

### WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE?

Initially you might not feel much difference, although some people do feel a peace, as if they 'have come home'. However, as our relationship grows with Jesus, our life style will change and some of the old bad habits and ways we thought about things change. We see people in a different kind of way. Our priorities in life change so that it is no just a case on wanting to get our own way all the time. Also we grow more sure of our future with Jesus.

*God is the one who began a good work in you, and I am certain that he won't stop before it is complete on the day when Christ Jesus returns.'*

Philippians Chp 4 vs 6-7

### HOW CAN I BE SURE ?

Every relationship becomes stronger by getting to know the other person and trusting in them. The first disciples did that by walking with Jesus, listening to his teaching, watching him pray and seeing him perform miracles and we can still do the same thing as we read about him in the Gospels. I would encourage you, when you read the Gospels, to imagine you are there, hearing the voices, smelling the new baked bread and even tasting the excellent wine as you bring to life the scenes and events.

The first disciples saw in Jesus someone they could trust to lead them into a new kind of life, discover a new kind of love that is stubbornly faithful, give them a certain hope for the future and the assurance of his presence with them.

That took time to grow but they became more and more sure because Jesus didn't fail them. They would have faltered from time to time but he never did. Jesus remains faithful.

### HOW CAN I BUILD UP FAITH?

The old theologians used to speak about something called the 'means of grace'. Grace is the undeserved kindness of God and the means by which God shows his kindness towards us. He does this in in four ways.

The first is through reading our Bible. It is through reading our Bible we get to know what God is like, what he wants for us and what he has planned for us. How he wants us live and be at peace. We can do that by reading the Bible on our own, with some help (Bible reading notes), with others in a Bible Discovery Group and through teaching at worship.

The second is through prayer. The best and most effective way to pray is to have a conversation with God, opening up your heart to him, pouring out your troubles to him, asking him to guide and help you.

The third is through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and worship. When you remember what Jesus did for you on the cross and how he died for you, it reminds you of his extravagant love for you and how special you are to him.

The fourth is by asking again and again that Jesus will fill your life with His Spirit, the Holy Spirit. When you first became a Christian you invited Jesus to come into your life. Sometimes though, we push him aside, or not make room for him, forget he is there or just not make time for Him. Jesus in fact tells us to keep asking the Father to fill us with his Spirit and the more you do that the less likely you are to lose him.

Now you are a Christian, enjoy your life with Jesus, be confident about your future with him and look for ways of showing your love in serving him and others.



## FINDING FAITH



Sometimes a bereavement or loss, a disappointment or other crisis in life makes us ask about faith.

This leaflet aims to try to make a start in answering some of the questions we all have about faith.

What is faith?  
How can I find it?  
How can I be sure?  
What difference will it make?  
How can I build up my faith?

## WHAT IS FAITH?

Faith is about trusting or believing in someone or something and we all do that. We all put our trust in people and things, whether the bus driver when we step onto the bus or the brakes when we put our foot down to stop a car.

Lots of people say they believe in God, indeed most people have a religious belief of some kind. But when asked what they believe, it is often a vague idea that there is a power or purpose behind the universe or they believe there is some kind of life force that keeps everything going.

*Faith makes you sure of what we hope for and gives proof of what we cannot see.*

Hebrews Chp 11 verse 1.

## SEARCHING

There are lots of arguments for the existence of God such as the design argument which asks us to look at the intricate design of the world and how it all holds together, the alternative is to say that the world is an accident.

But when it comes down to it, it is impossible to prove the existence of God by argument alone, if it was everyone would believe and you wouldn't be reading this.

Did you know that no where in the Bible is there an argument for the existence of God. It just takes God's existence for granted. That shouldn't stop us for searching for him though. The fact that you are reading this proves there is a need within us to search for God.

## HOW CAN I FIND FAITH?

People have always believed in some kind of god. Think of the Romans and Greeks and others who have put their trust in wooden and stone or even metal statues.

One of the amazing things about the Bible is that it talks about God searching for us. Remember when Adam and Eve found themselves outside the garden? Who was it who went searching for them? It was God! Remember the story of the Prodigal Son, while the son went off spending his inheritance and making a mess of his life? There was someone standing at the garden gate waiting and searching for him in the hope he would come back. This was the father, which many have seen as God.

*All who call out to the Lord will be saved.*

Romans Chp 10 vs 13

Maybe it is not faith we need to find then, but God. One of the other amazing things the Bible talks about is that God has made himself known and has done so through his story in the record of the Bible and his relationship with a people (the Jews), but in the fullest way, through Jesus.

The first people who met Jesus saw a man like themselves, who ate and slept, who sweated and wept. A man who got his feet dirty and whose muscles ached. But he was much more than that, he was extraordinary in the way he lived and spoke and acted. If you want to know who this really was you have to sit down and read through one of gospels such as Mark. In doing so you will see for yourself why people put their faith in him and why you can put your faith in him and have a relationship with him.

## HOW CAN I HAVE THAT RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS?

Every relationship starts with an initial commitment of some kind and then grows. Our relationship with Jesus Christ starts when we invite him into our life.

It begins by recognising our need for God and being right with him and that starts by saying sorry for the past and turning away from our old life and the wrong things we have been doing and then asking Jesus to come into our heart.

Jesus once said (Revelation Chp 3 verse 20) that he stood at the door and knocks, waiting and if anyone opens the door, he would come in and have fellowship with them. He comes into our life then by means of his spirit and from that point on it is a matter of getting to know him better and growing closer to him.

*'Think of how much the Father loves us. He loves us so much that he lets us be called his children, as we truly are.'* 1 John Chp 3 verse 1

Here is a prayer some people have used to enter into that relationship with Jesus:

**Lord Jesus, thank you for coming to live as one of us and dying for me for all the wrong I have done. Please forgive me for the way I have treated those around me and for the wrong things I have thought and done. Please come into my life now and help me to live your kind of life and fill me with your love. AMEN**

If you prayed that prayer tell a Christian friend or the minister and they will pray for you.