

Title: ADVANCING IN FAITH

Text: Hebrews 11:1-6

Intro: When you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, the Holy Spirit comes into your life and seals you as a child of God. This is an amazing one-time experience; however, you are meant to grow in your walk with God. As you do, you get to know Him in a personal way, discover His purpose for your life, learn to listen to and obey Him, experience His presence and power, and understand what it means to be a Christian.

I. Faith is not a feeling; it is a confident conviction that God will do what He has promised (Heb. 11:6).

A. It is His desire that believers would be not only be saved but that they grow in faith and walk in Him daily (**Col. 2:6**).

B. Just as Jesus grew in wisdom, so should we (**Luke 2:51-52**). You should be able to ask God for more than you did a year ago or even to ask for things you might never have believed possible in the past. Those who are not walking in the Spirit and trusting God will not advancing in their faith and be used by God for His glory.

II. TEN WAYS TO ADVANCE IN FAITH

A. Facing and overcoming adversity and trials. God looks at each person's life and designs trials to achieve His purposes. God knows exactly how to strengthen you spiritually. Also, the Lord will use and bless you in proportion to your faith (cf. **Matt. 9:27-30**)

B. Understanding the nature of God. The Father wants His children to know Him better. We must comprehend that He is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient as well as holy, righteous, merciful, and kind. As you come to understand the totality of the God who reveals Himself through His word and life circumstances, your faith will grow (**Eph. 1:18-19**).

C. Meditating upon His word. The Bible is the word of God, the very fuel of our faith. If we want to know what God thinks, how He acts, and what He can and will do, the Bible is the place for answers. Daily meditation on it allows the Father to reach our minds and hearts, protect and provide our needs (**Josh. 1:8**).

D. Applying the principles of His word. We can't expect to grow if we do not apply biblical principles. If we follow His will, God will enable us to succeed. He honors our willingness to follow Him, and our faith will grow because we will see evidence of His hand working in our lives (**2 Tim. 3:16**).

E. Observing the ways of God. At times, God allows hardships to help us learn dependence. Other times, He is silent in order to develop patience. Also, He uses seemingly inopportune situations or people who seem unfit for His purposes to accomplish what He desires. Knowing all the ways in which God works will broaden your faith (**Psa. 18:30a**).

F. Observing His work in the lives of others. God will put certain people in our lives to influence and challenge us. Watching their actions and hearing their testimonies can help our faith mature (**Phil. 3:17**).

G. Obeying the will of God. Obeying God and leaving all the consequences to Him is the perfection of faith. The willingness to do what He asks is the greatest example of obedience, and it brings the ultimate blessing because it honors and pleases God (**John 6:38**).

H. Receiving answers to prayer. We should pray with confidence, and boldness that our heavenly Father will provide everything we need. Much like a father who promises to catch his child when he leaps into a pool, God wants us to trust Him and "jump" in faith. He'll catch us every time (**1 John 5:14**).

I. Worshipping God. When we sing, whether in church or by ourselves, we are making a public profession. We're saying we believe in God's power and greatness. We're confessing what we believe and expect a blessing (**John 4:24**).

J. Confessing our failures. We can't fool God; He knows when we've made a mistake or failed Him in some way. The thing we must immediately do is repent and confess it to God immediately. Then, recommit ourselves to live according to His will and learn from our errors (**Psa. 51:3-4a**).

Conclusion: We will never know what our potential and witness the best things God has in store for unless we are willing to walk by faith and trust God at all times. Whatever your situation, God can help you advance spiritually if you're ready to fully obey Him.