

**Opening Introduction** Faith is like the WiFi of the soul—you cannot visibly see the signal, but it has the incredible power to connect you directly to the greatest power source in the universe. Our theme for this week is simple but profound: Faith is not blind optimism or emotional pressure; it is Spirit-given trust in God, grounded in His Word and evidence, strengthened through action, and centered in the faith of Jesus. This week we will explore what true faith actually looks like, what we should do with our nagging doubts, and how we can cultivate a trust so deep that it reflects the very faith of Jesus Christ Himself.

**Opening Poll** What is your biggest struggle when it comes to having faith?

- A. Trusting God when I cannot see the outcome.
- B. Overcoming my doubts and logical questions.
- C. Relying on God's Word instead of my fluctuating feelings.
- D. Waiting patiently for God's timing.
- E. Believing that God actually cares about my personal situation.

**Opening Engagement Story** During the 1800s, George Müller cared for over 10,000 orphans in England without ever once asking for financial support or going into debt. One morning, the plates and bowls on the tables were entirely empty, and there was no food in the orphanage. Müller asked the 300 children to sit down, and he prayed, thanking God for the breakfast He was about to provide. Within minutes, a knock came at the door—a local baker couldn't sleep and had baked extra bread for them. Moments later, a second knock—the milkman's cart had broken down right outside the orphanage, and he offered them all the milk before it could spoil. Faith shifts our focus. It is not about what we can do in our own strength, but about an absolute, restful trust in what God can do.

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## Day 1 Afternoon – The Gift of Faith

**Main Theme** Faith is not something we must frantically muster up on our own; it is a gift from God that connects us to His power.

**Poll** How do you usually describe your faith?

- A. Strong and steady.
- B. Growing, but frequently tested.
- C. A messy mix of belief and doubt.
- D. Struggling right now.

**Opening Illustration** Think of a mustard seed. It is tiny, but it contains explosive, living potential. Jesus said faith is like a seed, not a pebble. A pebble just sits there, unresponsive to water or sunlight. But a seed, even a tiny one, holds the potential for massive growth if it is simply planted.

**Set the Scene** The writer of Hebrews begins his famous "Hall of Faith" chapter by giving us the ultimate, foundational definition of what faith actually is and does.

## 2026 Q2 L08 – Having Faith - Discussion Leaders Notes

**Read the Text** “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV). *(Ask someone to read.)*

**Set the Scene** The Apostle Paul also writes to the Ephesian believers, reminding them exactly where this faith comes from so they will not boast in their own efforts.

**Read the Text** “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:8 (NKJV). *(Ask someone to read.)*

### What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- The definition: faith is a "substance" and an "evidence."
- The contrast: "hoped for" and "not seen."
- The origin of salvation: "by grace... through faith."
- The source of the faith: "not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

### Guided Discussion

- Why is it such a massive relief to learn that faith is a "gift of God" rather than something we have to manufacture ourselves? *(Allow discussion)*
- How does faith act as the "substance" and "evidence" for things we cannot yet physically see? *(Ask follow-up)*
- Since God gives everyone a measure of faith (Romans 12:3), what is our responsibility in making that seed of faith grow?
- How does viewing faith as a connection to God—like WiFi—change how you handle your daily struggles? *(Invite multiple responses)*

**Discovery Insight** Faith is the reality of what we hope for, given to us as a free gift so that we can firmly trust God's promises even when we cannot see the final outcome.

**Christ Connection** Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith. We are entirely helpless on our own, but by relying wholly on the merits of the Savior, we are held by a hand that will never let go.

**Life Response** Stop stressing about your lack of faith today; instead, simply ask God to water and grow the seed of faith He has already planted in you.

**Encouragement Bridge** Stop stressing about trying to "muster up" enough faith. Faith is a gift that God has already placed in your heart. You just have to use it!

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## Day 2 – Just Give Me a Sign!

**Main Theme** True faith relies on the abundant evidence God has already provided rather than demanding constant miraculous signs.

## 2026 Q2 L08 – Having Faith - Discussion Leaders Notes

**Poll** If you could see one miracle to boost your faith, what would it be?

- A. A parted sea.
- B. A dramatic physical healing.
- C. Fire falling from heaven.
- D. An angelic visit.

**Opening Illustration** Sometimes people think having faith means checking your brain at the door and taking a blind, irrational leap into the dark. But God never asks us to do that! Our God is a God of reason, and He gives us abundant evidence in nature, history, and the Bible upon which to build our trust.

**Set the Scene** Despite seeing Jesus miraculously feed four thousand people and heal the sick, the religious leaders approach Him with a skeptical demand, wanting Him to prove His identity on their terms.

**Read the Text** “Then the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him. But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, ‘Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation.’” Mark 8:11, 12 (NKJV). (*Ask someone to read.*)

### What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- The action of the Pharisees: "dispute," "seeking... a sign," "testing Him."
- The emotional response of Jesus: "sighed deeply in His spirit."
- Jesus' definitive answer: "no sign shall be given."

### Guided Discussion

- Why do you think Jesus "sighed deeply" when they asked for a sign, especially after He had just performed so many miracles? (*Allow discussion*)
- Why is demanding a spectacular sign usually an indication of unbelief rather than a genuine search for truth? (*Ask follow-up*)
- If we base our faith entirely on emotional highs and miraculous signs, what happens to our faith when life gets quiet or difficult?
- What is some of the "abundant evidence" God has already given you in your own life to prove He is trustworthy? (*Invite multiple responses*)

**Discovery Insight** God provides a rock-solid foundation of evidence through His Word and our past experiences, rendering our constant demand for new, spectacular "signs" unnecessary.

**Christ Connection** Jesus Himself is the ultimate sign and the greatest evidence of God's love. By looking at His life, death, and resurrection, we have all the proof we need that God is entirely trustworthy.

**Life Response** Write down three specific pieces of evidence from your past where God has clearly led or protected you, and keep it as a reminder for hard days.

**Encouragement Bridge** God doesn't ask us to take a blind, irrational leap in the dark. He gives us abundant evidence in nature, history, and the Bible to build our trust.

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### Day 3 – Jesus Sees Our Faith

**Main Theme** The greatest faith is found in recognizing our own unworthiness while having absolute confidence in the power and authority of Jesus.

**Poll** When you need help, how do you usually approach God?

- A. Like a child asking a loving parent.
- B. Like a servant asking a master.
- C. Feeling unworthy and hesitant.
- D. Boldly and confidently.

**Opening Illustration** Think of a dedicated soldier taking orders from a commander. The soldier does not need a long explanation or a physical demonstration to believe the command is real; they simply trust the authority of the one speaking.

**Set the Scene** A Roman centurion—an outsider to the Jewish faith—approaches Jesus with a desperate plea for his sick servant, demonstrating a level of faith that astounded even Christ.

**Read the Text** “Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, ‘Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. ... But say the word, and my servant will be healed.’ ... When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, ‘I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!’” Luke 7:6, 7, 9 (NKJV). (*Ask someone to read.*)

#### What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- The centurion's humility: "I am not worthy."
- The centurion's absolute trust: "But say the word, and my servant will be healed."
- Jesus' reaction: "He marveled at him."
- Jesus' declaration: "I have not found such great faith."

#### Guided Discussion

- Why do you think Jesus "marveled" at this man's faith more than the faith of His own followers? (*Allow discussion*)
- How did the centurion's understanding of military authority help him understand how Jesus' power works? (*Ask follow-up*)
- Notice the contrast: the centurion felt completely unworthy, yet he had the greatest faith. Why do humility and great faith always go hand in hand?

## 2026 Q2 L08 – Having Faith - Discussion Leaders Notes

- How can we exercise this kind of "say the word" faith when we are praying for healing or breakthrough today? (*Invite multiple responses*)

**Discovery Insight** Strong faith does not rely on our own goodness or perfection; it relies entirely on the authority, power, and spoken Word of Jesus.

**Christ Connection** Jesus responds to raw, humble trust with immediate grace. He delights in those who recognize their profound need and rely wholly upon His ability to save and heal.

**Life Response** Pray for a specific need today, explicitly telling Jesus that you do not trust in your own worthiness, but entirely in His authority over the situation.

**Encouragement Bridge** You do not have to be perfect to have great faith; you just need to deeply trust the perfect Savior. Let Him speak the word over your life today!

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### Day 4 – Faith Is Not a Feeling

**Main Theme** Faith is taking God at His Word and choosing to trust Him even when our emotions are a mess.

**Poll** How do your emotions typically affect your faith?

- A. They dictate how close I feel to God.
- B. They sometimes cause me to doubt.
- C. I try to separate my feelings from my faith.
- D. I feel most faithful when I am happiest.

**Opening Illustration** Working out at the gym strengthens your muscles even on the days you really don't feel like being there. Spiritual exercise works the exact same way. You increase your faith by intentionally exercising it, trusting God's promises even when your feelings are completely discouraged.

**Set the Scene** A desperate father brings his demon-possessed son to Jesus after the disciples fail to heal him. The father is torn between a desperate hope and overwhelming, agonizing doubt.

**Read the Text** “Jesus said to him, ‘If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.’ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, ‘Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!’” Mark 9:23, 24 (NKJV). (*Ask someone to read.*)

#### What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- Jesus' condition for the miracle: "If you can believe."
- The father's immediate, emotional reaction: "cried out," "with tears."
- The paradox in the father's prayer: "I believe; help my unbelief!"

### Guided Discussion

- Why is "Help my unbelief!" such a powerful and acceptable prayer for a Christian to pray? (*Allow discussion*)
- If faith is not a "happy flight of feeling," how do we separate our true faith from our fluctuating emotions? (*Ask follow-up*)
- What should we do when we feel torn between trusting God and feeling like our situation is completely hopeless?
- Can you share a time when you had to act on faith even though your feelings were telling you to give up? (*Invite multiple responses*)

**Discovery Insight** Doubt is not the absence of faith. Choosing to cry out to Jesus and act on His promises in the very midst of our emotional unbelief is a profound exercise of true faith.

**Christ Connection** Jesus did not condemn the father's emotional struggle or his mixed-up faith. He met him exactly where he was with compassion, and He supplied the miracle that the man's faith lacked.

**Life Response** When you feel distant from God or overwhelmed by doubt this week, speak a Bible promise out loud instead of listening to your feelings.

**Encouragement Bridge** It is okay to pray, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" True faith isn't about always *feeling* confident; it's about trusting God's Word even when your emotions are a mess.

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## Day 5 – Examples of Faith

**Main Theme** The stories of biblical heroes prove that faith is a willingness to step out on God's promises before seeing the outcome.

**Poll** Which biblical hero of faith inspires you the most?

- A. Noah (obeying when it made no sense).
- B. Abraham (leaving the comfortable for the unknown).
- C. Sarah (believing God for the impossible).
- D. Moses (choosing hardship over worldly wealth).

**Opening Illustration** When you step onto a bridge, you are putting your faith in the engineers who built it, trusting it will hold your weight long before you reach the other side. A leap of faith means shifting your focus from the safety of the shore to the certainty of the One who built the bridge.

**Set the Scene** The author of Hebrews lists the "Hall of Faith," highlighting ordinary men and women who accomplished extraordinary things by trusting God over their visible circumstances.

## 2026 Q2 L08 – Having Faith - Discussion Leaders Notes

**Read the Text** “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ... for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” Hebrews 11:8, 10 (NKJV). *(Ask someone to read.)*

### What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- The catalyst for Abraham's obedience: "By faith."
- The level of uncertainty: "not knowing where he was going."
- The ultimate focus of his journey: "waited for the city... whose builder and maker is God."

### Guided Discussion

- Why is it so incredibly hard to follow God when we do not know the exact destination or the timeline? *(Allow discussion)*
- If you look back at your life, have you made more decisions based on faith, or based on fear and safety? *(Ask follow-up)*
- How does remembering that we are looking for a "heavenly city" change our perspective on earthly setbacks and unknowns?
- What "leap of faith" might God be asking you to take in your life right now? *(Invite multiple responses)*

**Discovery Insight** True faith requires a shift in focus—from what we can see, manage, and control right now, to the eternal promises that God has guaranteed for our future.

**Christ Connection** Jesus left the ultimate heavenly city, stepping into our broken world by faith, so that He could bring us safely home to the city whose builder and maker is God.

**Life Response** Identify one area of your life where you are clinging to control out of fear, and consciously release it to God today in prayer.

**Encouragement Bridge** The heroes of the past were not perfect, but they trusted a perfect God. You are called to pick up the baton and be a hero of faith for this generation!

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## Day 6 – The Faith OF Jesus

**Main Theme** As we navigate the end times, we are called to possess the same unwavering, obedient reliance that Jesus demonstrated on the cross.

**Poll** What do you think is the hardest part about having the faith of Jesus?

- A. Loving and forgiving my enemies.
- B. Trusting God when suffering unfairly.
- C. Remaining completely obedient under intense pressure.
- D. Surrendering my own will entirely.

**Opening Illustration** A reflection in a perfectly still lake shows the exact image of the sky above. When Jesus dwells fully in our hearts, the waters of our soul become still, and our faith becomes a perfect reflection of His faith.

**Set the Scene** In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John describes the defining characteristics of God's loyal people who stand firm through the final, intense struggles of earth's history.

**Read the Text** "Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12 (NKJV). *(Ask someone to read.)*

### What Do You Notice? (Observation Only)

- The required endurance: "the patience of the saints."
- The action of the saints: "keep the commandments of God."
- The possession of the saints: "the faith of Jesus."

### Guided Discussion

- Notice it says the faith *of* Jesus, not just faith *in* Jesus. What is the difference? *(Allow discussion)*
- How did Jesus demonstrate absolute faith in the Father when He was suffering in Gethsemane and on the cross? *(Ask follow-up)*
- Why is keeping the commandments of God intrinsically linked to having the faith of Jesus?
- How can we develop this same kind of enduring, patient faith today so that we are prepared for the trials of tomorrow? *(Invite multiple responses)*

**Discovery Insight** End-time faith is not just believing historical facts about Christ; it is allowing the Holy Spirit to reproduce the exact, unyielding trust and obedience of Jesus within our own hearts.

**Christ Connection** Jesus possessed perfect faith. When our faith is weak, we can rely entirely on His merits, knowing that He has already overcome the world and will hold us securely to the end.

**Life Response** Pray specifically today, "Lord, don't just give me faith *in* You; give me the very faith *of* Jesus."

**Encouragement Bridge** We are called to have the faith *of* Jesus! This means trusting the Father with the same unwavering, obedient reliance that Jesus showed on the cross.

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## Day 7 Summary

**Main Theme** Faith is not blind optimism or emotional pressure; it is Spirit-given trust in God, grounded in His Word and evidence, strengthened through action, and centered in the faith of Jesus.

**Poll** Which lesson on faith resonated with you the most this week?

- A. Recognizing faith is a gift.
- B. Crying out "Help my unbelief!"
- C. Remembering faith isn't a feeling.
- D. Looking at the biblical heroes of faith.
- E. Desiring the faith *of* Jesus.

## 5 Weekly Takeaways

- **The Gift of Faith:** Faith is like WiFi—invisible but powerful. It is not something we manufacture; it is a free gift from God that connects us to Him.
- **Evidence, Not Blindness:** God does not ask for a blind leap in the dark; He gives us abundant evidence in nature, history, and the Bible to build our trust.
- **Action Over Emotion:** Faith is not a happy flight of feeling. It is taking God at His Word and moving forward even when our emotions are a mess.
- **The Hall of Faith:** True prayer warriors and heroes of faith anticipate that God is at work, stepping out on His promises before they see the outcome.
- **The Faith of Jesus:** We are called to reflect Christ perfectly, trusting the Father with the same unwavering, obedient reliance that Jesus demonstrated on the cross.

**Final Reflection Question** Looking at the map of your life, have you made more decisions based on the safety of fear, or based on the bold leaps of faith? (*Pause for responses.*)

**Closing Appeal** God is not looking for you to perfectly understand the future, and He isn't demanding that you never have a moment of doubt. He is simply asking you to use the measure of faith He has already given you. When you feel helpless, cry out, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" Step out on His promises today, and let the Author and Finisher of your faith give you the very faith of Jesus.

**Closing Prayer** Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of faith. When our feelings fail us, remind us of Your abundant evidence. Help our unbelief, and plant the faith of Jesus so deeply in our hearts that we will follow You anywhere. In Jesus' name, Amen.