

Preparing Your Heart for the Grace of God

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I. Introduction.

A. Faith is the means by which we enter into the grace of God.

B. Faith can grow or decrease organically. (John 16:1, 1 Timothy 1:19, 2 Timothy 2:18)

II. The sources of nourishment are the character of God and the Word of God.

A. The character of God.

1. It is impossible for God to lie. (Hebrews 6:18)

2. The bottom line of human experience is the character of God.

3. In fellowship we nurture our understanding of God's character.

B. The Word of God. (Romans 10:17)

III. Working definitions.

A. Faith is a quiet state of mind and heart that governs and controls our actions. (Psalm 112:7)

B. Faith is active—it is a statement that we believe God is who he says he is. (Hebrews 11:6)

C. Faith and obedience are nearly synonymous.

D. Faith is a gift of grace. (Romans 12:3)

IV. Purposes of faith. This includes the subduing of kingdoms and many other purposes. (Hebrews 11:33-36)

V. Testing of faith.

A. God is committed to seeing that our faith is tested.

B. Our faith can only become personal through personal conflict.

C. Faith is more valuable. (1 Peter 1:7)

VI. Causes of atrophy.

A. Unconfessed sin. (2 Timothy 2:5)

B. Preoccupations.

C. An un-teachable heart. (Hebrews 3:12-4:2)

Application questions:

1. When have you grown through tested faith? Explain.

2. How would you define faith?

3. Why is it important to understand faith as something that is organic and is always increasing or decreasing? Explain.
