

Faith Is Trust In And Commitment To A Person

Faith in God and Jesus Christ also means trust in and commitment to Them. In this chapter, we will examine this trust and commitment. In the next chapter, we will see faith also involves submission to God and to Christ as our Lord and Master. The English word “surrender” includes elements of all these three things – trust, commitment and submission. So remember when reading this and the next chapter, there is a very close relationship between trust, commitment, submission and surrender in our relationship to God.

In Greek the words “*believe*” and “*believed*” are mostly “*pisteuo*”. “*Pisteuo*” is often used in the New Testament to mean “totally entrusting” ourselves to God or “wholly committing” ourselves to Him. Vine says “*pisteuo*” means “to believe, also to be persuaded of... to place confidence in, to trust, signifies, in this sense of the word, reliance upon, not mere credence”¹ and “to entrust, commit to”.² Louw and Nida define “*pisteuo*” as sometimes meaning “to entrust something to the care of someone”.³

A faith *without trust and commitment* components is *not a real saving faith*. It is a dead faith.

The King James and the New King James Versions of the Bible translate forms of the word “*pisteuo*” as “*commit*” in Luke 16:11 and John 2:24 or as “*committed*” in Romans 3:2, Galatians 2:7, 1 Timothy 1:11 and Titus 1:3. The New American Standard Bible translates forms of the word “*pisteuo*” in the above verses as “*entrust*”, “*entrusting*” or “*entrusted*”.

The New Testament word “*believe*” or “*pisteuo*” also relates to committing ourselves totally to God for His salvation and for His use and purposes. This entrusting ourselves to Him is part of the only type of believing that can receive God’s salvation. It is a terrible tragedy when preachers are afraid to include commitment to God as part of their teaching on faith and salvation. Some even sadly equate any mention of commitment to Jesus Christ as being a form of legalism.

The words “*believe*” and “*faith*” are mainly used among non-Christians in English-speaking Western countries to mean just believing in the truth of something. This is why these two English words do not fully explain what it means to have faith in Jesus Christ in the sense it was meant in the original Greek New Testament. The Greek word “*pistis*” translated “*faith*” and its associated verb “*pisteuo*” are used in the New Testament in ways that relate to *trusting* and *depending* on Jesus Christ as a *Person* and to *committing* ourselves to *His Lordship* and to *His saving work*.

Saving faith is trust, reliance and commitment to a *Person* – Jesus Christ, not just belief in truths about Him. Saving faith includes belief in truths about Him, but is much more than that. In Acts 16:31, Paul stressed it is belief on the *Person* of Jesus Christ which receives

¹ Vine, page 61.

² Ibid, page 113.

³ Louw and Nida, page 464.

salvation: *“So they said, ‘believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.’”*

Bible Study Questions

1. Explain why the meaning of the New Testament word *“believe”* or *“pisteuo”* in Greek, when used in relation to Jesus Christ, includes trust in and commitment to Him.