

THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH (Examples of a Counterfeit Faith)

1. LUKE 12:45-47: The man in the parable knew the master's will but was presumptuous and lived accordingly. But note that in his heart he did refer to the master as "My master". This person intellectually knows the truth but this type of response is shown to be indicative of unbelievers (cf. Matt. 24:51; 25:30; Lk. 19:27).

2. LUKE 18:9-14: In this parable, Christ presents examples of proud and self-righteous people who believe in God and yet are not saved.

NOTE: Believing in God plus your works for salvation really amounts to faith in SELF and is condemned as self-righteousness.

3. JOHN 2:23-25: In view are those who have an emotional faith, but something is lacking in the heart because the text says, "Jesus did not commit Himself to them", and then it goes on to emphasize the necessity of being born again as seen in John 3:1-8.

4. JOHN 8:30-32: These represent those who have a bogus kind of faith that does not continue. Jesus told them that "disciples indeed" abide (continue) in His Word. It is clear that these "*believers*" were not true converts because in the immediate context, they proceeded to want to kill Jesus and Jesus told them that they were of their father the devil and were not of God (see John 8:33-47; cf. Heb. 3:14; 10:38-39).

5. ACTS 8:12-13, 20, 22-23: Simon is initially said to have believed but his heart was not right. He had a self-serving agenda kind of faith and Peter proceeded to tell him his heart was not right and called him to repentance. He lacked sincere and genuine repentance. He had an emotional/intellectual sort of faith but lacked repentance.

6. ACTS 20:29-30: Paul warned that among the people of God savage wolves would come "in among you". They clearly profess to be part of the family of God, but they have a self-oriented agenda and not the good of the flock. Wolves in sheep's clothing are a constant danger (cf. Matt. 7:15; also note that the wheat and the tares grow together – Matt. 13:24-30).

7. ROMANS 10:2-3: Paul's testimony was that the Jews had a zeal for God. They had a faith of sorts, but it was an ignorant faith that resulted in self-righteousness.

8. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-2: Paul says that faith is vain (empty, futile) if it does not hold fast to the true gospel (cf. 2 Cor. 6:1).

9. 2 CORINTHIANS 11:26: Here Paul spoke of "false brethren". They have a profession of faith but are not genuine (cf. 1 Tim.1:5; 2 Tim. 1:5, 3:5).

10. JAMES 2:14, 17, 20, 21-26: James called mere intellectual assent that doesn't work a dead faith. It professes but does not work. James is clear that this kind of faith does not save.

11. JAMES 2:19: James says that even demons "believe – and tremble!" They too believe intellectually and have an emotional experience ("tremble") but they are not saved. They have no true allegiance to God. A demon-like faith has intellectual and emotional elements only. It lacks a heart commitment to the truth of Christ (cf. Rom. 10:9-13).

12. 1 JOHN 2:3-4: There are those who claim to know the Lord but live a life of disobedience. Such people are "liars" who are not truly saved (cf. 1 Jn. 3:10; Rev. 21:8).

13. REVELATION 2:9; 3:1, 9: There are those who profess to be the covenant people of God but in truth belong to Satan. There are those who have a reputation for being alive but in truth are spiritually dead. In contrast, the truly genuine "persevere" (cf. Lk. 8:15).

14. REVELATION 17-18: The great whore claims to belong to God but is unfaithful and in truth does not really know God.

15. REVELATION 20:7-10: Many in the Millennial Kingdom will outwardly submit to the rule of Christ but then when Satan is released, they will show their true colors as they openly follow Satan in a final rebellion.

FOUR BASIC CATEGORIES OF COUNTERFEIT FAITH:

(Note that these 4 categories overlap to some degree.)

1. **PRETEND FAITH.** It is hypocritical – outwardly professing but not an inward reality (Titus 1:16).

2. **VAIN FAITH.** It accepts certain intellectual and historical facts but does not endure (cf. Acts 26:27-28; 1 Cor. 15:1-2; Heb. 12:15).

3. **DEMON-LIKE FAITH.** The will is uninvolved while the intellect and emotions are (cf. James 2:19).

4. **TEMPORARY FAITH.** Initially, it accepts the truth but then does not continue (cf. Lk. 8:4-15).

James 2:19 (NKJV)

19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

Hebrews 11 is called “The Hall of Faith Chapter”. There we read that without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). But note that this same verse indicates that true faith diligently seeks Him. And the examples borne out in the rest of the chapter consistently illustrate this. A living faith is an active faith in that it demonstrates itself in the person’s life as illustrated over and over in Hebrews 11. This is what the HALL OF FAITH chapter is all about!

Hebrews 11:39 (NKJV)

39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith....

This is the essence or the nature of a true saving faith as illustrated in all the examples brought out in the chapter.