

How do I trust something I cannot see? : A Leader's Guide

An often asked question about faith and believing in God is simply 'how do I trust in something that I cannot see?' As we can't actually see God, this gives people a reason to question and wonder. From our 21st century point of view, as science delves into exploring everything at a deeper level, it is a very valid question. That's where faith comes in – as Hebrews 11 says, 'faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see'. To put it simply, there are three main ways that we can have faith in, or trust in God – through our own experiences of God, through the experiences of others, and through God's promises and the way He has worked over time. Truth be told, we'll probably never see God in our lifetime, but that doesn't mean He's not there – we can see the outcomes of His actions. It's like the wind; we can't see the wind, but we see leaves being blown, boats sailing, and we feel it and know it's there. In the same way, as we hear the stories of how God is working in the lives of others, as we see God working in our own life and as we remember the things that He has done for those who came before, we can feel and know that God is ever with us, even if we can't see Him.

Focusing Questions

1. What are some ways that you've experienced God working in your own life?
2. What are some stories that you've heard about what God has done in the lives of others?
3. What does Hebrews 11 have to say about how God has been working?

Outcomes

1. God is working in our own lives; we just need to take the time out to recognise it.
2. Part of faith is hearing about what God is doing in the lives of others; stories help build our faith.
3. Part of faith is knowing that God has consistently come through for others; and that those people have lived in faith no matter what.

Key Verses

(note: you don't have to read all these out and use them. Read through them and figure out what you think will work best)

- Jeremiah 29:13
- Hebrews 11:13-16
- Hebrews 11:39-40
- Exodus 4:1-17
- Daniel 3
- Genesis 32:22-32

Notes

How do I trust something I cannot see?: Bible Study Plan

Tuning In

This section is short & sharp. Find out what your group believes or wonders about this topic. It is a great place to collect those tough questions which you can answer later or in the following weeks.

What are some of the things that we trust in (For example, the financial system, aeroplanes, etc.)? Why do we trust in those things?

What's a time when you've asked or petitioned God for something, but have had no reply? How do people respond? What's an appropriate way to respond?

Exploration

Our own experiences

What are some ways that you yourself have experienced God, or had God come through in a situation for you? Check out the story of Moses in Exodus 4. Moses heard directly from and saw God, and yet still couldn't trust God – what can we learn from this? How do we overcome this? What is the key here – was it that Moses couldn't trust God, or was it that he couldn't trust himself?

Others experiences

What are some of the stories you've heard about God working in the lives of others (especially people close to you)? For example, healings or other miraculous stories.

God in history / in the Bible

What are some of the ways God has worked through history, whether in the Bible or later?

Going Further

Faith is more than just believing when we can hear from or see God – it is believing in spite of not hearing from God. Check out the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in Daniel 3, and also what the writers of Hebrews has to say in Hebrews 11:13-16 or 11:39-40 – what does this speak to us as a community of believers when we face times of hardship?

Reflection & Taking Action

Sometimes we need to grapple with our own faith, much like Jacob wrestles with God in Genesis 32. What are some of the other things that we often struggle with on our faith journey, and how can we help one another through these things? Discuss and make a commitment to support one another as we explore our faith.