

# The Sail of faith

Hebrews 11:1 *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”*

Faith is not a prerequisite for salvation; it is simply the means by which God enables us to experience it. We can't see God, Heaven, or the Age to come. During our earthly walk, we can experience them only by faith. We cannot see God's love. We cannot see the mind of God or His emotions and attitudes towards us. Jesus said that the experience of being born of God is sort of like feeling the wind. You cannot see it, but you know it is there by its affects. When you unfurl the sails of faith, you tap into and are carried along by it. God's unconditional love and acceptance of all of us, is like that wind. It is there for everyone. It already belongs to everyone. The wind is not turned on or off by our belief in its existence. In order to experience its effect on us, what I would call Christian salvation, we need to raise the sail of faith.

When I was young, I was unsure of my salvation, because I wasn't able to muster up what I believed was the necessary amount of faith. No matter how hard I tried, I could not rid myself of intellectual doubts about God's existence and the inerrancy of the Scriptures. I had trouble fully embracing the apparently exclusionary doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ alone. I had trouble believing that a supposedly loving God would send people to endless torment in Hell, simply for not believing the correct religious doctrines. Despite my doubts, I was drawn to the positive aspects of the Gospel, so I confessed Christ as Savior and Lord, anyway, hoping that one day I would be able to muster up the kind of faith that seemed evident in the lives of other believers whom I envied. I wished with all my heart that I could have the same kind of unquestioning faith that they had. I felt that I was somehow cursed with a questioning intellect that prevented me from exercising complete faith in God.

Eventually, God rewarded me for my efforts, as I came to the understanding that the strength of my faith was not nearly as important as the strength and trustworthiness of the One in whom I had placed my faith. As I hoisted my feeble sail of faith, the winds of God's Holy Spirit did in fact take hold. As time went by, I was able to let out more and more sail, as God revealed more of His truths to me. Eventually, as I discarded many false beliefs about God and substituted more of the truth, I found myself being carried along not just by an occasional breeze, but by the higher and much stronger trade winds. Instead of muddling along in a little dingy, I now feel like the captain of a mighty clipper ship.

If you at times find yourself floundering on the rocks of confusion and doubt, please don't despair. If you don't believe anything else about God, just try and believe this. God is love. He is all powerful. He is omnipresent. He loves everyone, including you. Like the wind, He is there for everyone. If you sincerely desire to experience the love of God, put up your little sail of faith and do the best you can to live your life according to the teachings of Christ. Don't be afraid to ask all those good questions, and God will provide you with the answers you need. As you exercise the little bit of faith that you already possess God will multiply your efforts, and the size of your sail will grow. Don't worry about all the negative stuff. For now, just immerse yourself in the good stuff, the love of God.