

CHAPTER THREE

FAITH AND THE PROMISES OF GOD

A group of people once asked Jesus how they could do the work of God. Jesus replied, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent” (John 6:29). God desires belief and faith from us, for “without faith it is impossible to please God” (Hebrews 11:6).

But often our “faith” is nothing more than wishful thinking—“I hope everything works out all right. I have ‘faith’ that it will.” The biblical concept of faith far surpasses this superficial approach.

WALKING BY FAITH

1. How does faith relate to the *beginning* of the Christian life?
Ephesians 2:8-9

You received Christ by faith. How then should you live?
Colossians 2:6

2. How would you define faith from:
Acts 27:25

Romans 4:20-21

Hebrews 11:1

“Faith is the assurance that the thing which God has said in his word is true, and that God will act according to what he has said in his word. . . . Faith is not a matter of impressions, nor of probabilities, nor of appearances.”

GEORGE MULLER³

3. What does faith make possible? Match the following:

- ___ Hope, joy, peace a. *Matthew 21:22*
- ___ Answered prayer b. *Romans 15:13*
- ___ Power over Satan c. *Ephesians 3:12*
- ___ Access to God d. *Ephesians 6:16*

4. State the principle of 2 Corinthians 5:7 in your own words, and give an example of how you can apply it.

5. What sin can exclude you from seeing God work?
Matthew 13:58

The opposite of faith is not doubt; it is unbelief. Doubt only needs more facts. Unbelief is disobedience and refuses to act in accordance with what God has declared.

³ As quoted in *George Muller: Man of Faith* by Basil Miller (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1972), 27–28.

b. Why did you choose this? _____

THE PROMISES OF GOD

- 11.** Think of a specific situation when someone promised you something.
a. How did you evaluate whether or not that person would keep his promise?

- b. Did he keep it? _____
- c. How does this affect your attitude toward his future promises?

12. God also makes certain promises to you. What does Scripture say about the words of God?

1 Kings 8:56 _____

Psalms 89:34 _____

Isaiah 55:11 _____

2 Peter 1:4 _____

13. Why do you think God's promises are trustworthy?

PROMISES TO CLAIM

14. Fill in the following chart.

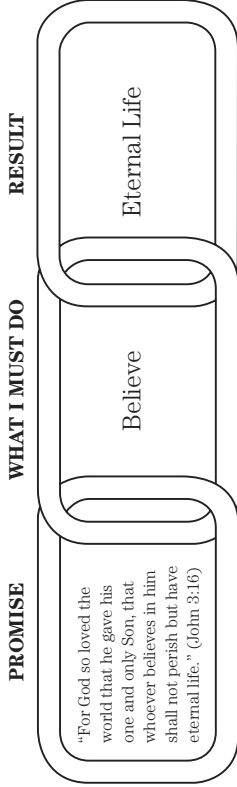
PROMISE	CONDITION, IF ANY
<i>John 15:7</i> _____	_____
<i>Lamentations 3:22-23</i> _____	_____
<i>Romans 8:28</i> _____	_____
<i>Galatians 6:7</i> _____	_____

15. Why do you feel God places conditions on some promises?

16. What is God's attitude about fulfilling his promises to you?
2 Corinthians 1:20

What should your attitude be in claiming God's promises?
Hebrews 6:12

It is helpful and encouraging to note God's promises. You may want to keep a list of these promises, their conditions, and their results. God's promises often form a "chain" like the example below.



17. Discover how Jehoshaphat utilized the promises of God. Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-30.

- What was the first thing Jehoshaphat did? *Verses 3, 6-12*

- How did God answer him? *Verse 15*

- Was this a promise? _____
- What was his next response? *Verse 18* _____
- What evidence is there that Jehoshaphat believed God's promise?

- How did he encourage others? *Verse 20*

- What was the result? *Verses 22, 27* _____

18. What is one promise you have discovered in your Bible reading?

Specifically, how has this promise helped you? _____

Remember These Points

- Faith is based on the Word of God.
- People may entrust their lives to a number of objects which will ultimately fail. The only worthy object of faith is God.
- To me, the most significant example of faith from Hebrews 11 was:

- God is a faithful Promiser whose words never fail. God does what he says he will do because he is faithful to his word.
- Christians should claim God's promises, for he desires to respond to our faith.