

## EGF-7: Faith Over the Falls

EGF Group Bible Study 3-19-11

There is a famous story about a nineteenth-century French daredevil whose name was Charles Blondin. His most famous stunt was crossing Niagara Falls walking on a tightrope. He did this repeatedly and with many variations. One day he pushed a wheelbarrow in front of him on a tightrope over the falls. He then asked the crowd if they believed he could do it again, and they screamed YES!

Then he asked for a volunteer to get into the wheelbarrow and there was silence. No one wanted to step forward to be the one who sat in the wheelbarrow. They were all willing to believe he could do it, but to take belief one step farther—to have faith enough in Blondin to sit yourself in the wheelbarrow, balanced on that rope far above the rushing torrents of water—no, nobody in the crowd that day had that kind of faith.

This story illustrates very clearly the difference between mere belief and the kind of faith that would allow you to place your life in someone else's hands. And that is what we are asked by Jesus to do... to place our life in His hands. Do we have faith enough to climb into the Lord's wheelbarrow? Our topic of study is faith.

### **1. What is faith? Hebrews 11:1**

Webster's Dictionary defines *faith* in this way:

- Belief; the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity, without other evidence; the judgment that what another states or testifies is the truth. I have strong faith or no faith in the testimony of a witness, or in what a historian narrates.
- The assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition advanced by another; belief, or probable evidence of any kind.

### **2. Can merely acknowledging the truth save anyone? James 2:19; Galatians 5:6; 1 Timothy 4:10**

What does trust mean? Webster's Dictionary defines *trust* in this way:

- TRUST, n. Confidence; a reliance or resting of the mind on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship or other sound principle of another person.
- TRUST, v.t. To place confidence in; to rely on. We cannot trust those who have deceived us.

*"No one can be justified by any works of his own. He can be delivered from the guilt of sin, from the condemnation of the law, from the penalty of transgression, only by virtue of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. Faith is the only condition upon which justification can be obtained, and faith includes not only belief but trust."* White, Selected Messages, Vol. 1, p. 389.

**3. How necessary is faith if we wish to have eternal life? Hebrews 11:6; Romans 1:16-17**

*“When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in His blood, all may be made perfect in Christ Jesus.”* White, *Selected Messages*, Vol. 2, p.32.

**4. How can we know what true, living faith really is? Ephesians 5:14-16; Hebrews 12:2-3**

To keep the eye of faith fixed upon Jesus is to maintain uninterrupted contact with Him who is the source of power, and who can strengthen us to endure and to overcome. By considering the way in which He met trials and temptations we can avoid growing weary or fainthearted. Christ endured, and by His grace we too may endure.

*“There are many who realize their helplessness, and who long for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; they are vainly striving to obtain it. In despair they cry, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?” Rom. 7:24, margin. Let these desponding, struggling ones look up. The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, “Wilt thou be made whole?” He bids you arise in health and peace. Do not wait to feel that you are made whole. Believe His word, and it will be fulfilled. Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength. Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is “dead in trespasses.” Eph. 2:1. He will set free the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the chains of sin.”* White, *The Desire of Ages*, p.203.

**5. On what is this “saving faith” based? Romans 10:17**

*“Temptations often appear irresistible because, through neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible, the tempted one cannot readily remember God’s promises and meet Satan with the Scripture weapons.”* White, *The Great Controversy*, p.600.

**6. How are faith and obedience related? Hebrews 11:8; James 2:20-26**

Good works accompany faith and prove the validity of the faith by which a person is justified. If there are no “works,” it is evident that genuine faith does not exist.

**7. With what is faith joined? Revelation 14:12; Romans 3:31**

*“Faith and works go hand in hand; they act harmoniously in the work of overcoming. Works without faith are dead, and faith without works is dead. Works will never save us; it is the merit of Christ that will avail in our behalf. Through faith in Him, Christ will make all our imperfect efforts acceptable to God. The faith we are required to have is not a do-nothing faith; saving faith is that which works by love and purifies the soul. He who will lift up holy hands to God without wrath and doubting will walk intelligently in the way of God’s commandments.”* White, *Faith and Works*, p.48.

- 8. What relationship is restored by faith? Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1**
  
- 9. How do trials affect our faith? James 1:3**
  
- 10. How is the Christian to walk? 2 Corinthians 5:7**
  
- 11. How does faith protect us against sin? Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 5:1-4**
  
- 12. What is the great purpose of faith? 1 Peter 1:8-9**

Salvation is the purpose of faith. The outcome of faith is deliverance from sin and the reception of the everlasting “inheritance” that awaits every true Christian at the final judgment. Eden restored is God’s reward for all the redeemed.

- 13. What must we do daily in order to obtain this living faith? Isaiah 45:22; 1 Timothy 6:11-12**

*“By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. The word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus.”* White, *The Desire of Ages*, p.391.

Having faith in Jesus won’t ensure you a problem-free, pain-free life. What it will ensure you is a Divine Companion who walks beside you through all life’s trials. A Friend who holds your hand no matter how frightening or distressing life becomes. A God who promises He will never allow you to be given a trial too great to bear.

Isn’t that the kind of traveling companion you want? No matter how risky the journey—even if it involves crossing Niagara Falls in a wheelbarrow—you can believe that Jesus will carry you safely all the way. Are you willing to give your life into the hands of Jesus today and always?