

## REAL FAITH

### *LEARNING TO LIVE IN CHRIST*

#### Overview

We are all in the process of building our lives. On a daily basis, each of us makes decisions which build upon our past and prepare us for the future. In constructing a building, a great amount of planning, time, and energy are put into laying the foundation. Without a solid foundation, any construction project is in trouble from the outset. The one-to-one discipleship process you are beginning is intended to help you lay a solid foundation for your life . . . a foundation that is based upon the principles of God's Word found in the Bible.

#### Expectations

With any undertaking, it is important to know up front what to expect. Here is what will be asked of you:

1. Be willing to spend time regularly reading the Bible on your own.
2. Be willing to learn how to communicate with others about your relationship with Christ.
3. Be willing to pass on to one other person what you learn in this discipleship process.

#### Helpful Hints

Here are two other principles to help you along the way:

1. Any question is a good question. Your discipleship partner, the person who takes you through the material, may not always have the answer, but he or she can work together with you to find the answer.
2. The goal is not to get through one session per meeting, but to learn to apply Biblical principles to your life. If you need more than one meeting to cover a lesson, take some extra time and enjoy the process.

#### The Faith Principle

A principle that we will come back to again and again throughout the discipleship process is that of **faith**. The Bible defines faith as "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). What this means for Christians is that even though we may not fully understand what is going on around us, we can have confidence that God is completely trustworthy and has our best interests in mind at all times. For example, an airplane pilot may have his view obscured by clouds, but he has been trained to rely on his instrument panel to give him the accurate information and direction he needs to safely

navigate his course.

In a similar way, the follower of Christ is to live by faith in God and His Word on a daily basis. Here is a definition of faith that we will refer to regularly:

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***Faith** is living as though the Bible is true, even when I do not feel it is true. The reason I can live as though it is true is because it is true. The reason it is true is because God says it is true.*

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This definition of faith is used with permission from Manley Beasley.

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Every day the Christian must decide whether to place his faith in his circumstances and emotions or in what the Bible says is true. For example, many Christians regularly feel a great sense of condemnation. The Bible teaches, however, that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). The follower of Christ either consciously or subconsciously decides whether he will believe and act according to the former or the latter. The decision he makes has a dramatic effect on the quality of his relationship with Christ.

Here are some other Bible passages about faith that we will refer to regularly:

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2 Corinthians 5:7	<i>We live by <b>faith</b>, not by sight.</i>
Hebrews 11:6a	<i>And without <b>faith</b> it is impossible to please God.</i>
Galatians 3:11b	<i>The righteous will live by <b>faith</b>.</i>
Romans 14:23b	<i>Everything that does not come from <b>faith</b> is sin.</i>

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In the sessions that follow, we will cover Biblical principles about God, our relationship with Him, and our relationships with others. In order to apply these principles to our lives, we will need to make decisions of faith. We will need to believe and act on what God says is true versus what we are told by our culture or our emotions or our circumstances.

## Note

Any spiritual study is in danger of becoming merely an academic exercise. Our prayer for you as you move through the **Life Builders** process is that you will apply the truth of each lesson by faith. Faith is choosing to believe what the Scripture says even when my feelings seem to run contrary. Each **Life Builder** lesson is full of Scripture, not so we can know more, but as we choose to believe that Scripture by faith and act upon it empowered by the Holy Spirit, then we are transformed another degree into the image of Jesus Christ. Make sure that you apply the Faith Principle to each lesson and each Bible passage as you work through this process. God bless you on your journey of building lives for the kingdom of God.