

Faith.

Faith = for activation in The House.

Vines Dictionary translates the Greek word 'pistis' and it primarily means firm persuasion, a conviction based upon hearing.

Over the next few weeks we will look specifically at the subject of 'faith'.

We will look at

- How faith builds,
- How it moves us higher
- What activates or is the fuel of faith
- What faith embraces
- The forces, which erode faith
- The basic characteristics of faith.

2005 is the year of the Miracle. Many people's lives have already been touched this year and will continue to be touched. God is in the business of letting the World know through us about Himself.

He doesn't send Jesus again to die, but rather through us He shows Himself strong to the world. Our faith is that which He uses to show the world. Faith is not meant to be a private thing. Recently on TV, George Negus presented a segment on a Christian University in US. At the end of the segment he stated that 'religion was a private matter'. He was attempting to dictate to us that religion was something we keep to ourselves. This is diametrically opposed to the very principles of the great commission. It is in direct opposition to faith.

As we uncover, discover and rehearse our knowledge of faith we must at all turns recognise one basic foundational tenet - faith is not an abstract quality based on promises or their rewards, FAITH IS A PERSON. It is Jesus Christ.

A line to recent song written by some young people says it the best. 'Salvation is here and He lives in me'. Lets not divide or segregate our life into compartments, but let's always hold true. He is our source. He is our everything. He is our all.

So then how does faith 'Jesus' build?

1. Faith builds gradually

Romans 10:17 - *Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*

Remembering the definition by Vines that faith is a conviction based upon hearing.

We need to hear something to have faith. It will no just be absorbed into our consciousness by osmosis. We need to hear something. This can be both physical and spiritual.

As we listen to something, we learn. So it is with faith. Slowly, precept upon precept, thought upon thought, line upon line, God builds a greater understanding of faith and how He works in and through us.

2. Faith builds with purpose.

Mark 1:38 - *Jesus said "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, for this is the purpose I have come for."*

Faith needs a purpose. Everything in life needs a purpose to be purposeful. No purpose and we feel useless. Our purpose, the object of our faith is not just to live a great life with great benefits both now and in the future, but it is the salvation of the world.

It's the ultimate purpose. Our purpose is to obey the Word of God to us. But one word rides high over all others and it is Jesus' final words to the world before he departs. "Go into all the world and preach the gospel."

3. Faith builds with Hope

Hebrews 11:1 - *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for and evidence of things to come.*

Hope is the building block of faith. No hope, no faith. Little hopes, little strength in our faith.

During the week I was again reminded that I was named after a Catholic patron saint. St Jude the Hope of the Hopeless, or the patron saint of lost causes. My parents named me after that believing that by doing so God would move in their lives. And God did move. They did not realise at the time, but God had a bigger purpose, I was destined to bring hope to this world through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even when we don't fully grasp what is happening His hand hasn't left the doorknob.

One final thought for today. You may ask "Where can I get this faith so that it can build in my life?" Faith is a person and thus we only get it from the person. That person is Jesus Christ.

When we accept Jesus as our Lord and saviour He comes into our lives and lives in us. Now faith is in us. Romans 12:3 says He has give to each of us a measure of faith. We have faith. It's there. Faith is in us because He is in us. It is not in us because we adhere to series of steps or actions. It is in us because Jesus is in us.