



Open Water Ministries

# ~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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## Worship Music

### Prayer

Lord, I receive this word today as strength for my life. You have called me to do something great for You, and I'm not going to let the devil or my circumstances chase me away from where I know I need to be. It's been very difficult, but this season will pass—and when it does, I'll be stronger, wiser, and more equipped for the future. I thank You for helping me to dig in, take a firm stand, and maintain the post You have assigned to me. Lord there are many of us, for we are one body with many parts, and it takes all of us. You have given each of us a task and there is know one any better than anyone else, for what You have given each of us to do, combines together to make Your one body. Lead us, guide us, teach us and convict and change us when necessary, in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Lord I Believe In You-  
Crystal Lewis](#)

[For Such A Time As This-  
Crystal Lewis](#)

[I Still Believe-  
Crystal Lewis](#)

[Trust Me-Crystal Lewis](#)

### Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

[“How Can I Trust God To Do Great Things Through Me?” Charles Stanley](#)

## Radio Stations

[KWVE ...Calvary Chapel](#)

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[Chuck Smith  
Through The Bible](#)

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[Jon Courson](#)

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[Charles Stanley](#)

[David Wilkerson](#)

[Greg Laurie](#)

[Virtue for Women-  
Cathe Laurie](#)

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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1 And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. 2 And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. 3 Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. 4 Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. 5 And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together. 6 Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few. 7 And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies. 8 And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah; 9 Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant. 10 They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar. 11 Bless, LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again. 12 And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him; and the LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders. 13 And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, 14 And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, 15 And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, 16 And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. 17 His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh. 18 And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and, Issachar, in thy tents. 19 They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand. 20 And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. 21 And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the LORD, and his judgments with Israel. 22 And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan. 23 And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD: possess thou the west and the south. 24 And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. 25 Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be. 26 There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. 27 The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. 28 Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. 29 Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

← Chapter thirty-three, →

Now this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel just before he died. And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints; Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. The king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together. Let Reuben live, and not die; and let his men be few (Deu 33:1-6).

The word "not" you notice is in italics, that means it was added. It was really "let his men be few". Now Reuben actually was one of the smaller tribes as they took the land. And it became really sorta scattered among the other tribes and the men of Reuben did become very few.

And this is the blessing of Judah; and he said Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people; let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies. (The prophecy for Levi), Let the Thummin and the Urim be with the holy one, whom thou did prove at Massah, and with whom thou did strive at the waters of Meribah; Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brothers, nor knew his own children; for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant (Deu 33:7-9).

In other words, the priests and Levi were observed. Aaron was told don't mourn for your sons when they die. Don't touch their bodies and so forth. And so he kept the word of the Lord and didn't regard his own family but his service to God more important.

Bless LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands. And concerning Benjamin he said, The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him; and LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders (Deu 33:11-12).

Now if you will take a look at the map of Benjamin, you'll find it sorta looks like shoulders. And right between the shoulders is the city of Jerusalem, if you will look at Benjamin, on a map of the Bible area of Benjamin. "And so the Lord shall dwell between his shoulders." Here is the first hint that Jerusalem will be the place where the temple will be built and where people will come to worship the Lord, there in the shoulders of Benjamin, which was Jerusalem.

And of Joseph he said, Blessed be Joseph of the LORD or his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, And for the precious fruits (Deu 33:13-14)

And so forth. You remember that Jacob said Joseph was as a "fruitful bough whose branches hangs over a wall" (Genesis 49:21). And so the fruitfulness of Ephraim and Manasseh the sons of Joseph.

And of Zebulun, (verse eighteen) he said, Rejoice Zebulun, in thy going out; and Issachar, in thy tents. They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand (Deu 33:18-19).

Now Zebulun occupied the area that is the plains of Megiddo and the mount of Carmel and out towards Haifa. Now Asher actually occupied the port city of Hifa and north along the coast. But because of this prophecy, and also we'll get one about Asher here who will dip his toes in the oil, there are some Christian business men who are oil engineers and geologists and all have gone over and studied the area around Mount Carmel because of these scriptures and they are convinced that there are vast oil reserves there under Mount Carmel and they are beginning drilling for oil. The first test well is starting the first of this next year. And they are hoping to discover vast reservoirs of oil. They believe from their geologist surveys, their seismology tests and so forth that there are vast reserves of oil. If there indeed be, it makes this prophecy very interesting concerning Zebulun that he will actually suck out the treasures from the sand. And they believe there are oil-bearing sands under this area that was once inhabited by Zebulun.

And so they are beginning a series of test wells the first of the year. In fact, we're supposed to visit one of the wells when we're over there in February. It's just a mile from that monastery on the top of Mount Carmel. You that have been over to Israel, you will remember that monastery on the top of Mount Carmel. Just about a mile east of that monastery is where they're putting down that first test hole. And so it's very interesting. It will be interesting to see what comes of it.

But this prophecy concerning Zebulun is one of the things that sparked them to start their geological surveys and testing over there. It is interesting that the vast oil resources of Saudi Arabia and the Middle East were discovered by Rockefeller after he read the Bible and in reading of Babylon, how they used tar for their mortar. He figured if there was that much tar in the area, there must be oil deposits there and he is the one that went over on the basis of reading the scripture and started this vast oil exploration of the Middle East. And of course that is where he became so extremely wealthy is because he was reading the Bible and believed what the Bible said. And they started their drilling there in Iraq, and of course, they discovered more and more of the vast oil reserves of the area. But Rockefeller was prompted by the scripture talking about their using tar for their mortar in Babylon to go over there and to start drilling for oil. Now if that indeed be the case, it would be interesting to drill down in the area of the Dead Sea because they did use pitch down there also, or tar.

Now of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlarges Gad: he dwells as a lion, and tears the arm with the crown of the head. And he provides the first part for himself, and a portion for the lawgiver (and so forth). And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan. And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied the favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD. And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; Let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be (Deu 33:20-26).

Now Asher, if you look at Asher on a Bible map, you'll see that Asher looks like a leg from the knee down with a foot, and the toe of the foot of Asher was at Hifi. "He shall dip his foot in oil." Actually the first major oil pipeline to bring oil out of the Middle East was built from Iraq to the port city of Hifi. Once it was completed they started shipping out a million gallons of oil a day. Through Hifi, Asher had his foot in the oil just like Moses said he would almost four thousand years ago. So it's a very interesting prophecy of the Bible concerning Asher "his foot in the oil", and that's exactly what did happen. Whether or not there is more than that, whether or not in their drilling they are going to find oil there, it will be very interesting to find out. They are, as I said, starting their test wells the first of the year.

Now this particular scripture, verse twenty-five, the latter part, how I love this. "And as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Take that as a promise of God for you. As your days, so shall your strength be. God's grace is sufficient for you. And whatever you are facing for that particular day, God will give you strength for that day. "As your day is so shall your strength be." I love it.

The eternal God, is thy refuge, (verse twenty-seven) and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop their down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of the excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places (Deu 33:27-29).

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers.

Friday night we were up at Eureka; beautiful night up there, cold and clear. Looking up we could see so many stars. And after the service we were standing outside with some of the fellows, and we were looking up and they were pointing at some stars and I said, "Well that the constellation Orion. Now you see those three stars that are in a row there?" I said, "The bottom star of those three stars is four hundred and fifteen million miles in diameter. If you were to hollow out that star leaving a crust, a hundred million miles thick, you could put the sun in the center of that star and let the earth rotate around it and have room to spare". Now the amazing thing is that star is traveling at a speed estimated to be somewhere around twelve hundred miles a second. Now that's an awfully large mass to be traveling that fast. How much thrust do you suppose it took to get Betelgeuse into orbit?

The psalmist said, "when I consider the heavens to be the work of thy fingers, the work of thy hands. The sun, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained. What is man that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalms 8:3-4) The thrust that it took to get Betelgeuse in orbit, that huge, huge mass, was just this flick. "But I consider the heavens the work of your hands."

Now if God with His hands "stretched out the heavens like a curtain" (Psalms 104:2), to me the eternal God is thy refuge and underneath is not the everlasting hands, but the everlasting arms. Believe me that if with His hands He could stretch out the heavens, His arms can hold you through any adversity or problem you might be facing. Underneath are the everlasting arms. So often I've wondered, "God are you able to hold me through this one? Are you sure, God, you can hold me up? I'm awfully heavy at times, Lord." Underneath are the everlasting arms; how beautiful.

(Through The Bible; C 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; 1979-1986)

## VI. PRAYER AND IMPORTUNITY

"How glibly we talk of praying without ceasing! Yet we are quite apt to quit, if our prayer remained unanswered but one week or month! We assume that by a stroke of His arm or an action of His will, God will give us what we ask. It never seems to dawn on us, that He is the Master of nature, as of grace, and that, sometimes He chooses one way, and sometimes another in which to do His work. It takes years, sometimes, to answer a prayer and when it is answered, and we look backward we can see that it did. But God knows all the time, and it is His will that we pray, and pray, and still pray, and so come to know, indeed and of a truth, what it is to pray without ceasing." -- Anon.

Our Lord Jesus declared that "men ought always to pray and not to faint," and the parable in which His words occur, was taught with the intention of saving men from faint-heartedness and weakness in prayer. Our Lord was seeking to teach that laxity must be guarded against, and persistence fostered and encouraged. There can be no two opinions regarding the importance of the exercise of this indispensable quality in our praying.

Importunate prayer is a mighty movement of the soul toward God. It is a stirring of the deepest forces of the soul, toward the throne of heavenly grace. It is the ability to hold on, press on, and wait. Restless desire, restful patience, and strength of grasp are all embraced in it. It is not an incident, or a performance, but a passion of soul. It is not a want, half-needed, but a sheer necessity.

The wrestling quality in importunate prayers does not spring from physical vehemence or fleshly energy. It is not an impulse of energy, not a mere earnestness of soul; it is an inwrought force, a faculty implanted and aroused by the Holy Spirit. Virtually, it is the intercession of the Spirit of God, in us; it is, moreover, "the effectual, fervent prayer, which availeth much." The Divine Spirit informing every element within us, with the energy of His own striving, is the essence of the importunity which urges our praying at the mercy-seat, to continue until the fire falls and the blessing descends. This wrestling in prayer may not be boisterous nor vehement, but quiet, tenacious and urgent. Silent, it may be, when there are no visible outlets for its mighty forces.

Nothing distinguishes the children of God so clearly and strongly as prayer. It is the one infallible mark and test of being a Christian. Christian people are prayerful, the worldly-minded, prayerless. Christians call on God; worldlings ignore God, and call not on His Name. But even the Christian had need to cultivate continual prayer. Prayer must be habitual, but much more than a habit. It is duty, yet one which rises far above, and goes beyond the ordinary implications of the term. It is the expression of a relation to God, a yearning for Divine communion. It is the outward and upward flow of the inward life toward its original fountain. It is an assertion of the soul's paternity, a claiming of the sonship, which links man to the Eternal.

Prayer has everything to do with moulding the soul into the image of God, and has everything to do with enhancing and enlarging the measure of Divine grace. It has everything to do with bringing the soul into complete communion with God. It has everything to do with enriching, broadening and maturing the soul's experience of God. That man cannot possibly be called a Christian, who does not pray. By no possible pretext can he claim any right to the term, nor its implied significance. If he do not pray, he is a sinner, pure and simple, for prayer is the only way in which the soul of man can enter into fellowship and communion with the Source of all Christlike spirit and energy. Hence, if he pray not, he is not of the household of faith.

In this study however, we turn our thought to one phase of prayer -- that of importunity; the pressing of our desires upon God with urgency and perseverance; the praying with that tenacity and tension which neither relaxes nor ceases until its plea is heard, and its cause is won.

He who has clear views of God, and Scriptural conceptions of the Divine character; who appreciates his privilege of approach unto God; who understands his inward need of all that God has for him -- that man will be solicitous, outspoken and importunate. In Holy Writ, the duty of prayer, itself, is advocated in terms which are only barely stronger than those in which the necessity for its importunity is set forth. The praying which influences God is declared to be that of the fervent, effectual outpouring of a righteous man. That is to say, it is prayer on fire, having no feeble, flickering flame, no momentary flash, but shining with a vigorous and steady glow.

The repeated intercessions of Abraham for the salvation of Sodom and Gomorrah present an early example of the necessity for, and benefit deriving from importunate praying. Jacob, wrestling all night with the angel, gives significant emphasis to the power of a dogged perseverance in praying, and shows how, in things spiritual, importunity succeeds, just as effectively as it does in matters relating to time and sense. As we have noted, elsewhere, Moses prayed forty days and forty nights, seeking to stay the wrath of God against Israel, and his example and success are a stimulus to present-day faith in its darkest hour. Elijah repeated and urged his prayer seven times ere the raincloud appeared above the horizon, heralding the success of his prayer and the victory of his faith. On one occasion Daniel though faint and weak, pressed his case three weeks, ere the answer and the blessing came.

Many nights during His earthly life did the blessed Saviour spend in prayer. In Gethsemane He presented the same petition, three times, with unabated, urgent, yet submissive importunity, which involved every element of His soul, and issued in tears and bloody sweat. His life crises were distinctly marked, his life victories all won, in hours of importunate prayer. And the servant is not greater than his Lord.

The Parable of the Importunate Widow is a classic of insistent prayer. We shall do well to refresh our remembrance of it, at this point in our study: "And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man; and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of my adversary. And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you He will avenge them speedily."

This parable stresses the central truth of importunate prayer. The widow presses her case till the unjust judge yields. If this parable does not teach the necessity for importunity, it has neither point nor instruction in it. Take this one thought away, and you have nothing left worth recording. Beyond all cavil, Christ intended it to stand as an evidence of the need that exists, for insistent prayer.

We have the same teaching emphasized in the incident of the Syrophenician woman, who came to Jesus on behalf of her daughter. Here, importunity is demonstrated, not as a stark impertinence, but as with the persuasive habiliments of humility, sincerity, and fervency. We are given a glimpse of a woman's clinging faith, a woman's bitter grief, and a woman's spiritual insight. The Master went over into that Sidonian country in order that this truth might be mirrored for all time -- there is no plea so efficacious as importunate prayer, and none to which God surrenders Himself so fully and so freely.

The importunity of this distressed mother, won her the victory, and materialized her request. Yet instead of being an offence to the Saviour, it drew from Him a word of wonder, and glad surprise. "O woman, great is thy faith! Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt."

He prays not at all, who does not press his plea. Cold prayers have no claim on heaven, and no hearing in the courts above. Fire is the life of prayer, and heaven is reached by flaming importunity rising in an ascending scale.

Reverting to the case of the importunate widow, we see that her widowhood, her friendlessness, and her weakness counted for nothing with the unjust judge. Importunity was everything. "Because this widow troubleth me," he said, "I will avenge her speedily, lest she weary me." Solely because the widow imposed upon the time and attention of the unjust judge, her case was won.

God waits patiently as, day and night, His elect cry unto Him. He is moved by their requests a thousand times more than was this unjust judge. A limit is set to His tarrying, by the importunate praying of His people, and the answer richly given. God finds faith in His praying child -- the faith which stays and cries -- and He honours it by permitting its further exercise, to the end that it is strengthened and enriched. Then He rewards it by granting the burden of its plea, in plenitude and finality.

The case of the Syrophenician woman previously referred to is a notable instance of successful importunity, one which is eminently encouraging to all who would pray successfully. It was a remarkable instance of insistence and perseverance to ultimate victory, in the face of almost insuperable obstacles and hindrances. But the woman surmounted them all by heroic faith and persistent spirit that were as remarkable as they were successful. Jesus had gone over into her country, "and would have no man know it." But she breaks through His purpose, violates His privacy, attracts His attention, and pours out to Him a poignant appeal of need and faith. Her heart was in her prayer.

At first, Jesus appears to pay no attention to her agony, and ignores her cry for relief. He gives her neither eye, nor ear, nor word. Silence, deep and chilling, greets her impassioned cry. But she is not turned aside, nor disheartened. She holds on. The disciples, offended at her unseemly clamour, intercede for her, but are silenced by the Lord's declaring that the woman is entirely outside the scope of His mission and His ministry.

But neither the failure of the disciples to gain her a hearing nor the knowledge -- despairing in its very nature -- that she is barred from the benefits of His mission, daunt her, and serve only to lend intensity and increased boldness to her approach to Christ. She came closer, cutting her prayer in twain, and falling at His feet, worshipping Him, and making her daughter's case her own cries, with pointed brevity -- "Lord, help me!" This last cry won her case; her daughter was healed in the self-same hour. Hopeful, urgent, and unwearied, she stays near the Master, insisting and praying until the answer is given. What a study in importunity, in earnestness, in persistence, promoted and propelled under conditions which would have disheartened any but an heroic, a constant soul.

In these parables of importunate praying, our Lord sets forth, for our information and encouragement, the serious difficulties which stand in the way of prayer. At the same time He teaches that importunity conquers all untoward circumstances and gets to itself a victory over a whole host of hindrances. He teaches, moreover, that an answer to prayer is conditional upon the amount of faith that goes to the petition. To test this, He delays the answer. The superficial pray-er subsides into silence, when the answer is delayed. But the man of prayer hangs on, and on. The Lord recognizes and honours his faith, and gives him a rich and abundant answer to his faith-evidencing, importunate prayer.

E.M. Bounds; Prayer; "The Necessity Of Prayer" Chapter 6; Public Domain;  
Edward McKendree Bounds (August 15, 1835 – August 24, 1913) was a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and author of eleven books, nine of which focused on the subject of prayer.

**DO YOU REALIZE THAT YOUR FAITH is a gift from God? You should look upon your faith as a miracle. It is the ability God gives lost men and women to trust and obey our Savior and Lord. It is the ability God gives regenerated men and women to continue to trust and obey.**

**And Jesus is the author of our faith.**

Are you satisfied, contented with your faith? Is it the kind of faith that is pleasing to God? Does it rest solidly upon the very nature and character of God? I raise these questions with the hope of finding some ripple of concern among God's people about this simple, straightforward statement in the letter to the Hebrews: "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." In all of my ministry I have found comparatively few eager to consider what the Bible teaches concerning genuine faith in God. It is difficult, also, to find spiritual concern among Christians for trusting God and living to please the One who created us and who redeemed us back to Himself. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is often called "The Faith Chapter." Its opening message is familiar: Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. ... By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. ... And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Heb 11:1-6) "The Faith Chapter." I doubt that most people recognize the full meaning of that term, "the faith chapter." I would like to amend the title by calling Hebrews 11 the "Faith in-God Chapter." Or, even better, the "Faith-in-the-Character-of-God Chapter." The word "faith" can mean a thousand different things to as many people. It is especially so if in their thinking there is no basic reference to God, no consideration of His eternal will and no understanding of the lostness of mankind. I have discovered that professing Christians can read about the great exploits of faith in the past—and then immediately ask the age-old question, "But what is faith?"

**No actual definition**

Although the writer to the Hebrews declares that faith is being sure of what we hope for and being certain of what we do not see, he is not thereby actually providing us with a definition. Definitions have to do with human reason, human intellect, human philosophy. I think God had his own reasons for withholding a specific definition of faith from the pages of our Bibles. God's record and appeal are spiritual messages, directed to the spirits of needy men and women. If our Christian testimony is to be vital and effective, we must understand that the Bible was not given to serve as a handbook of ethical considerations. Rather, it is plainly a book of morals. Therefore, when we take God at His word in committing ourselves to Jesus Christ, we discover that faith and morals are two sides of the same coin!

I repeat: The Bible is not a book of reason about things that are good and things that are bad. Rather, it is an authoritative book clearly demonstrating for us what is good and what is bad! On that basis, then, what does the Bible tell us about genuine faith?

Without dealing in pinpoint definitions, we know that faith as demonstrated in the Word of God is complete confidence and trust in God and in His plan of salvation through Christ. Let us agree further that faith is a gift of God to every penitent, trusting person. Beyond that, faith is a miracle, for God gives lost men and women the blessed ability to trust and serve Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Bible assures us that faith in God is the plain gateway to forgiveness, to cleansing, to regeneration, to restoration. The Bible declares that where there is no faith there are no answers to fervent prayers. The Bible makes clear that every spiritual benefit flowing from the atonement of Christ is given to faith and is received by faith. All of this is common evangelical doctrine and is accepted wherever the cross of Christ is rightly understood.

**Beware of faith in "faith"**

I have often warned men in the ministry of their great responsibility when they begin to preach and counsel about faith. It is quite possible to lead people into the mistake of placing their faith in "faith" itself. I do not think any of us believes that as Christians we can or should ever be satisfied by emphasizing our faith in "faith." To do so would result in our bragging about the greatness of our faith and our trading mutual testimonies about the results of our faith. I remember an old story, used more than once as sermon illustration. It concerned an anonymous Christian believer who testified of great faith and willing obedience with this rather amazing promise: "If the Lord ever asks me to jump right through that brick wall, I am ready to jump!" My point is that we should not be busy magnifying our own great faith. Rather, we should be busy demonstrating the fragrance of God's love and grace in our daily walk. It is not proper to magnify faith if in doing so we forget that our confidence as believers is not in the power of faith but in the person and work of our Savior, Jesus Christ. I have heard ministers say that if the people in their congregations would memorize more Bible promises, they would immediately have more faith. Yes and no. Study the Scriptures and you will find that we are not going to have more faith by counting the promises of God. Faith does not rest upon promises. Faith rests upon character. Faith must rest in confidence upon the One who makes the promises. Faith says, "God is God! He is a holy God who cannot lie. He is the God who is infinitely honest—He has never cheated anyone. He is the God who is faithful and true!" Yes, we must be concerned with the person and character of God and not just with His promises. Through promises we learn what God has willed to us, we learn what we may claim as our heritage, we learn how we should pray. But faith itself must rest upon the character of our God. When I think of the angels in heaven who veil their faces before the holy God who is totally truthful, I wonder why every preacher does not begin preaching about God—who He is, His attributes, His perfection, His being and why we love Him and why we should trust Him!

**A.W. Tozer**

(AMP Bible; The Everyday Life Bible; Joyce Meyers; Scripture; Commentaries; Past Pastor Sermons; Dictionary; 2006; pg 323-326)  
(Word 9 Bible Software; 2010; Concordance, Dictionary, Scripture, Sermons of Saints past, Devos; Sparkling Gems From The Greek)