

How to Build a Faith that Will Last

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Introduction: A living faith is a great gift from God.

- A. We live in a generation that has no purpose for living.
 - 1. Our government and our media are working to cleanse references to faith and God from everyday life.
 - 2. Our culture is predictably descending into greater hostility and alienation.
 - 3. Nations will rise and fall, but those who trust in God will be blessed!
(Psa 33:12-17; Isa 40:15)
- B. We do not need to depend upon our culture to build a living faith that will last!
 - 1. One of the things that helped me to learn to trust in God was the expression of faith found in those who trusted God.
 - 2. I knew that I had pain in my life and I struggled to know how to deal with it. Then I read about the apostle Paul. **(Rom 8:18)**
 - 3. I knew that I did not have peace or purpose in my life but then I heard the words of Christ. **(Jn 16:32-33)**

I. You must make faith your own

- A. Each of us needs to recognize that there is a God.
 - 1. You may need help in overcoming the indoctrination of this world.
 - 2. Most people when stripped of their prejudices will admit there is a God.
(Rom 1:20; Ecc 3:11)
 - 3. Faith is not a discarding of reason but is built upon it. **(Heb 11:1)**
- B. You must begin to seek God. **(Heb 11:6)**
 - 1. I began when I saw my own emptiness and saw the power of faith.
 - 2. Many do not want to believe because they think their lusts will provide fulfillment in life. Their problem is one of the will and not of evidence.
(Jn 3:19-20)
- C. You must seek the pure word of God. **(Psa 119:140; Prov 30:5; 1 Pt 2:2)**
 - 1. Many are led astray because they let men stand in the place of God.
 - 2. To believe in the one true God you must make His promises your own.
 - 3. I still remember when I first started my own Bible reading and needing help from a paraphrase “version.” I wanted to know God for myself.
 - 4. How can you really build a faith in God by building with the writings of men or of the directions of a human organization?

II. You must handle the word of God with the will to obey

- A. A faith without a life of repentance is dead. **(James 2:17-19)**
 - 1. The word of God when correctly applied will create great discomfort. The one with a living faith knows this and seeks it out! **(Jn 3:21)**
 - 2. You will actually *seek out teachers like this* for your goal is to become more like the Lord. You place yourself before Him daily.
- B. You must never stop seeking, discerning and learning. **(Heb 5:12-14)**

1. Rather than run from doctrinal questions, you run to them.
2. Rather than letting someone else teach, you desire to learn how to share with others that which has so enriched your life.
3. Along with your learning you have a great confidence in God's grace as offered in his conditional promises. **(Rom 8:15-17)**

C. Protect the conscience. **(Acts 23:1; 1 Tim 1:5, 19; 4:2)**

II. You must build relationships with faithful people

A. What goes into your heart? How do you build a faith that will last?

(1 Cor 3:11-14)

1. The kind of teacher and teaching that you receive will make a difference.
2. Who do you open your heart to? **(Mal 3:16; Heb 10:32-33)**
3. You know the difference between one really wanting to hear and know God and one who is playing religion. Do you have such a friend?

B. You need to separate from those with a "toxic faith."

1. Some take their focus off God and begin to become bitter and proud.
2. Beware of those who become enamored with others and cause you to develop bad attitudes towards others. **(Heb 12:14-15)**
3. It is easier to spread the "gospel of bitterness" than to patiently endure and work with your brethren. **(Eph 4:31-32)**
4. Some descend into darkness and take others with them.

III. You must build a solid doctrinal foundation

A. Building a doctrinal foundation is challenging. **(Eph 4:13-15)**

1. We must not despise the discernment that leads to a solid foundation.
2. Consider the exhortations of the apostle Paul. **(1 Tim 1:3; 4:13, 16; 6:3-4)**
3. How can a man build such a foundation? How would you seek it?

B. You must resist the attitude that fights sound doctrine within a local church.

(2 Tim 4:1-4)

1. How do these attitudes spread within a local church? How do men like this react to sound teaching?
2. Please fight to keep a good conscience. **(1 Tim 1:19-20)**

IV. Renew your mind daily by seeing the unseen

A. Take time to place yourself before God. **(Rom 12:1-2)**

1. When we center on God we can keep our thoughts on His promises.
2. Simply expressing thanksgiving to God will keep our hearts faithful.

B. Often think about the second coming and heaven. **(Rom 8:24-25)**

Conclusion: What kind of faith are you building?