

Faith

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Faith is to Believe what you do not see, the reward of which is you see what you believed.

Faith plays a very vital role in our lives. It is so powerful that it can make impossible targets possible. It has the power to move mountains. Everything in the world revolves around faith. The entire human race evolved from cavemen to the modern thinking and achieving men of today, solely through the power of faith! The long strides being made in the field of science, economics and religion are all possible due to faith. In fact, we cannot even put one step forward without having faith.

Walking would be a constant falling forward. However, we walk because we have faith that we will not fall. The first step we took as a small child was entirely on faith. Man progressed from the time he was dwelling in the caves to the modern era of computers because of his faith in the observation of the world and in the laws governing it. This faith in his own sense organs and intelligence made him experiment with nature and discover her various secrets.

Though faith is an important aspect of our lives, its full meaning and its profound implications are rarely understood and appreciated. Generally, people take it to be a negative quality, implying lack of intellectual maturity. Pujya Gurudev has well defined it as follows, "Faith is to believe what you do not see, the reward of which is you see what you believed."

In the beginning, it may appear like a blind belief but it culminates in the verification of what was believed. Blind belief is a belief in something that cannot be verified, neither through experience nor through logic. Blind belief leads to superstitions. Faith, however, is verifiable; hence it is unique. In the initial stages, faith acts as a motivation for action, called *kriti hetah*. The first time we perform an action, we do so with faith alone. Many inventions in science were done thus. The scientists never knew how they would turn out but they went ahead and tried them on faith. The first time man flew an airplane or medicine was tried on a human was all performed on faith. Our travel, education, etc. all depends on faith.

The so called Rationalists believe that Faith is opposed to reason. They take great pride in negating the importance of faith in our 'rational' world. The truth, however, is far from it. Our reasoning itself is based on the faith in the power of our intellect. We have to have faith in the power of the senses to show us the right picture of the world based on which we formulate our logical thinking. The whole scientific process is a journey in our faith in the apparatus used for various experiments. Most apparatuses are an extension and enhancement of our sense organs. Further, it is faith in the documented formula, such as $E = mc^2$ and Newton's law of gravity, that scientists have been able to make progress in various fields.

Faith plays an important role in our personal life, relationships, business, politics, etc. All relationships, whether of the family or of business, are based on trust, which is another form of faith. In the business world, unless there is an underlying trust among all parties, no amount of legal contracts can help. We interact with the outside world having faith in human nature and the nobler values. For example, when we board a plane, we are putting our trust in the pilot's hands. One has to trust the world in order to make one's life more peaceful and harmonious.

Faith plays a vital role in the field of religion as well, or the so called world of the unseen. Here, there is faith in the existence of the One Reality, which is not directly visible to us. It is the one underlying principle behind the variety of names and forms. It is that Truth which binds the seeming differences together in one cord. This Reality is the very Self in all. Though the Self is not visible to the naked eye, the existence of the Self is declared in the scriptures and is the direct experience of many masters. The scriptures are the declarations of these masters' experiences. To believe what the scriptures and the masters say as true is the initial step in striving and realizing our own Self. Here, faith is the virtue of the intellect that is subtle enough to appreciate and comprehend the Truth. The journey begins with faith and culminates in the realization of the Truth.

Faith is a very important virtue in various aspects of our lives. Faith brings us closer to the secret which makes the whole world move in a wonderful clockwork precision. Have faith in Faith - for it is the real wealth of man.