

What Does It Mean to Believe?

1. _____ = _____

Whatever "belief" (or "believe") and "faith" (or "have faith in") mean, they are **identical**, two English synonyms used to translate the **same** Greek word:

- Verb: **pisteuo** ("to have faith," "to trust," or "to believe")
- Noun: **pistis** ("faith," "trust," or "belief")
- Adjective: **pistos** ("faithful," "trustworthy," or "believable")

It would be most consistent and less confusing if all three words were translated with different forms of the same English word rather than with different words (i.e. with "**believe**," "**belief**," and "**believable**").

2. A Biblical Definition of "Believe" - Romans 4:20-21

²⁰ He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief [**apistia**], but was strengthened in faith [**pistis**], giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

- 1) God's **Promise** (God's _____) – "what He had promised"
– Biblical faith or belief **requires a legitimate promise of God** (believing in something God has not promised is **erroneous**, **dangerous**, and **worthless!**)
- 2) Our **Persuasion** (Our _____) (Verb: Lu 1:1; Rom 14:5; Col 4:12; 2 Tim 4:5,17; Noun: Col 2:2; 1 Thes 1:5; Heb 6:11; 10:22)
 - Of God's **Power** (God's _____)
– God **can do** what He says He will do
 - Of God's **Performance** (God's _____)
– God **will do** what He says He will do

Biblical faith (or belief), then, is:

- Being **completely convinced** that God **can** and **will** do what He has **promised**.
- Being fully confident that God can and will keep His Word.
- Being convinced that what God has **said** He **can** and **will** do.
- "I take God at His Word"
- "I believe that God will do what He has promised."
- Accepting God's claims as true. (Romans 4:16-25)

¹⁶ Therefore [it is] of **FAITH** [**pistis**]

that [it might be] according to grace,

so that the promise might be sure to all the seed,

not only to those who are of the law,

but also to those who are of the **FAITH** [**pistis**] of Abraham, who is the father of us all

¹⁷ (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations")

in the presence of

Him whom he **BELIEVED** [**pisteuo**] –

God, who

gives life to the dead and

calls those things

which do not exist

as though they did;

¹⁸ who,

contrary to hope,

in hope **BELIEVED** [**pisteuo**],

so that he became the father of many nations,

according to what was spoken,

"So shall your descendants be."

¹⁹ And not being weak in **FAITH** [**pistis**],

he did not consider

his own body, already dead

(since he was about a hundred years old), and

the deadness of Sarah's womb.

²⁰ He did not waver at the promise of God

through un**BELIEF** [**apistia**],

but was strengthened in **FAITH** [**pistis**],

giving glory to God, ²¹ and

being fully convinced that what

He had promised

He was also able to perform.

²² And therefore

"it was accounted to him for righteousness."

²³ Now it was not written

for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, ²⁴ but also for us.

It shall be imputed to us who **BELIEVE** [**pisteuo**] in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

²⁵ who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.