



Getting Started

Whether we call it religious faith, unswerving trust, or fundamental values, everyone has bedrock principles on which they base life's decisions. This guide is for anyone interested in exploring the reason(s) for why we sometimes take risks.

The Christian church talks a lot about faith. Sometimes it is talked about as an end goal: believe these ideas and you have faith. Sometimes it sounds more like a cop-out: I don't ask the hard questions and I don't have any of the answers because all I have to do is believe. When did faith become certainty rather than trust?

But faith might instead be an action—faith is doing something in the midst of doubt. In the study of organizations, trust has been defined as “making yourself vulnerable.” Faith might be a willingness to ask the toughest questions and live with the answers. Maybe agnostics and seekers are more faithful than unquestioning followers.

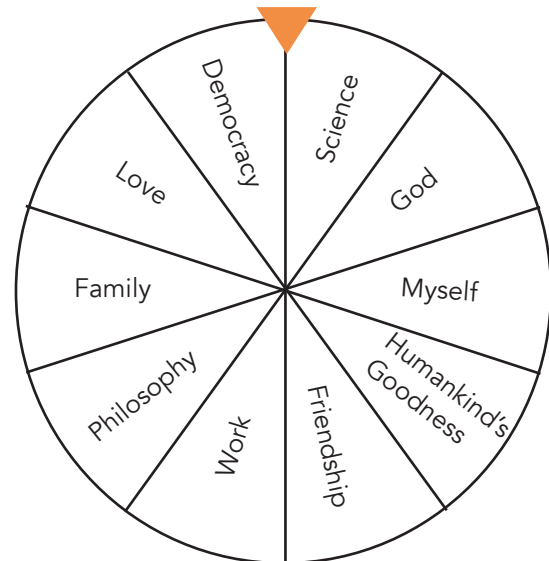
We live every day with faith in a lot of things: That “until death do us part” will last; in the sanity and skill of the other drivers who are going 60 mph beside us on the highway; or that we will continue to stay healthy.

So, what do you have faith in? What are you willing to bet your life on?

I got trust issues because people got lying issues.
- Anonymous

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.
- Hebrews 11:1

What are you willing to bet on?



Choose one

In the Christian story, what is easiest to accept?

In the Christian story, what is most difficult to accept?

Of the words listed above, in which ones do you have the MOST faith?
(Feel free to add other words)

Of the words listed above, in which ones do you have the LEAST faith?
(Feel free to add other words)



A story about Peter and his failed attempt at faith...or was it?

Peter was one of the 12 disciples that followed Jesus. He was, let's say, impulsive. He regularly got things very right or very wrong. One of the most memorable moments is when he tried to walk on water. His faith started so well...

14 ...Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

25 Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

27 But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

28 "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

29 "Come," he said.

30 Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

(Matthew 14:22-31, NIV)

Choose one

How easy is it for you to try something new? Would you have stepped out of the boat?

When have you tried something new... and failed? Would you do it again?



Going Deeper

Having faith isn't as simple as we might like. It requires holding oneself in that messy middle and having the courage to move forward anyway.

It is being willing to get out of the boat.

Choose one

Where have you risked too much/too often?

Where in your life have you risked it all, even though you didn't know the outcome?

If God exists, where do you think God takes a chance and becomes vulnerable to us?

The Journey Ahead

Spend a week making a list of what you put your faith in without even knowing it. Share that list with someone.

Experiment. Take a small chance on something and look for God to show up. Share your experience with someone.

Yell at God about something you think isn't right or fair or shouldn't be allowed if there really is an all-powerful Creator.

To Learn More



If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat by John Ortberg

Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging
by Brennan Manning

The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr. Edited by
Clayborne Carson

Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality by Donald Miller



Hope In All Circumstances -
<https://www.bethel.tv/en/podcasts/sermons/episodes/153>



Dream Big -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP7tKyCYbLM>