

Faith in God

There are some specific verses that clearly state that we have the faith and this faith is directed toward God. There are other verses that this isn't so clear and must be understood properly within the context. Sometimes both faith in God and faith of God can be interchanged and both make sense. Here are examples of where faith in God seems to be the proper translation.

Colossians 1:4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; Here the subject is the believer so it seems to make sense that it is the believers faith in Christ Jesus that is in view here. His does not address where the believer originally received this faith. Other verses (below) point to God as the giver of our faith.

Colossians 2:5 For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.

This verse definitely references the believer's faith and how stable and sure it has become.

1 Thessalonians 1:8 For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.

This verse also references the believer's faith he has in God, specifically the believers at Thessalonica who were being praised for their faith.

Faith of God/Jesus Christ

The phrase *πιστεωσ Ιησου* (faith Jesus) or *πιστεωσ θεου* (faith God) can be interpreted as faith in Jesus/God (the object has faith in the subject) or faith of Jesus/God (the subject has the faith or is faithful). In the Greek, the word for faith is in the possessive genitive case but the true intention of the writer needs to be ascertained within the context. There are some verses that are very clear that the faith comes from God.

Ephesians 2:8—9 ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Our salvation is a result of God's grace. If God did not have grace then He would not have bothered setting up the plan of salvation. We are saved through faith. In context, this must be God's faith to us because it is clear there is nothing I can boast about and nothing I can do to earn my salvation. If my faith is what saved me then I would worry about retaining enough faith to stay saved. The only thing I need to do is believe in the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, " BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

This verse is saying that because of God's faithfulness, I have faith. It is consistent with Ephesians 2:8—9 in seeing my faith is not generated within myself but from an outside source. There is no reason the natural man would ever want to have a faith in God according to Romans 1:17—3:20.

Philippians 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

I believe this verse is stating that the believers finds righteousness through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ in going to the cross. Our righteousness is imputed upon us by God because of Christ's faithfulness.

The believer is given faith

Romans 12:3 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

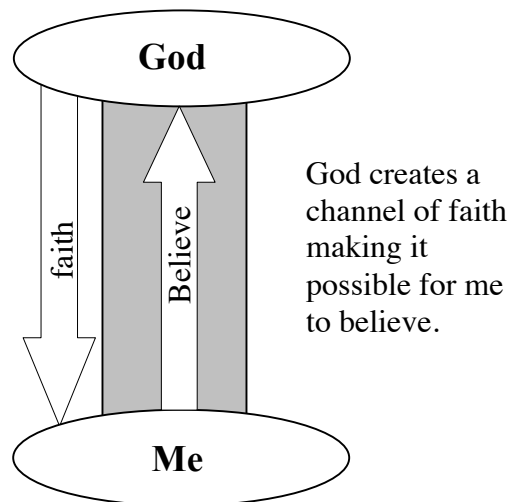
We can see that God is the source of faith and that each believer has various amounts based on what God allots. In context, we are not to think of ourselves more highly than we should since it is God Who has given us what we need to serve Him. We have nothing to boast about.

Faith as a conduit

We are saved *through* faith never because of faith. If I were saved because of the faith I have then my salvation would be based upon my own work. I would also be fearful that I may not have sufficient faith to be qualified for eternal life. Faith is actually a conduit set up by God between Him and man. I can have faith because God has supplied it to me.

It was God's grace that started the ball rolling. Without the grace of God there would be no means of salvation. We also see that it is through faith that we are saved. This conduit of faith is a gift of God. It is not a work of man. God, in effect, created a channel from Him to us so we could send our belief back to Him. (Ephesians 2:8—9)

It is through the conduit of faith that we receive righteousness (Romans 3:22; Philippians 3:9); justification (Galatians 2:16); the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:14); Sonship (Galatians 3:26); salvation (Ephesians 2:8; 2 Timothy 3:16); Access (Ephesians 3:12);



If we could see the beginning from the end we would not be able to walk by faith. There is very little that we can see or measure or touch or quantify in the spiritual realm and thus we need to trust what we know from Scripture and from the indwelling Holy Spirit. Now we operate under faith, hope and love. When we finally see Christ, the only thing left, the greatest of the three, is love.

Originally taught at Bethesda Sunday School December 6, 2009
For a complete set of notes and additional mid-Acts materials please visit www.MidActsTruths.com