

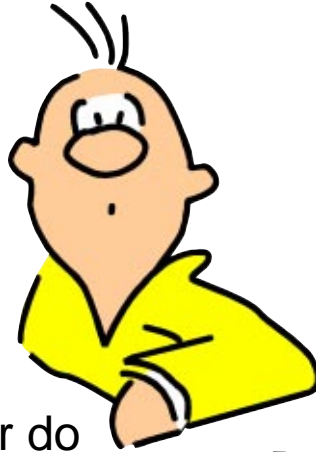
# THE ELEMENTS OF FAITH

## FACTS, FAITH, APPROPRIATION, and maybe (*FEELING*)

Let's begin with a simple illustration: I have been feeling ill. I know I have something wrong with me. I go to see the doctor, and ...

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**1. Facts:** I learn from my doctor that I have a fatal illness. He gives me medicine he says will heal me.



**2. Faith:** I do, or do not, believe I am sick enough to die, and I do, or do not, believe in the medicine offered to me.



**I WILL NOT BELIEVE !**  
I have my own ideas.  
I don't like being threatened!  
I'll do it my way!  
I'm not really THAT sick.  
etc. etc. etc.

**3. Appropriation:** I believe everything I have been told, but I do, or do not, take the medicine. I may keep putting it off. If I actually take the medicine I live, *if not I die.*



**4. Feeling:** I have taken the medicine. Strength has returned to my body. I may, or may not, rejoice in my healing. **Either way, I live.**



## THE THREE ELEMENTS OF FAITH

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1. Knowledge (facts)
2. Assent (faith)
3. Appropriation (action)

### The three elements of faith applied to SALVATION:

1. **First**, there must be a *knowledge* of the claims of Christ as to His person and mission in the world: As to His person - that He is Deity, John 9:35–38; 10:30; Phil. 2:6–11. As to His work, (full salvation) - Matt. 20:28; 26:26–28; Luke 24:27, 44.

2. **Second**, there must be an *assent* (belief) to all these claims, John 16:30; 20:28; Matt. 16:16; John 6:68, 69.

3. **Third**, there must be a personal *appropriation* of Christ as being all that He claims to be, John 1:12; 8:21, 24; 5:24. There must be surrender to a person, and not mere faith in a creed. Faith in a doctrine must lead to faith in a person, and that person Jesus Christ, if salvation is to be the result of such belief.

### The three elements of faith applied to GOD'S PROMISES:

1. **First**, we should know whether the particular promise in question is intended for us in particular. There is a difference in a promise being written for us and to us. There are dispensational aspects to many of the promises in the Bible, therefore we must

rightly divide, apportion, and appropriate the Word of God (cf. 1 Cor. 10:32).

2. **Second**, when once we are persuaded that a promise is for us, we must believe that God means all He says in that promise; we must assent to all its truth; we must not diminish nor discount it. God will not, cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

3. **Third**, we must appropriate and act upon the promises. Herein lies the difference between belief and faith. Belief is mental; faith adds the action; we may have belief without the will, but not faith. Belief is a realm of thought; faith is a sphere of action. Belief lives in the study; faith comes out onto the streets. Faith substantiates belief—gives substance, life, reality, activity to it (Heb. 11:1). Faith puts belief into active service, and connects possibilities with actualities. Faith is acting upon what you believe; it is appropriation. Faith counts every promise valid, (Heb. 11:11); no trial can shake it (11:35); it is so absolute that it survives the loss of anything (11:17). For illustration, see 1 Kings 18:41–43.

### The three elements of faith applied to PRAYER:

1. We must understand the promises on which we base our prayer;
2. we must believe that these promises are true; and
3. then step out upon them,

thereby giving substance to that which, at the moment may be unseen, and, perchance, nonexistent, so far as our knowledge and vision are concerned, but which to faith is a splendid reality.

### FACTS, FAITH, FEELING

Isa. 26:3; Phil. 4:6; Rom. 5:1; Heb. 4:1–3; John 14:1; 1 Pet. 1:8. Fact, faith, feeling—this is God's order.

*Satan would reverse this order and put feeling before faith, and thus confuse the child of God.*

We should march in accord with God's order: Fact leads, Faith with its eye on Fact, following, and Feeling with the eye on Faith bringing up the rear.

**All goes well as long as this order is observed.** But the moment Faith turns his back on Fact, and looks at Feeling, the procession wobbles. Feed Faith with Facts, not with Feeling.—A. T. Pierson.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Condensed from: Evans, William, *The Great Doctrines of the Bible*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press) 1998, c1994.