

greater than the created thing's existence. Science is limited to the scientific method and is not designed to deal with the study of the supernatural or philosophical. Faith should never be associated with foolish wishing or the fantasy of desire. Faith is belief, a belief based in evidence and facts, and for it to grow, it must be exercised in an appropriate manner.

How does God define faith? *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* (Hebrews 11:1) Faith has substance! The word "hoped" is not meant to imply a wish or a desire, but it means more a foreseen expectation or coming event that is expected just as much as the sun is expected to rise in the morning. So faith substantiates our expected outcome of eternal life through Jesus Christ, our faith through good works and obedience to Christ showing Jesus as Lord even though He is making intercession for us in Heaven. Noah through faith was obedient to God, and built an ark just as God commanded, and He and his family were saved. *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.* (Romans 1:17)¹ "The scientific evidence supports that belief can heal." This statement was made by Herbert Benson, MD president of the Mind/Body Medical Institute at Beth Israel/Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. "Studies have found that those who have deep beliefs—whether they are marked by individual prayer, communal worship, or even nonreligious spirituality—generally live a longer and healthier life."² The effects of faith in the daily lives of people are becoming more important in science and are becoming more relevant for research, at least in medical arenas.

If faith by itself can generate benefits for man, can any religious belief be important? While faith is important to mankind, the object of the faith is far more important than the amount of faith. A simple illustration will show this truth. Two similar men approach a body of water and need to cross. One man has tons of faith while the other man has only a little faith. The man with lots of faith crosses where the ice is thin and will not support his weight, while the man with only a little faith crosses where the ice is thick and can support his weight. Who do you think got wet? Of course the man with lots of faith but the object of his faith was the thin ice. The object of your faith is more important than the amount of faith, because faith well founded can grow by the exercising of it. If Christ is the object of your faith then you have the correct object for your faith for: *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby, we must be saved.* (Acts 4:12)

Is faith only believing in something? Not really. *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.* (James 2:19) The devils, who are fallen angels who rebelled with Lucifer, are well aware that God exists, they know and are terrified. Faith for the believer, by Scriptural pronouncement, means more than just believing something and that being that. It requires an action on our part. First that belief must be accompanied by the action of repentance. Repenting is turning from the direction you are traveling (away from God) a hundred and eighty degrees and going toward God. Repenting is no longer doing the evil you once were doing and becoming obedient to Christ. *Who by him do believe in God, that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.* (I Peter 1:21)

Saving faith then has as its object the only Son of God, Jesus Christ! There is no other way to God. Faith without an object is illogical, so those who have faith must be able to define what they have faith in. Even the atheist has faith in the laws of nature; the evolutionists have faith to believe their theory in the face of mounting evidence to the contrary. All men have faith in something whether it is truly helpful or harmful to them. As believers we must determine to have faith in the only true God as He revealed Himself to us through the Scriptures. Any other idea or notion of God other than who He shows Himself to be in the written Word is a god of our own making. So we must always be: *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* (Hebrews 12:2)☞

¹ This is written in the Old Testament in Habakkuk 2:4.

See also Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38.

² Michaud E (2001) Can her touch save your life? Prevention **March**: 187