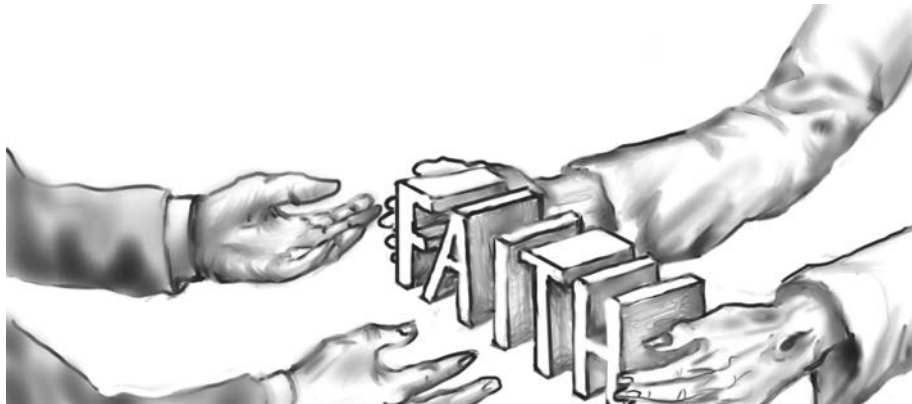


# Having Faith



## SABBATH—MAY 16

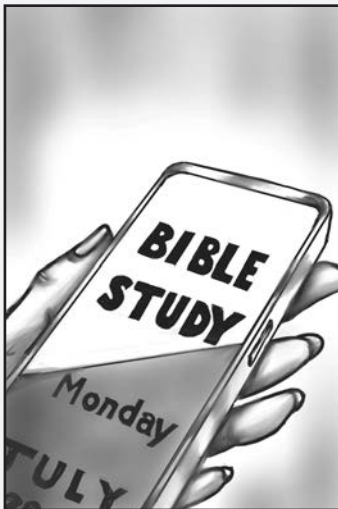
**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Mark 8:11, 12; Mark 4:40; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 11; Revelation 14:12.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Faith means being sure of the things we hope for. And faith means knowing that something is real even if we do not see it” (Hebrews 11:1, ICB).

**SOMEONE SAID,** “Faith is the same as Wi-Fi or an internet connection. You can’t see Wi-Fi. But it connects you to the power you need.” For sure, we can’t see faith. But we can’t have a relationship with God without faith.

How strong is your faith in God today? Was your faith weak in the past? Maybe you had an experience that caused you to doubt. Now you are stuck in your relationship with God. You aren’t growing anymore. You don’t know what to do to solve the problem. Or maybe your faith is the same as a rosebud that opens into a beautiful flower and fills a room with its perfume? As the memory verse for this week says, “Faith means being sure of the things we hope for. And faith means knowing that something is real even if we do not see it” (Hebrews 11:1, ICB). We can’t give ourselves faith. The Bible says, “Keep in mind [remember] the faith God has given to each of you” (Romans 12:3, NIV). Faith is a gift from God (Romans 12:3; Ephesians 2:8, 9). We have faith in God because of everything He already does in us and for us.

This week, we explore the topic of faith. What do we do with doubt? What does Jesus tell us about strong faith? Also, what does it mean to have “the faith of [that comes from] Jesus” (Revelation 14:12, KJV)?



“You can’t see Wi-Fi.  
But it connects you  
to the power you need.”

**JUST GIVE ME A SIGN! (Mark 8:11, 12)**

Maybe you heard someone say, “If I could just see God part the Red Sea, or Jesus heal a blind man! Then I’d believe.” Maybe you thought these same things yourself.

Is it easier for us now to have faith than the Israelites had in Bible times? The Israelites didn’t own a whole Bible. They also didn’t have a long history to look at and study, as we do. Moses taught the people to remember God’s leading and His love to them in the past (read Deuteronomy 4:7–10; Deuteronomy 8:2, 3). We are different from the Israelites. We have 6,000 years of Bible history to help us (read John 20:30, 31)!

In every age, people want a sign or proof for God. But proof for God is all around us. If you read Matthew 24, you will see how many things already happened that Jesus talked about. Many of these things are happening now.

**People in Jesus’ day wanted Him to give them a sign as proof that He really was God’s Son. God already gave them so many signs. How did Jesus answer in Mark 8:11, 12?**

Do we argue with Jesus and give Him a test the same as the Jewish leaders did? Do we make Jesus “[cry] with a low, sad sound” (Mark 8:12, EASY) because we don’t have faith? Jesus already gave us everything we need to believe.

“The Jews didn’t need signs. Proof wouldn’t help them. They didn’t need more knowledge. They needed new hearts.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 406, adapted. What about us? Do we also need new hearts? Do we need a real relationship with God? Maybe we don’t need a sign at all. We have so much knowledge already in our Bibles.

So, let’s not make Jesus “[cry] with a low, sad sound” (Mark 8:12, EASY) because we don’t have faith. Remember Jesus’ words to Thomas: “ ‘You believe because you have seen me. Other people have not seen me, but they do believe in me. God is really happy with those people’ ” (John 20:29, EASY; also read Hebrews 11:1). God doesn’t ask us to believe without giving us reasons for our faith. He already gave us so many reasons. But God never forces us to have faith. We can choose to doubt if we want. Or we can think about the things that help our faith grow strong.

**In just 60 seconds, talk about your faith in God. What does your answer tell you about your relationship with Him?**



**Moses taught the people to remember God’s leading and His love to them in the past (read Deuteronomy 4:7–10; Deuteronomy 8:2, 3).**

## JESUS SEES OUR FAITH (Mark 4:40)

**What does Jesus say in Mark 4:40 about His followers' faith? Compare that with the faith of the woman in Matthew 15:21–28.**

We may say that we are Jesus' followers. But that doesn't mean that our faith is strong. In Jesus' day, some people said they believed in Him. But Jesus saw what really was in their hearts (John 2:23–25).

**Read the story in Luke 7:1–10. What do we learn about faith from this story?**

---



---



**In Mark 9, we read about the man who asked Jesus to command the demon to leave his son. But the man's faith was weak.**

In Mark 9, we read about the man who asked Jesus to command the demon to leave his son. But the man's faith was weak. "He said with tears in his eyes, 'Lord, I have faith. Help my weak faith to be stronger [grow more powerful]!' " (Mark 9:24, NLV).

In these stories, do you see how Jesus noticed people's faith? Some people had strong faith. Some people had weak faith. Jesus did miracles because of their faith. Or He did miracles to make their faith grow strong.

The Holy Spirit helps us to believe. But the devil wants us to doubt. He wants us to think that God doesn't care about what happens in our lives. "Doubt has an evil power over us. Doubt will continue to grow in hearts if we let it. So, we must remove every last bit of it. Do not act out your doubts. Do not talk about your doubts. Then your doubts will die because you are not giving them any control over your life. Faith and love must grow in the heart."—Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works*, page 17, adapted.

What do you do with your doubts about God, the Bible, or His love? God invites us to talk with Him, the same way that He talked with Abraham, Moses, and Job. For sure, we may not always understand the reasons for everything God does. But God invites us to work with His plan. We must trust Him with what we don't fully understand.

**Think of all the reasons you have for faith. At the same time, when must you just accept what you can't understand and live in faith?**

**FAITH IS NOT A FEELING (Ephesians 2:8)**

Jesus said that if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can move mountains (Matthew 17:20). If you saw a mustard seed, you know that it is very small. But having faith this small can make big things happen. So, faith must be powerful enough to do something we can't do. A mustard seed can grow into a large tree (Matthew 13:31, 32). In the same way, our faith should keep growing, too.

**What does Ephesians 2:8 tell us about our faith and being saved? What if someone says, "I don't have faith because God didn't give me any"? Why is this idea false?**

Faith is our answer to the Holy Spirit. God works with the Holy Spirit to bring us close to His heart. We must allow the Holy Spirit to do this work (Jeremiah 31:3). God saves us with His love and mercy when we believe in Him. God gives us His love and forgiveness when we accept Jesus' death for our sins. Our relationship with God comes from our understanding of this Bible truth.

Next, we must remember that faith isn't a feeling. "Many people don't live their faith because they are waiting for a feeling of joy to fill them first. Feeling is not faith. . . . Joy comes from God. We must live our faith first. Then God will give us the blessing and this joyful feeling."—Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, page 72, adapted.

Some people don't feel close to God in their hearts. Or they don't think they are good Christians. So, they think that they don't have faith for these reasons. But faith is about belief and trust in God in the good and bad times. We also must trust in God when we can't fully understand what is happening in our lives.

We must not allow our feelings to control our religious experience or our relationship with God. Do you feel that God is very far away from you? That's just when you need to have the most faith. Pray to God (the same as the father did in the story in Mark 9:24).

**Look up these Bible verses: Hebrews 12:1, 2; 2 Chronicles 15:7; Romans 3:23–26; and Luke 7:50. Ask God to use these promises to make your faith and relationship with Him strong today. Say these verses as part of your prayer to God.**



**A mustard seed can grow into a large tree (Matthew 13:31, 32). In the same way, our faith should keep growing, too.**

## EXAMPLES OF FAITH (Hebrews 11)



Remember the father with the child who was filled with a demon? The father came to Jesus.

Spend time today reading Hebrews 11. Read the chapter without stopping. Then read it a second time. Write down your thoughts to the questions below:

- Read verse 1 again. What do you hope for today that you can't see now? (Think of both your needs for this life and your spiritual needs.)
- What part does faith have in your personal story about Jesus and how He gave you a new heart and life?
- Read verse 3 again. God made the earth and the skies. He is alive. Why should this Bible truth be the easiest thing for us to believe?
- Read verse 6. Write the message of this verse in your own words.
- Verses 7–40 talk about the lives of different people in the Bible. Why is faith an important part of their relationship with God?

We need faith to have a living, strong relationship with God. How can you have more faith? How can you help someone whose faith is weak? Here are some ideas:

**A small amount of faith (the same as a mustard seed) is powerful. A little bit is all you need to grow a relationship with God (Matthew 17:20).** Are you willing to work with God? Then He will help your faith grow.

**Faith comes from hearing God talk to us in His Word, the Bible (Romans 10:17).** Study the Bible and pray daily.

**Ask God to help your faith grow (Luke 17:5).** Remember the father with the child who was filled with a demon? The father came to Jesus. "He [the man] said with tears in his eyes, 'Lord, I have faith. Help my weak faith to be stronger [grow more powerful]!' " (Mark 9:24, NLV). We can see our need. We can ask God to give us more faith.

**Don't give up your faith because you have doubts (Mark 9:24).** Don't stop trusting God because you have questions you can't answer. Take your questions to God. Let your life show God saves you (Philippians 2:12–16).

**Accept the Holy Spirit.** Ask God for more of the Holy Spirit in your life.

**Live your faith.** Remember that faith isn't a feeling. Faith is a decision to believe. Remember in hard times that when you can't see God, He is there (2 Corinthians 5:7).

**Thank God for His help.** Read the hymn "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." Make it your personal prayer of thanks.

## JESUS' FAITH (Revelation 14:12)

Soon this earth's history will end. The Three Angels' Messages talk about God's people at that time. God's people will keep God's commandments and have Jesus' faith.

**Read Revelation 14:12. What does Jesus' faith or "the faith of Jesus" (NKJV) mean?**

---



---

In the 1890s, Seventh-day Adventists came to an understanding about "the faith of Jesus" and the Three Angels' Messages. Until that time, the church's teaching about the law didn't include enough about the Good News. Ellen G. White wrote: "As a church, we announced that we must keep God's law. But we didn't announce that Jesus' faith is also important. The law and the Good News are connected." —*Selected Messages*, book 3, page 172, adapted.

Hebrews 11 gives us a list of holy men and women who had strong faith. But no one had faith the same as Jesus.

**Read the story in Matthew 26:36–42. What do these verses teach us about Jesus' faith in this story?**

When we have Jesus' faith, we will obey Him and the Bible. We will copy the faith that Jesus had in God. Also, we will have a living experience with Jesus every day. Jesus must be the most important part of our daily lives. Without Him, we can't have a saving relationship with God.

When we have Jesus' faith, Jesus will live in us. His faith will live in our hearts. Jesus is the reason for our faith. At times, our faith may be weak. But Jesus is strong and worthy (Revelation 5:9). We can have Jesus' faith. Then our own lives will show His faith is in us. We will be living proof that God gives His gift of love and forgiveness to everyone who believes.

**How much do you want Jesus' faith? Ask God to help you empty your heart of all pride. Ask Him to give you this faith. Make Hebrews 11:6 your personal prayer, saying, "Lord, without faith, I can't make You happy. I come to You and believe that You live. I believe that You will reward me when I seek You with all my heart. I do so now. Amen."**



**When we have Jesus' faith,  
Jesus will live in us.  
His faith will live  
in our hearts.**



“Jesus will hold on to us.  
He will not let go.”

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** God forgives and accepts us when we believe in His love and forgiveness. God offers these gifts to us because of Jesus. God also makes us holy because of our faith (Acts 26:18). When we invite Jesus into our lives, we also become God’s children (John 1:12). We live with faith in the Son of God (Galatians 2:20).

“Without Jesus, we are nothing. We are helpless. Only Jesus can save us. When we understand this Bible truth, we are no longer weak. We become strong. Jesus can live in our hearts. Prayer, Bible study, and faith bring Jesus into our lives. Jesus will hold on to us. He will not let go.”—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, page 182, adapted.

“Make your faith strong with prayer and fasting or going without food for a short time. Empty your heart of all pride and self. Be filled with the Spirit of God and His power. Ask God with all your heart for these things. Ask with faith that causes you to depend completely on God. Give your whole life to Him to serve Him and do His work. Then the Holy Spirit will help you fight against evil angels and leaders on this earth.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 431, adapted.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① The Holy Spirit helps us fight against Satan and his angels. What five things does the quote above from *The Desire of Ages* say we must do to win this fight?
- ② What part does faith have in the fight against evil?
- ③ How is the Holy Spirit helping you win the fight against evil right now in your life?
- ④ Read Hebrews 10:23. What Bible truth does this verse teach? What promise is in this verse? Why is it so important to hold on to our faith and share it with other people?

## GOING TO SOLUSI TO HIDE

Lindsay was not a Seventh-day Adventist. As Lindsay finished high school, she hoped to study at a university. But then her parents told her the bad news. They didn't have enough money to pay for her education.

Mother said, "You must understand. But I promise you will go to the university, even if we must wait a while."

Mother was a clothes maker. Father sold the dresses, curtains, and sofa covers she made. But their business wasn't doing well when Lindsay finished high school. Then her parents decided to move to Botswana.

Father tried to encourage Lindsay. "Things will get better," he said.

Lindsay helped with the family business for the next five years. Old friends called from Zimbabwe to ask how Lindsay was doing. Her friends asked, "What's happening in your life?"

Lindsay answered, "I'm studying, the same as you are." She lied. She wanted her friends to think she was studying at a university the same as they were.

Time passed. Lindsay almost stopped believing she would go to a university. Then Mother's business got more customers, and she opened a shop. Not long after, Father and Mother announced to Lindsay that she could continue her studies.

Lindsay was so excited! But she wasn't sure about where to go. She thought about the University of Zimbabwe. But friends were studying there. She didn't want them to know that she just started school. Lindsay looked at Midlands State University. But friends were studying there, too. Lindsay had friends at every university except one: Solusi. So, she decided to go there.

When Lindsay arrived at Solusi, she didn't know anything about the Seventh-day Adventist religion. But she went to church every Sabbath anyway. Eight months later, Lindsay was baptized. Her parents celebrated her decision to live for Jesus.

Today, Lindsay Chikanda is 24 years old and finishing her first year of studies. She is ready to tell her high-school friends the truth, saying, "I'm so sorry, but I didn't tell you the truth. I wasn't studying. I was really in Botswana because my parents couldn't afford to pay for my education. So, I was working with them. But then I came to Solusi, and I learned about Jesus. Do you want to know about Jesus, too?"

Your 13th Sabbath offerings help support Seventh-day Adventist education worldwide. Thank you for giving. Watch a short YouTube show about Lindsay at: [bit.ly/Lindsay-IS](http://bit.ly/Lindsay-IS).

## INSIDE *Story*



**Lindsay's parents celebrated her decision to live for Jesus.**



**Lindsay Chikanda**