to make amend are all signs of rebellion against God. The only way out for him is to humbly accept God's offer of salvation through Christ as a gift. He just has to accept the simple good news and believe and so be saved. How if he refuses?

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. John 3:16-18NIV

If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. 1 John 1:10 NIV

That is for the self-righteous man; he must bow to the gospel of the cross and so be saved.

As for the legalistic believer, he has one major challenge, and that is, if the conditions he outlined for the new comer are the conditions that he followed to be a Christian, then he is not a Christian at all. This is the entry point of Christian faith and one of the four pillars of the Christian faith – faith for salvation. If anyone does not have it, he is not safe in the church.

## Chapter Seven

### 2. Faith to Accept the Word of God

**T**hat brings us to the second dimension or pillar of the Christian faith – faith to accept God’s word as perfect truth and standard for your life. The bible is God’s written word because it was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Tim 3:16-17.*

*“And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

Having said that, it will be fair to point out that if you open the bible, you are likely to observe translational errors; you see accounts where Matthew said two when Mark said one on the same account. You will see stories that are incoherent and descriptions that lack scientific explanation. That will make you begin to wonder if God makes mistakes. But let me make it clear to you that the bible has changed millions of lives from worthless, directionless, and ruined destinies into great hosts of excellent people. A whole lot of drug addicts have looked into the bible and found deliverance; a great many at the door post of death, have found life by reading the bible; not a few who were about to commit suicide have picked up hope by going through the pages of the bible. Many more sinners struggling under the strangle hold of sin and imminent judgment has been set free by looking into the pages of the bible. Professionals and scientists, warriors and artisans, old and young bear testimony about how their lives have been changed for the better by looking into the bible. You may be shocked that even enemies of the church, like the occult men and Indian magicians steal from its pages and the power therein to do their craft.

If somebody else see nothing special about the bible but mere stories, then it is not out of place to conclude that it is not the fault of the bible, but that he has not connected to the Spirit that inspired the writing of the bible. I don’t know if I came too soon with this, but the plain fact is that the bible is a book of the Spirit and only men in the spirit will understand the bible.

Some body may now ask, “But, sir there are so many people who teach the bible in bible schools, seminary and colleges. Are you suggesting that all of them are spiritual?”

Not at all! Remember we started by saying that some people can see nothing but errors in the bible. Whether they see error or not is not the difference. Some have taught from the bible for several years but have not met the God of the bible. They are not in any way different from those who only find errors in the bible. Both must need pass through the say door to connect to the Spirit of the author of the bible. What they have is the Letters of the book but needs to meet the

message of the book through the messenger. The messenger is the Holy Spirit; the bible has one unseen author, and He is the Holy Spirit. So we have the bible as a book from a printing press and we have the bible as living word of God passed through to man by the Holy Spirit. There is only one challenge here; the Letter and the Spirit of the bible are on the same pages. You get whichever of them you are connected to.

So those who are teaching from the bible don't have a different terms if they must connect to the divine message. They must accept the word of God by faith; yes, they must look at the bible and say, "I may not understand everything in this book but I accept by faith that this is God's word. I close my eyes to every common sense or human reasoning and humbly yield to the Holy Spirit, the author of this book. I let Him to teach me from henceforth". When this happens, a new dawn comes in.

You need not be surprised that a whole lot of believers are still struggling with this. They are yet to come to terms with many things stated in the bible. They come to some point and say something like, "I know I don't agree with this but let me just go ahead. I don't want to have issues with my church". Remember that he still sits among church people and talk church talk. One day something happens and our brother acts in a particular way and the whole church is surprised. Well, they are surprised because they never knew that he has been managing only three pillars of the faith. Pressure now has come on him in the area he had no balance and so he falls. It was not the pressure that pushed him down, he had no ground in that area.

This goes for gospel messages we hear and revelations from the Holy Spirit; we must receive it through faith the same way we received our salvation through faith. Only then can we benefit from the bible and our fellowship with other believers. Some would want to divide between Old Testament and New Testament, but let me point out that when the bible said "All Scripture" it made no distinction. Also note that the Scripture that Peter and Paul read did not include the New Testament.

When you accept the word of God by faith it will now form the spiritual fertilizer your soul needs to grow. The Holy Spirit will then help through its pages to find answers to questions on everyday living.

***"Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Acts 20:32.***

## Chapter Eight

### 3. Faith to act on the Word of God

One would think that once some body has come to accept the bible as the word of God and has opened his heart to welcome the voice of the Holy Spirit, all struggle will be over. But is not so. There are still those who have acknowledged the bible as God's word, they say it, announce it and declare it to other people, yet when it comes to applying it, they cannot.

These are those who believe that there are superpower believers who god has given special privileges to use His power and His word to help other Christians. We won't rule that some believers are specially gifted to help other believers spiritually, but we must also say at this point that those Christians do not necessarily have special privileges. They only put their faith to work; they acted on what they believe and God confirmed His word. It makes sense to say that if any other believer would believe what they believe and do what they did with the same faith in their heart, they will also have the same results.

Let's take a very strange example here.

"Master," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us." "Do not stop him," Jesus said, "for whoever is not against you is for you." Luke 9:49-50.

This account was before Pentecost, whereas most of Jesus disciples were still struggling with understanding His teachings, somebody perhaps walked to one of His meetings, heard just one message that talks of authority in the name of Jesus, he walked out of that meeting determined to put to practice what he heard. The result was that he was able to cast out demons. The account said he was driving out demons, it was not just once. He started a deliverance ministry while Jesus was yet to go to the cross. He heard something, believed it and put it to work. Like many living churches today, Jesus disciples were concerned about this. Their first response was not to commence their own deliverance ministry so that they can help many more people. No. their concern was to stop the only deliverance ministry in town because they were not sure he was with them in doctrine and creed.

One good thing they did was that they took the matter to the Lord before they acted. Today, many don't even ask the Lord before they move to shut down the ministry. It is interesting that Jesus recognized that man as part of His people. He said the deliverance minister is with His people.

How do we rate this? This is third dimension of faith; faith to act on God's word. Another account which is in opposite direction is that even after Pentecost, there were members of Jesus ministry of whom the bible never one thing they achieved by being members of that fellowship. Mention must be made of Nathaniel and Mathias who replaced Judas. Many more believers are

still in this condition. They have believed indeed but they would not move to put what they believe to work.

I read this story from James Makiver's book, *Supernatural Power*: A rope climber was entertaining his audience along the side of a waterfall. He first tied a rope across the waterfall, then he walked on the rope to the other of the waterfall and back. The audience applauded in excitement. He got a wheelbarrow and walked across the gully of the waterfall with the wheelbarrow and back. There was more applause and excitement. Then he asked the crowd if anyone believed he could carry somebody in this wheelbarrow to and fro. They all shouted in affirmation. Then he asked somebody to climb into the wheelbarrow so he could carry out the exercise. Nobody was willing to climb into the wheelbarrow even though all of them have seen what he can do and celebrated him.

This story is a picture of what most believers do. They believe God and His word, they preach it and discuss it but you don't see the same people putting into action what they strongly affirm. That is why you see so much powerlessness and sicknesses among God's people. These kind of believers are poor reflection of the Christianity of the bible.

These are the kind of believers the world is asking every now and, "Where is your God?" you talk about your God all the time, but when will you introduce Him? Such believers will spend quality time trying defend the whole truth of the bible. The common text is,

***"Contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints." Jude 3.***

In their understanding the faith that was entrusted to the saints are arguments over words. Should a woman put on earrings or not? Should women wear trousers or not? What is the right day for Christians to be in church? What is the right titles of God? Should believers pay tithe or not? Is it proper for believers to pray in Tongues in public? So in their understanding, they are contending for the faith they answer bible believing churches because they know the bible offhand. When they interpret the bible they careful avoid these kind of scriptures –

***"Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles". Acts 2:43.***

***"As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed". Acts 5:15-16.***

***"Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city". Acts 8:5-8.***

***"As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the saints in Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years. "Aeneas," Peter said***

*to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord." Acts 9:32-35.*

*"While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God." Acts 10:44-46.*

*"In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk". Acts 14:8-10.*

*"God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them." Acts 19:11-12.*

*"When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power". 1 Cor 2:1-5.*

When we contend for the faith entrusted to the saints and leave out the power accompanying that faith, we do disservice to the one who entrusted the faith to us. The Christian faith was founded and commissioned with power. We cannot of a truth have a kind of Christian faith that is powerless. We do that at our own detriment. In fact the bible speaks against it –

*"...having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them." 2 Tim 3:5.*

Jesus Christ promised power to those who will witness to and contend for the faith. He warned them never to venture out until they receive power.

*"He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Luke 24:46-49.*

*"On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." .....But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:4-5, 8.*

The power received is to be manifested in the places of witnessing and contending for the faith. He left us an example in that regard. If we do not follow that example, we cannot say of a truth that we represent Him.

This third dimension or pillar of the Christian faith is missing in the fellowship of many believers. It rests on us to restore it. It is not difficult to restore, all it calls for is that we put our faith in the action gear. It will be the place of God to confirm His word. If we don't move in obedience, there will be nothing for God to act on. Somebody may ask, "How if I move and nothing happens?"

This kind of question only generates fear and doubts. Remember we said that it is only possible to enter into this realm of Christian experience by faith. I have been to Christian meetings when quality time was spent trying to explain to people how to operate in their spiritual gifts. There was time for questions and answers. The people celebrated the teachings but at the end nothing happened. Nothing happened because they could not enter into the realm by faith. In fact, I even feel that the many teachings further caused weakness because the people tried to grasp with their senses how it will work out. And because they could not grasp it, they could not move.

Regarding the question, "what if nothing happens?" Why should that bother you? If God will receive all the glory, I don't think He will leave you with all the shame. I have seen power in the ministry but I have also witnessed instances where I did not experience as much result as I expected. I did not stop. I kept moving, while insisting on what I believe is the true standard of Christ-like ministry.

***"And the disciples went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs". Mark 16:20 NLT.***

## Chapter Nine

### 4. Eternal faith

**J**esus Christ never deceived His followers; He told the whole truth, whether good, bad or ugly. One such truth is that they will be persecuted. He told them to prepare to face death.

***“They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.” John 16:2-4.***

One reason I love to be a Christian is because I am not in the dark about anything that will come my way. Some denominations today prefer to fool their followers, in such churches they don't make mention of death or sorrow to the hearing of the congregation. They don't announce the death of a member and they tell the members to keep smiling always. Unfortunately, Jesus Christ never made such promises. When people are not warned in this way about trials, temptation and possible death, they are often unprepared when such things happen. More often than not such a time comes. Even the founder of that church will die one day and his children and members will likely face the sad reality called death.

It is in keeping with the task of equipping the believer for days of sorrow and persecution that the church need to bring believers into teachings called eternal security. Sad to say that some teach eternal security as heaven on earth, instead of preparing the people for life after this life on the earth. This story will help us understand this issue better.

It was sometime in 1970s in Nigeria when Islamic extremists started killing Christians in the North of the country. This story was told of two preachers, one a local church pastor and the other an independent evangelist. The Islamists caught the evangelist in the middle of the road; they asked him to drop his bible on the ground and match on it and say that Jesus is not God. The evangelist did exactly that and they killed him after. This evangelist has been very vocal in calling people to surrender their lives to Christ. Some of the people he had preached to were among those who watched him renounce Christ in the face of death. This happened, not because he was not a genuine believer in Christ Jesus or that he did not have genuine love for God. It happened because one pillar was missing in his Christian faith, when pressure came on that side he fell. I can bet that all the other three were intact but the absence of just one was enough to jeopardize his eternal destiny. A big church in the city I live were shocked with the news that their senior deacon had died in a witch doctor's house. They knew that he was sick, they had given time to pray for his healing but he was not getting any better. One night his wife and family stole him out of the church and moved him to a witch doctor. He still died but my concern is that this last minute dial of Christ may cost him heaven. I believe so because last minute confession of Christ saved the thief on the cross even though he died a condemned criminal. So if last minute acknowledgement of Christ can move a man destined for hellfire to heaven, it is

safe to believe that last minute denial of Christ will move a man destined for heaven to hellfire. These happened because a pillar of faith was missing.

Back to the story of the pastor and the evangelist. The pastor and his family heard about the turmoil in the city and prepared to flee with their two children. But before they could move out, some people who did not know where to flee to just ran into the church. Pastor was confused about what to do with all these people. He cannot ask them to leave and he cannot abandon them there and flee. He knew they came to the church because they believed God's presence is there. How can he now tell them that they made a mistake? He asked them all to sit down quietly. His wife and children also sat down. He picked up his bible and began to teach them about the victory of Christ over death. Everywhere was still and others who did not know where to run just joined. He explained to them that those that believed in Christ have conquered death, and that they have no reason to be afraid of death. He hurriedly led those who have not given their life to Christ to the cross and then continued his teaching.

When the Islamists got there, they could not believe their eyes. They decided to use their popular formula and that was to set the house on fire and wait for those who would want to flee outside. No body moved in the church hall, all attention was on the pastor. His robust confidence strengthened their faith. The Islamists poured fuel all over and even on the pastor's bible. Pastor continued as if nothing was happening. They lit the fire but when the fire approached the building it will go out. They tried several times but the same result. So they made to enter with their knife and start killing but their leader stopped them and asked them to let this group be. It was not known what he saw or what he told them but they just matched away. That was how the faith of that pastor saved more than three hundred souls. He did not save them because he knew what will happen but he had already surrendered his life and God gave him back his life.

While I was working in Total Care Ministry Owerri, Nigeria, they rushed a baby to the clinic section of the ministry; with my prayer team on standby praying fervently, the baby died. The father happened to be a pastor of a prominent Pentecost church in the city. A nurse on duty approached him for necessary documentation but the pastor pounced on the nurse and wounded her brutally, so that the lady cried out and I had to come down from my office. He was not ready for bad news. I was made to understand that it was their first and only baby after four years of marriage. He had three minus one pillars. Some who claim Abraham as their father have abandoned their wife after three years of marriage because of fruit of the womb. Abraham waited for twenty five years and his children cannot wait for five years. Some who claim that the God of Shedrack, Meshach and Abednego was their God sold out in the face of losing their job on account of their faith as Christians.

Talk is cheap but days will come when you prove what you say, and it may be a fire-like trial. May God help you.

You can now see why this pillar is very important in the life of a believer. One day we must die, the sooner you let that sink in your subconscious, the better for you. It is true that Paul and Silas prayed and sang and the Holy Spirit came down and gave a jail break. But you should also know that Paul died in the prison. In fact, he was strangled.

You must set your focus on eternity in heaven, you must not let heaven out of your eyes. That was the way the Lord Jesus Christ lived His life on earth. He escaped many attempts on His life but the time to die came, He faced it courageously. You must develop the same mindset. We can work with all our strength to make life comfortable for ourselves here on earth but we should be careful we are not doing that at the detriment of our eternal bliss in heaven. Trials will come but understand also,

***“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” 1 Cor 10:13.***

***“Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings”. 1 Peter 5:9***

Did you read where it said, Standing firm in the faith? Having come thus far in this book, you know what dimension of faith the scripture is talking about now; eternal faith. The fourth dimension, the fourth pillar. Standing firm in the eternal faith in the face of your trials and imminent death. I heard a preacher talking about what he called, faith hall of fame. Speaking from Hebrews 11, he dramatized many of the characters and demonstrated their faith and exploits but I noticed he deliberately avoided something. If you avoid the mention of truth in your testimony, it does not take away that truth but only shows you are a false witness.

***“All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance”. Heb 11:13.***

They died believing, they died in faith. They did not receive what was promised but that did not push them out of faith. The anchor of their faith was from within their soul and held to the holy of holies. It was not shallow, but very deep. It was not faith for things but faith in God and their faith was in tandem with God’s purpose so they were strengthened by that inner conviction that if what they had faith for will come from God, then they had no reason to worry because God cannot lie and He cannot fail.

## Chapter Eight

### Conclusion

**F**rom the first to the last level of Christian faith requires that you enter, remain and continue in faith. For some people they don't have a problem entering by faith, but once inside, they begin live like it is by their efforts.

I have seen people I can bet are zealous for God, they memorize the word, act on the word of God sudden turn their back on the church. When you a careful look, you discover that he jumped the first dimension of faith. Perhaps, he is a good learner, so he learned everything and it was working for him. But pressure came on the starting point of his faith in Christ, it turned out that he never received the gift of salvation.

There are those who received salvation as a gift but kept struggling with the word of God; finding it difficult to accept it by faith, he suddenly declares he is not quite sure Christ is truly God, and then he falls back

There are many in holiness circles who are genuine in their faith as Christians and believe and preach the word of God with passion. Yet, each time they come to the point of walking on the sea, cast out demons and claiming their healing through the stripes of Jesus, they are never able to receive it for themselves. Their hearts soon overshadowed by doubt and fear, they also begin to draw back.

The worst of these are those who have every other thing right but at the twinkling of an eye, a child of loses all he had labored for because of lack of knowledge regarding eternal destiny.

None of the four is more important than the rest. God's will is that the believer should be complete in Christ. Bible faith is not docile or indolent. It is faith because it believes enough to act. Hence the bible advice

We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience will inherit what has been promised. Heb 6:12 NIV

Patience provides the platform for the ladder of faith. Faith is propped up by perseverance and hope, so that we can lay hands on the promises of God.

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