

# What is faith?

*Faith vs. fantasy*

Message 5: [Under your wings series](#)

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## Introduction: Is it faith or is it fantasy?

As children we have all played fantasy or make-believe games— you were perhaps a dragon slayer, a brave soldier, a sleeping beauty, a barbie doll or in my home country – a pot-bellied politician. When I was a child, I too played fantasy games and even had a pirate name – but I will not share it today. But what is the difference between this fantasy world we often inhabit as children and faith as per the Bible?

Here is a game or role play to help you understand faith vs fantasy.

Here is a chair:



- This chair is beautiful
- This chair's designer and carpenter I know and trust.
- In fact -this chair is one I would love to have in my house. I would so buy it again without blinking twice.

- This chair is one I would have with me when I put my thinking cap on as a King to make my decisions.
- This is the Chair of my dreams!

**At this point you might go: Stop talking too much about the chair like you are in a fantasy world. Put your words to action.**

**How would I prove that the words I am speaking about this chair are true and not just empty words or fantasy?**

I would prove my words to be true by doing something so simple – I would **JUST SIT on the chair.**

**Faith is as simple as that** - you no longer just believe the words – that’s like fantasy.

Faith is when you act on the words you believe. That is why the scriptures say: *“Faith without works is dead” (James 2: 17)* or if you want a modern translation, The Wasake Translation (TWT): “Faith without backing it up with action is simply cheap talk and we know: TALK IS CHEAP!”

So, using the chair analogy and connecting it to the Bible which says: *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10: 17 (NKJV)*, how then is faith according to the Bible?

Faith is when you read or hear the words in the Bible and believing them to be the word of God, the architect you can trust, the architect who makes things beautiful, you act – the action you take is like literally sitting on the Bible – to mean, you believe in the words so much, that you put your FULL weight on them – like you would with a chair.

Do you have faith enough in the Bible that you would act on what you read or put your full weight on those words? If you read the words but don’t act on them – you might be in fantasy land and yet God wants to test you to know whether you really believe him and his words.

This is exactly what the Lord did to me about 6 months ago when I had my wilderness experience or test!

### **What is a wilderness experience?**

A wilderness experience is when God tests you like in a refiner’s fire so you can step into the next level of your spiritual life. In a wilderness experience, your faith is tested. As an example:

- **Moses** had a wilderness experience where in the burning bush experience (Exodus 3-4), he encountered the Lord and was forced to prove his faith. He had deal with his past fear of returning to Egypt and to Pharaoh. God made a stick turn into a snake and yet he had to pick up this snake, the royal symbol of Egypt and only then would it turn back into the stick or staff he had. Faith told him that it was a stick – even when it looked like a snake!
- **Our Lord Jesus** had a wilderness experience where just after his baptism, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness so the devil could test him on whether he really knew or was confident in his identity as the son of God. One of the tests of the evil one was to use scripture. The Bible records this as follows:

*Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:*

*“He will command his angels concerning you,  
and they will lift you up in their hands,  
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*

*Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test. Matthew 4: 5-7 (NIV).*

**Faith is therefore confidence in your identity** – The Lord Jesus did not need to prove to the evil one that God would keep his word of protection, he knew it through and through and didn’t need to prove it.

Likewise, when you have faith in God – and that you are his child, you don’t need to prove it– you know it through and through, just as much as you know your name and no one can tell you otherwise, BUT knowing this identity is a journey and one you the Lord takes us on – through a wilderness.

### **6 months ago – my wilderness experience faith test.**

So, to prepare me for my faith test or rather my wilderness experience, first the Lord Jesus gave me a word for this current season and it is called “Under your wings.”

The core message of this season would come from Psalm 91. The same Psalm 91 that the Devil quoted to Jesus in his own wilderness experience.

I meanwhile started discussing Psalm 91 in my last message of this season where in “Message 4: Yes, and amen” I shared that there are at least 12 promises God makes to his people including what the devil took out of context with Jesus. The promise of God that the enemy quoted in its full context is this:

*If you say, “The Lord is my refuge,”  
and you make the Most High your dwelling,  
no harm will overtake you,  
no disaster will come near your tent.  
For he will command his angels concerning you  
to guard you in all your ways;  
they will lift you up in their hands,  
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*

*Psalms 91: 9-12 (NIV).*

So remember I said that faith is like not only speaking about a chair but proving your faith by sitting on it? Well the Lord wanted to test me or refine me so that I would start knowing with 100% confidence that God means what he says in his word – including that he will take care of me.

So about 2 weeks before I had to take my test, on around 21 October 2023, I heard the Holy Spirit ask me: “who feeds you?” The Lord asked me this question because I was worried about my job. My job was in a situation of flux, change was coming and it was making me anxious. The Lord was asking me this question because if you think about it, we often say things like: “The Lord is my Shepherd, I lack nothing.”

Do we really believe this or do we say it like empty talk but really believe that our jobs are our true shepherd.

The Lord decided to kill the thing I loved so much and so just like Abraham was asked to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac – the Lord told me to leave my 6-figure salary job and I had no other job!

This is an unbelievable command the Lord would give me because it is He who had led me to this job and had closed all other paths or jobs, including in a bigger company than the one I was in.

I could not believe what I was hearing but I knew it was a test and I knew it was the voice of God.

Someone close to me really could not believe this was God and basically asked me: “*Did God really tell you to leave your job?*”

Everything seemed so unbelievable – How would I survive let alone support my family plus the ministry?

Faith forces you to either believe God or to just stop fantasising. In other words, faith makes you go HARD CORE!

So, I believed the Lord and I quit my job. This is something I had never done in 20 years of my career. No job to go to.

And then the fire begun. I run out of my savings and I didn’t even know how I was going to pay my bills. When I run out of the savings, I started to think, that perhaps I had heard wrong and that’s when doubts started kicking in about whether I had heard God right and on why the process was taking too long. It had been 6 months of testing and I could not see any light. Was God angry with me? To be honest, some days were better than others BUT what carried me through was that day after day, I read the word and day after day I said to myself: “I am just one prayer away from a miracle.”

Thank God he is gracious for during this fire, he spoke through a pastor friend of mine and confirmed that it was he who was testing me in the purifying fire and he confirmed that what was I was going through was my consecration experience or my wilderness experience.

The Lord was therefore showing me that he was taking me on a journey of faith, like the ancients.

### **The faith of the ancients.**

The scriptures say this about faith and the ancients:

*Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. Hebrews 11: 1 (NIV).*

What were the ancients so confident about? What did they place their hope in?

They placed their hope in God and that what he had told them was not a fantasy. He had promised them a new country, they believed him. They believed him so much, they no longer enjoyed this world and the scriptures further say this about them:

*Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. Hebrews 11: 16 (NIV).*

This confidence in the word of God and the scriptures was so real, and not a fantasy that they were willing to put their entire weight on God and that is why they could withstand some of the fire that went through. What did they face?

*Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning;[e] they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground. Hebrews 11: 36 – 38 (NIV).*

Would you withstand jeers and mockery just on account of a promise in the Bible?

You can only withstand suffering if you believe that the words are true. So true, that you would rather be beaten and even killed, than doubt them.

That is what faith is. Do you have this kind of faith?

Do you know what happened to me after the 6 months of suffering? You will have to come back to hear the full testimony the Lord is writing but just know it has been such a life changing experience that now when I read the Bible, I know I am literally reading truth. I knew I was reading truth before, but it's a different level of knowledge and so when I for example read the other verses of Psalm 91, I just know I can put my full weight on God when I read something like this:

*He will cover you with his feathers,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;  
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.*

*Psalm 91: 4 (NIV).*

**What is faith?** Faith is believing in God so much that you can find refuge in his word or so to speak – under his wings. There under his wings, he demonstrates true faithfulness, he becomes your shield and rampart.

Amen!

### **The message of Jesus.**

As I was wrapping up this message, the Lord Jesus gave me a message for you. He told me to tell you:

*“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11: 28 (NIV).*

The Lord Jesus is saying, come and sit down in my heavenly chair, my heavenly rest. Come and put your full weight in me. You will find rest for your weary soul and you will not be disappointed. Too many of us today, put our trust in fantasies – in science fiction and myths of the day and we end up becoming disappointed.

My God, the one who took me through the fire has however commissioned me as his servant and appointed me as a preacher of righteousness – so I can tell you that: “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near.” This Kingdom was previously hidden but now it is manifest and if you put your faith in Christ, you will see the glory of God.

Do you believe this?

If so, I would love for you to become part of God's family, so please pray this prayer to become a Christian:

*"God of heaven, I confess that I am a sinner and have been one since birth, but I have heard that you can make me new, and you sent your son Jesus to die for me. He rose again and it is he who can give me his Holy Spirit. Please forgive me and welcome me into your Kingdom, teach me how to follow you. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

Lots of love, your brother in the Lord and a Servant of Jesus the Christ.

Lord Jesus, come, Maranatha!