

## Practically applying the character quality of

# faith

vs. Presumption

*"Confidence that actions rooted in good character will yield the best outcome, even when I cannot see how."*

**By: Steve Becker**

Ideas have consequences. What you believe, determines what you do. Faith is understanding that what you do today will affect what happens tomorrow. It is understanding the cause and effect principles of life's situations we encounter. For instance, yielding to a moment of temptation damages not only my marriage, but the lives of our children and our grandchildren as well. My love for my entire family is demonstrated when I am faithful to my spouse.

Understanding presumption, the opposite of faith, helps to deepen our understanding of the quality. Faith in the weather forecast is an important consideration. A January forecast for a bitterly cold day should change how I dress when leaving my home. Presuming that it has been warm and sunny, so it will be warm and sunny tomorrow could be foolish. Presumption is making a claim about the future based on the evidence I see now, regardless of what any other evidence might say. I may want tomorrow to be a beautiful day, so I am going to defy the weatherman and hope against hope that the weather bends to my wishes. Stubbornness is believing what I want to believe regardless of seen or unseen indicators.

Faith is not a blind leap in the dark. To make a leap without ability to see - just hoping something will catch me - would be presumption, not faith. Rather than making decisions based

on presumption or self-willed stubbornness, faith is making confident decisions based on truth.

Faith is generally focused on future outcomes, but is always rooted in present realities. Nonetheless it must be acknowledged that an act of faith often involves a certain degree of uncertainty.... especially when trusting in other people. Life brings each of us into the world totally dependant on others. The first goal of our

### Commitment to Faith

- I will not take things for granted.
- I will trust those who have proven character.
- I will make right choices based on principles of character rather than whims of circumstance.
- I will expect the best.

parents was to help us become independent of them for our survival. Rugged individualism however, is not the final goal of human achievement. The greatest achievement and happiness in life is found in those who have used their faith in others to become inter-dependant, or if you will combining our best strengths with others weaknesses and vice versa. This is basis of synergy, where one plus one sometimes can equal five or even ten. Putting faith in others is easy if you know their character, because character is the best predictor of future actions.

Faith in others is vividly seen on the battle field, where soldiers trust one another with their very lives. Building relationships and learning to trust one another is an important aspect of faith. Faith is not blind, but it does require trust in the character of others. Believe in others even before they believe in themselves. Believe in others before they succeed... in order to help them succeed. Emphasize their strengths and encourage them when they fail. Praise them for their character. Today's achievement is never a guarantee of future results, however today's character is the foundation of tomorrow's success. Listen to what C.S. Lewis said about faith: "In getting a dog out of a trap... in extracting a thorn from a child's finger... in teaching a boy to swim or rescuing one who can't... in getting a frightened beginner over a nasty place on the mountain... the one fatal obstacle may be their distrust... We ask them to believe that what is painful will relieve their pain, and that which looks dangerous is their only safety. We ask them to accept apparent impossibilities: that moving the paw farther back into the trap is the way to get it out, that hurting the finger much more will stop the finger from hurting, that water which is obviously permeable will resist and support the body... that to go higher and onto an exposed ledge is the way not to fall..."