

FAITH AND LUCK

“Better Odds”

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Scripture: Hebrews 4:14

Idea: *The foundation of our faith is a person, not an experience, and not faith itself. Our foundation is the person of Jesus Christ.*

Introduction

1. For the next several weeks we are going to talk about faith. Not what you believe, but what it means to believe.
2. We are going to answer several questions:
 - What is faith? “I’m trusting God.” What does that mean? When we pray with faith . . . does that mean God has to do stuff? Why doesn’t it work?
 - What can we expect from God?
3. That’s pretty exciting, because you probably woke up this morning thinking, “What is faith? What does it mean to believe something?”
4. But this is one of the most important things we will talk about because it is at the core of Christianity . . . and confusion over this creates all kinds of confusion in other areas.
5. Today, as Christians, what is the **foundation** of our faith? What is supposed to prop up our faith? What is it supposed to lean against? Why is some people’s so strong? Some so weak? Why did yours go away? Why did you grow up believing and now you aren’t so sure?

Maybe the best way to illustrate the importance of this is to look at the opposite.

- I. **It is not uncommon to meet men and women who readily admit that they lost or abandoned their faith . . . or that they are slowly losing it.**

And it’s usually for one of two reasons: lifestyle choices or circumstances that did not fit with their worldviews.

- A. Lifestyle: decisions that were contrary to what they believed they ought to do that immediately set up internal conflict that could only be resolved one of two ways—change behavior or change beliefs.
 - Raised to believe . . . moving in was wrong.
 - Always believed it was wrong to intentionally deceive.
 - Obey the government. Now it’s a game.
1. Either quit believing it was wrong or quit behaving wrongly.
2. When people are able to shift their beliefs for the sake of behavior, it says something about the **foundation** of their faith systems.
3. It implies that their faith had shallow roots at best; that it was a convenient faith based on what worked for them—made them feel good, secure, and purposeful—for the time being.