

A Study of Faith Pt.1



Matthew 19:26

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- When people say they have faith, they do not always mean the same thing.
- Some people mean that they are taking a chance and leaping into the unknown with the hope that something good will happen.
- Some mean that they wish for a desirable outcome, “I hope my team wins!” “Just have faith, they will...maybe...as long as the Defense shows up...ok it depends...but have faith!”

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- Rarely do you hear somebody say “I have faith because of the evidence I have before me.”
- Rarely do you hear somebody say “I have faith because I believe.”
- This is why an understanding of faith is important, if we can identify its proper place, then we can make sense of Biblical Faith.

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- This is why over the next few weeks we will seek to study and understand faith in three ways:
 1. Defining and Identifying Faith
 2. Demonstrating the importance of faith based in truth.
 3. Identifying a collective body of people who live by One True Faith.

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- This morning let us approach this study having removed all former notions, and preconceived ideas from our thinking.
- For This study we will strive to maintain a Biblical definition and understand of faith, and how it can directly effect our relationship with God.

WHAT IS FAITH?

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- Before we can properly deal with faith from a Biblical standpoint we have to be able to identify and understand true faith.
- Essentially we cannot deal with Biblical faith if we don't know that of which Biblical Faith Consists.
- We will let the Bible define for us what faith truly is...

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**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen.**

~ Hebrews 11:1

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Faith Is:

1. The Substance (*The Underlying Reality of a real life situation*) of Things Hoped For
2. The Evidence (*An Available Body of Facts*) of Things Not Seen

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- What the Hebrew writer is telling us is that faith is based in the wants and needs of reality, and that those are confirmed by obtainable facts.
- Not just hope, not wishing and finger crossing, not a blind leap in the dark, but a hope that is confirmed in evidence.

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- The fact of the matter is that everybody believes in something:
 1. I only believe in what is right in front of me, what I can touch with my hands and see with my eyes.
 2. I only believe in things that produce actual results (Science, Medicine, Money etc.)

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3. I don't believe in anything at all (*This is still a belief that nothing can be believed*).

4. I believe in God, Jesus Christ, and the Word of God.

Is it not possible to believe in Science, Medicine, and yet at the same time still believe in God?

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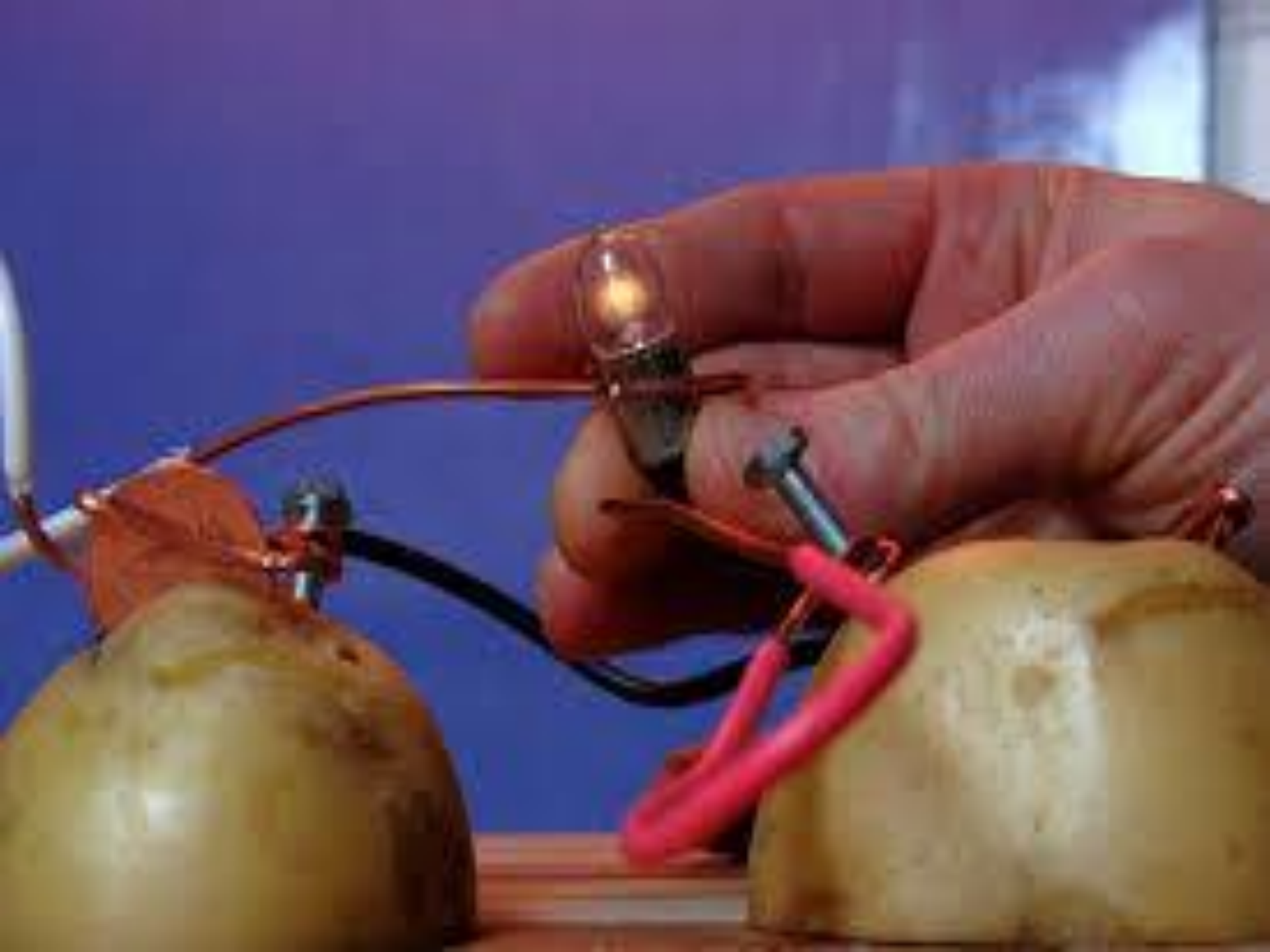
- **Science – I know that if place a penny and a galvanized nail into a potato and then run wires from that potato into a light bulb that the following reaction will occur:**

Oxidation: $\text{Zn} \rightarrow \text{Zn}^{++} + 2\text{e}^{-}$
(Zinc loses 2 electrons)

Reduction: $2\text{H}^{+} + 2\text{e}^{-} \rightarrow \text{H}_2$
(Hydrogen ions gain electrons)

Net Reaction: $\text{Zn} + 2\text{H}^{+} \rightarrow \text{Zn}^{++} + \text{H}_2$
(Hydrogen gas and 'power')

While I cannot see this reaction take place I can see the results



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- Lets measure this up to what the Hebrew writer says:
 1. The Underlying Reality is the want and need to light a Bulb.
 2. While we cannot actually see the reaction take place we know it did because of the evidence and result: The Bulb Lit Up

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- Therefore I can have Faith because the reality of my needs and wants (in this case light) were confirmed with observable results.
- Lets think about this from a medicinal standpoint. If one has a bad infection, they could lose their life. Bacteria live in our bodies, some are good and some are bad (science has proven this)



**When these bad bacteria attack
they can do some foul things
to us**

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We rid ourselves of these bad bacteria with antibiotics:

- **Penicillin**
- **Amoxicillin**
- **Cipro**
- **Tetracycline**

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- I cannot actually see (without the aid of a microscope which the doctor or lab may use) the bacteria living in my body but I know they are there because of the evidence:
 - Sore Throat
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Rash etc.

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- I cannot see the antibiotic in my body working to kill the infection, but know it did because of the evidence.
- The symptoms are all gone
- And now I'm feeling...

ALL BETTER



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- Once again lets examine this in accordance to what the Hebrew writer says:
 1. The underlying reality is an infection that needs to be cured.
 2. While we cannot see the infection being killed by the antibiotic we know it did because of the evidence: The Infection is Gone

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- There is a vast, seemingly limitless, world of examples that we could use here.
- Yet the formula is true, a real hope in the form of a want or need exists and the answer to this is based in the evidence.
- Now most people can see this and appreciate this when it comes to worldly things but they slam the door on this process when it comes to spiritual things.

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Why would they do this?

Even though faith is based in evidence we still have to step out and go to it:

We aren't jumping blindly out into the unknown, but instead are believing to be securely caught by what we know is there

Jumping Into This

A large, powerful ocean wave is shown crashing, with white foam and dark blue water. The wave is the central focus of the image, with a sense of motion and energy. The background is a dark, overcast sky, which makes the white foam of the wave stand out.

And Hoping That Someone Is In There To Catch
You, Is A Lot Harder To Do Than.....

Jumping Into A Secure Situation



Where We Have Proof That Someone Is There To Catch Us.

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- But this still ultimately requires that to some degree we allow ourselves to be vulnerable.
- People, generally speaking, even if it is a sure thing, don't want to feel vulnerable.
- We are afraid that we are going to open ourselves up, hit the water, and God won't be there.

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- Yet The Bible Tells Us Something About This:

*Therefore know that the LORD your **God**,
He is **God**, the **faithful God** who keeps
covenant and mercy for a thousand
generations with those who love Him and keep
His commandments.*

~ Deuteronomy 7:9

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*No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but **God is faithful**, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

~ 1 Corinthians 10:13

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God *is* faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

~ **1 Corinthians 1:9**

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- Now Use This Same Method For Yourself:
 1. We have a need, the reality of a situation in our lives that is beyond our own ability to solve it: Illness, Job Loss, Grief etc.
 2. We Pray and ask for God's help.
 3. While we cannot actually see God in action we see the results of the answered prayer.

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- The fact of the matter is that the evidence of God's existence is all around us:
 - We see it in the world in which we live
(Romans 1:20)
 - We see it in the Bible's declaration of things that neither science nor medicine had discovered at the time in which they were proclaimed **(Isaiah 40:22; Leviticus 12:3)**

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- We see it in our own lives when we attempt to follow Christ and keep the Word and are showered with blessings.
- We see it when we pray so earnestly for something and it happens.
- We cannot see God physically, but the evidence that He is there, present, and active is without question.

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- **It is for this reason that Peter could proclaim:**

He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

~ 1 Peter 1:20-21

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- It is for this reason that Paul could write:

For we walk by faith and not by sight

~ 2 Corinthians 5:7

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*For by grace you have been saved through faith,
and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.*

~ Ephesians 2:8

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- It is for this reason the Hebrew writer could say:

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

~ Hebrews 10:22

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- It is why The Lord could say:

Jesus answered and said to them,

“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

~ John 6:29

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Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

~ John 14:1

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- Faith is the hope and reality of our needs being met, and seeing the evidence around us that they have been met.
- God's evidence is all around us, whether we choose to see it or not...
- This morning we ask...

Will Your Faith Lead You...

“He who believes and is baptized will be saved;
but he who does not believe will be
condemned.

~ Mark 16:16

To Follow Christ?