

There is a clear difference between knowing and believing. To know is defined as to acknowledge that something is true, while to believe involves trusting and embracing that truth for our life.

Jesus in John 3:18 said: "Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."

Note He didn't say, "Whoever knows the truth," but rather "Whoever believes in Him."

Rom. 10:9-10 adds, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Notice again the words, "The Lord Jesus" as opposed to simply "Jesus".

Why?

Because unless we have been convicted of sin, then trusted, acknowledged and commit to follow Christ as Lord of our lives, we aren't saved.

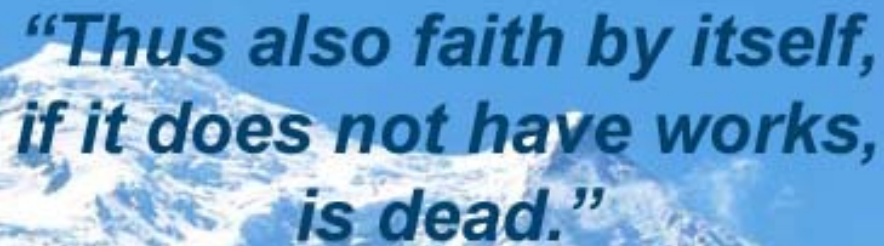
The reason the apostle in 1Peter 3:15 said, "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord."

Let's heed the warning of Eph. 5:6: "Let no one deceive you with empty words."

Then, 2Cor. 11:13 adds: "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ."

Do I truly believe in Christ as the only way to God, trust Him as Lord of my life, and follow Him at His Word?

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**“Thus also faith by itself,
if it does not have works,
is dead.”**

James 2:17

What are the core elements of faith?

Hebrews 11:1, 3: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." ³By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."

In 2Cor. 2:4-5 Paul said: "And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

Then, in 1Thessalonians 2:13 he added, "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe."

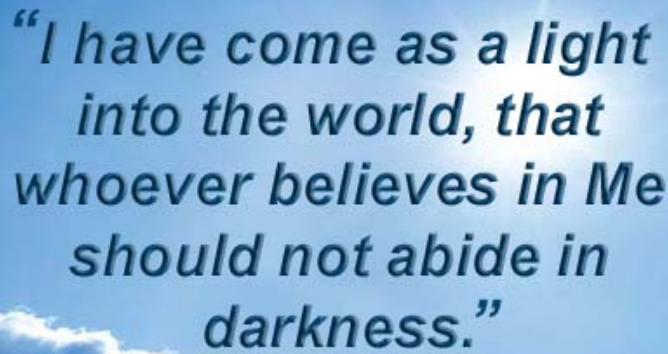
Thus faith must be based on the Word of God so we aren't deceived.

James 2:18 further says, "But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

In essence, true faith in God must always translate into commitment and action to follow our Lord Jesus Christ through His Word.

Is my faith strongly anchored in God and Christ?

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*“I have come as a light
into the world, that
whoever believes in Me
should not abide in
darkness.”*

John 12:46

According to God’s Word, what is the source and purpose of our faith in Christ?

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

John 10:9: “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”

John 11:25-26: “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”

John 20:31: “These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

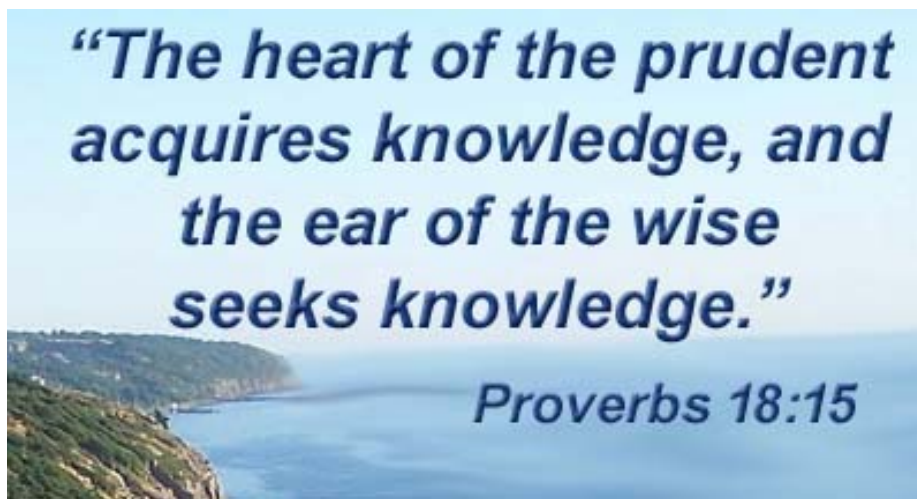
1Peter 1:8-9: “Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of *your* souls.”

Hebrews 11:6: “Without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

Eph. 1:13: “In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”

Do I deeply trust and believe in Christ, and rejoice knowing I have eternal life in His Name?

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Why must we and how can we sustain and grow our faith in Christ?

Pro 2:1-5: “My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, *and* apply your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as *for* hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.”

Pro 9:10: “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding.”

Romans 10:17 “So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

The reason we are warned:

Pro 15:14: “A wise person is hungry for knowledge, while the fool feeds on trash.”

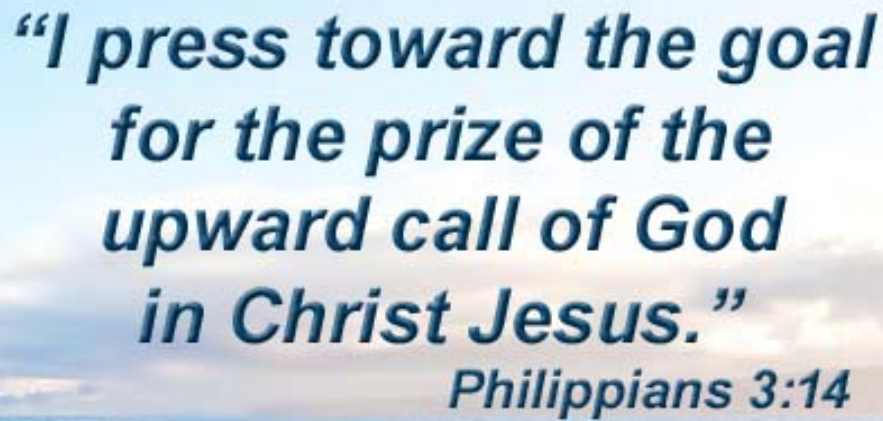
Hosea 4:6: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

Therefore:

2Peter 3:18: “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

How steadfast am I to seek and acquire knowledge through the Word of God?

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***“I press toward the goal
for the prize of the
upward call of God
in Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 3:14***

How does one walk by faith in Christ?

Pro 3:5-6: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

Tim. 6:12: “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”

Gal. 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

1Cor. 16:13: “Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.”

What must we be watchful for?

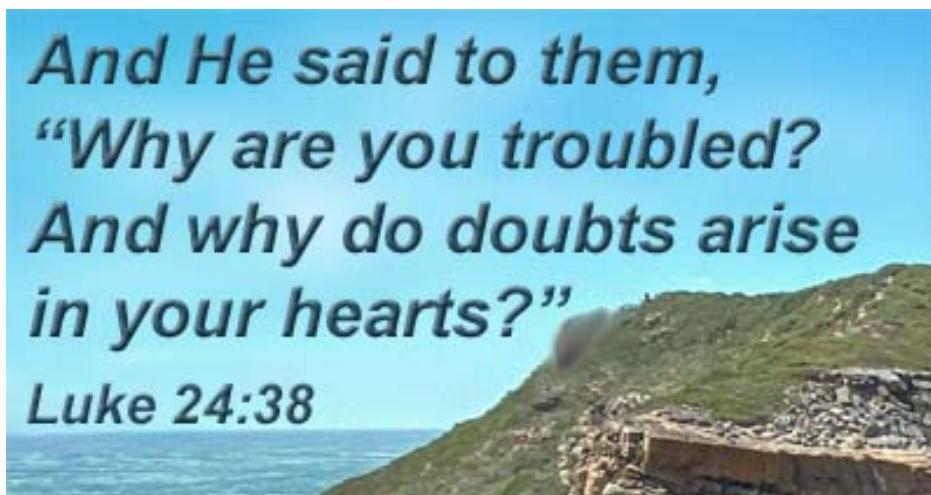
John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

Rom. 12:2: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Mat. 7:21: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”

How focused and steady is my walk of faith with the Lord right now?

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Obviously, to doubt God's faithfulness is to mistrust God. Then, how must we handle doubt so we trust God and live by faith in Christ Jesus? Joshua 1:9: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go."

Psalm 27:1: "The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

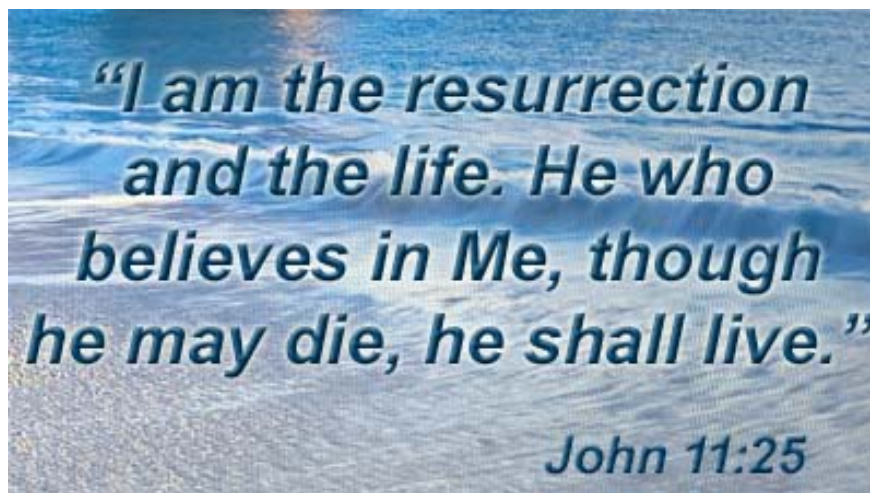
Psalm 23:4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."

Isaiah 41:10: "Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand."

James 1:5-8: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

Am I committed to trust God and live by faith in Christ, our Savior and Lord?

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How powerful can true faith in Christ, enrich us spiritually to bear fruit to the glory of God?

1John 5:5: "Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

John 1:12: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."

Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes."

Romans 15:13: "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Deut. 31:6: "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He *is* the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

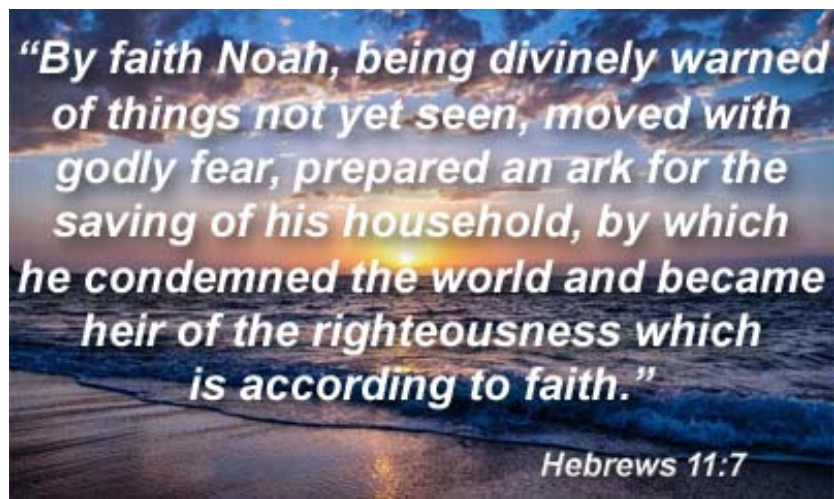
Isaiah 40:31: "But those who wait on the Lord shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

To what extent can the power of faith in Christ help us live to the glory of God?

Mark 9:23: "Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes."

Is the power of God enabled in my life through my faith anchored in Christ?

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Here are powerful stories of people standing by God in faith, even under threat of death:

Daniel 3:16-17: "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that *is the case*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king."

And God did deliver them from dying in the furnace!

Daniel 6:16, 19-20, 22: "The king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast *him* into the den of lions." "Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him." In Luke 17:26-27 Jesus said, "When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah's day. In those days, the people enjoyed banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat and the flood came and destroyed them all."

How strong is my faith in Christ that I may live to trust God in all circumstances of life?

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What are the promises reserved for those who maintain an unwavering faith in Christ?

Rev. 22:12: "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work."

2Cor. 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

John 7:38: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

Eph. 2:4-6: "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus."

James 1:12: "Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

Why?

Philip. 3:20-21: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."

Is the focus of my life leading me to eternal rewards in heaven with Christ?

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