

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

GROWING IN FAITH  
Make Every Effort — Week 5

**ICEBREAKER:** If you had to sing karaoke, what song would you pick?

**OVERVIEW:** Faith just might be the most important virtue of all. Not only is it the way to receive the gift of salvation, but it is required for every step of the Christian life. But what exactly is faith, and how do we grow in faith? With all of the misunderstandings about faith that exist today, we need to take the time to clearly define faith and the way to cultivate it in our lives.

1. **Read 2 Peter 1:5-7.** What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain. (Or what was your key takeaway from Sunday's message?)
2. The Bible only tells of two occasions in which Jesus was amazed, and both had to do with the topic of faith (Mark 6:5-6; Luke 7:9). Why is the issue of faith so important?
3. What are some ways that the Biblical concept of faith is misunderstood today?
4. What are some of the practical reasons we need faith?
5. Luke 7 tells the story of a woman who was a known sinner. While Jesus was eating at the home of a Pharisee, the woman came in with a very expensive jar of perfume and stood behind him at His feet. While she was weeping, she cleaned His feet with her tears and her hair, and then she put the perfume on His feet. Then Jesus commended her for her faith. Luke 7:50 And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." How did her actions demonstrate faith?

6. Some preachers today teach that faith is "sowing a seed of faith." They say that if you sow money in their ministry you will receive a return. The more money you sow, the bigger the blessing. According to this teaching, exercising faith means giving your money to them. What's wrong with this concept of faith?
7. Other preachers say that faith is positive affirmation, or positive confession. They claim that the way to inherit God's blessings by faith is to confess aloud with faith that God is going to bless you in a certain way. What is wrong with this understanding of faith?
8. Some people reduce faith to "strong belief." What's wrong with this definition of faith?
9. A Biblical definition of faith is confidence in God, that He is who He says He is, and that He will do what He says He will do. This kind of faith has three primary applications. First, faith trusts God enough to do what He says (see Hebrews 11:17). How are faith and obedience connected?
10. A second application of faith is that it has inner peace in times of difficulty (see Isaiah 26:3). What is the connection between faith and worry/fear?
11. A third application of faith is that faith praises God in times of difficulty (see Job 1:21). How is faith related to your attitude toward God during times of adversity?

**The Last Word:** It doesn't take any faith to praise God when everything in your life is going the way you want it to. Faith is praising God in the hard times. Not just when it is sunny, but in the storm.