# Faith

*Topic chosen due to study of book of numbers and the faith of Joshua and Caleb. Several points taken or adapted from Jeff Krist “Removing the Mountain” on* [www.sermoncentral.com](http://www.sermoncentral.com)*.*

* + - 1. Scripture Reading: Mark 11:12-14, 20-25

1. Introduction
   * + - 1. Illustration:

Two friends are going ice fishing, one a local and the other a friend from the south.

The local tells the friend to go out to the middle of the lake, start the chain saw, and cut a hole in the ice

The friend cautiously steps onto the frozen lake and takes a few short steps but at the first unexpected sound, quickly turns around dives back to the shore

The local smiles, takes the chainsaw, boldly walks onto the ice—out to the middle of the lake, starts the chainsaw, and cuts through the ice so that he and his southern friend may go ice fishing

* + - * 1. What is the difference in the two individuals?

Obviously their faith, but their faith in what?

One could argue the southerner’s faith in the local

But wasn’t it the ice the southerner didn’t trust

In this illustration, the two friends had different levels of faith in the ice

* + - * 1. Faith is essential to life, we use it more often than you may think

How many of you work without concern that your employer will pay you on payday?

How many of you send your children to school expecting them to return?

This morning, how many were concerned that your car might not crank?

* + - * 1. While some may not realize that cold weather is hard on batteries and have a simple, blind faith their car will start, I want to look proper faith in God—**knowledge based faith**

1. Faith
   1. Faith has an object
      * + 1. In the illustration of the ice fishers

the local had faith in the ice

the southerner did not

* + - * 1. Faith without an object is meaningless (not worthless – faith without an object simply does not have meaning), examples:

“I have faith that I will get through this tough time”—what is the object of faith here – ourselves!

“I have faith that I will get through this tough time, somehow”—what is the object of faith here – luck/chance!

“I have faith that God will get me through this tough time”—what is the object of faith here – God!

* 1. Faith in God
     + - 1. In the scripture reading **(Mark 11:12-14, 20-25)** – v.22 Jesus defines where our faith should be based—**In God**

An obvious point that can easily be missed:

In the illustration of the ice fishers, did the local’s faith in the ice save him from the freezing water or was it the ice?

In the same manner a man’s faith (though necessary) is not going to throw the mountain into the sea, **God** is going to throw the mountain into the sea

Realizing this is imperative, it is not by our might, our colossal faith the mountain is moved, but the might of God, we simply realized God is capable, willing to do it for us, and we were bold enough to ask him to do it

It only takes a little faith to do amazing things—a mustard seed (Luke 17:5-6, Mathew 17:14-20)

Ephesians 3:12 (HCSB) – “In Him [Jesus] we have **boldness** and **confident access** through **faith** in Him” (Hebrews 4:16)

Ephesians 3:20-21 (HCSB) – “Now to Him who is **able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think** according to **the power that works in us**—to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (Philippians 4:13)

Another point, though less imperative, Jesus talks about moving mountains or trees and throwing them into the sea

Was Jesus concerned with making his disciples into miraculous bulldozers?

This is an idiomatic statement – the Jews particularly talked about “removing mountains” meaning “removing difficulties”

Jesus capitalizes on this idiom to express the power of God

* 1. Knowledge Based Faith
     + - 1. In the illustration of the ice fishers, what was the key difference in the local and the southerner—the local knew the ice, the southerner did not

The local knowing the ice was without fear able to walk across it to its most dangerous point

The southerner, not knowing the ice, was full of fear and doubt

* + - * 1. Romans 10:17 (HCSB) “So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the message about Christ.”

Hear Paul expresses the relationship between faith and knowledge

As we hear the gospel (the good news, the message of our Lord and Savior, the ability to be saved through Jesus Christ) we will grow in faith

Another obvious and critical point—you can’t have faith in something you don’t know

* + - * 1. Peter is an excellent example for seeing knowledge based faith grow

Matthew 14:22-33 – Peter’s faith faltered

Faith in what? Jesus’ power to save and control his creation

Quickly we see all the disciples present learn more about Jesus and their faith grow

Luke 22:31-34, 54-61 – Peter’s faith faltered again

Faith in what? Jesus

This emotion filled event certainly made an impression on Peter

Acts 2:14ff – Peter stood up and preached Jesus to his murders

Faith in what? Jesus

Peter (and the 11) had greater faith and passed that faith on through preaching of the word of God

So how did Peter and the 11 grow in faith?

* 1. Growing in Faith
     + - 1. Luke 17:5-6 – The disciples ask Christ to increase their faith

First, they ask Jesus, we can do the same today

Second, Jesus says you only need a little bit of faith

Often when trials occur, Christians will say I need more faith, if could get more faith I could make it through this trial and the object of faith, God, is lost

Recognize God is the one who will get you through the trial

Yahweh (God) is all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present

Yahweh will never leave or forsake his children (Deuteronomy 31:6, Hebrews 13:5)

Yahweh will never allow his children to be tempted beyond what we can handle and will always provide a way of escape from sin (1 Corinthians 10:31

If you focus on God, his power, his majesty, his role as a father you will have the faith you need so that you can boldly come before him and ask for the help you need (Hebrews 4:16)

You can proclaim   
“The Lord is my helper;  
I will not be afraid.  
What can man do to me?” (Hebrews 13:6; Psalms 118:6)

In case my point isn’t clear, I am not saying be satisfied with a little bit of faith, I am saying as your knowledge of God increases so will your faith in Him

* + - * 1. Brethren, we need to study our Bibles so we can come to know God

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17 KJV)

The Bible is replete with examples of faith so we can learn and grow in our faith and knowledge of God

* 1. Examples of Faith
     + - 1. David and Goliath – 1 Samuel 17: David refused to allow God’s army to be mocked  
            “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hand.”  
            – 1 Samuel 17:45-47 ESV
         2. Joshua and Caleb – Numbers 13-14: The two faithful spies   
            “The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them.” – Numbers 14:7-9
         3. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego – Daniel 3: Refusal to worship false gods  
            “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”   
            – Daniel 3:16-18 ESV
         4. Peter and the apostles – Acts 5: Choosing to serve God rather than man  
            “We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”   
            – Acts 5:29-32 ESV
         5. Hebrews 11 – Provides a checklist for additional study

In each of these examples we a common thread – faith based action

We looked at faith without meaning (no object) now lets look at dead faith

* 1. Dead Faith
     + - 1. In the illustration of the ice fishers, both the local and the southerner could have expressed their faith in the strength of the ice, but if they would not go out on the ice to fish, what use is the faith?
         2. James 2:14-26

Faith demands action

Faith without action is useless (v.20) and dead (v.26)

1. Conclusion
   * + - 1. Once we have come to know God and have faith in Him we must act accordingly
         2. If we do not our faith is dead and there no longer remains any hope for us – Hebrews 10:26-27, 31
         3. If you have failed to act in accordance with your faith, turn away from that life and start being active for the Lord
         4. If you have not started your life of faithful service to God by becoming one of his children there is no better time than right now
         5. Let us know if we can help you in any way by coming forward as we stand and sing
       1. 2014/01/26 Oak Ridge coC w/o PowerPoint