

# 28<sub>b</sub>

## Faith

**Objective** The confirmands would like to become more and more like Jesus Christ so that the fruit of the Holy Spirit becomes evident.

**Contents** Faith comes by assimilating the sermon.  
Faith, understanding, conviction.  
Belief and faith in the triune God and His promises.

### **1** Lead-in

#### **Explain**

There are many things which our mind cannot grasp. For example:

- The universe and its expanse exceed the powers of our imagination.
- Life after death is incomprehensible to our intellect.

God the Creator of all things is “from everlasting to everlasting” (Psalm 90: 2). He also cannot be understood by the human intellect. The Lord Jesus said, “You believe in God, believe also in Me” (John 14: 1).

#### **Workbook exercises A and B**

The confirmands do exercise A in their workbook. Answers are discussed. Afterwards they do exercise B. These answers are also discussed.

#### **Summarise**

Even in our earthly life faith is required. In the spiritual sphere however, we would be helpless without faith.

### **2** Faith comes from assimilating the sermon

#### **Tell**

A man travels to a foreign country whose language he does not understand. When he arrives he tries to decipher the various signs and notices to obtain information about food and accommodation as well as many other things. One of the locals approaches him and offers to translate and explain that which is written to make it understandable. The foreign traveller gladly accepts this offer, trusts the local resident and believes his explanations. He later learns that everything is as had been explained to him. As a result he becomes convinced: “This local resident told me the truth. It was worthwhile to believe him!”



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### Ask

#### What was crucial for the foreign traveller to be helped?

### Listen to answers and supplement

The foreign traveller believed the local resident because the latter explained everything in the language which the former could understand. If these things had not been explained to him in a language he understood the foreigner would certainly have misunderstood or misinterpreted many things.

### Elaborate

#### *God speaks to us*

If God did not speak to us, we would have no knowledge about Him or His plan of salvation. Through the ambassadors of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit speaks to us in a language we can understand. Many things that were previously incomprehensible to us, or concealed from us, are explained to us.

#### *We believe God*

Apostle Paul wrote: "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10: 17). When we believe the word of truth and trust the Lord we will deepen our spiritual understanding. The prerequisite for this is to believe in a childlike manner. Little children believe their parents unconditionally and they trust them. We want to believe and trust our heavenly Father like a little child.

#### *We do what God tells us*

If we truly believe, we will also act in accordance with the will of God. Faith and works belong together: "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1: 22).

#### *We experience that God's word is the truth*

When we do this we can repeatedly experience that everything is as we were told. When we trust our heavenly Father our faith increasingly becomes a firm conviction.

### Hint (homework)

At this point the confirmands are to relate the experiences of faith which they recorded as homework following lesson 28a. Depending on the amount of time available the confirmation teacher may of course also relate one of his own experiences of faith.

## 3 Faith in the triune God and His promises

### Explain

#### *Faith: the foundation for everything*

We believe in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe that God became Man in Jesus Christ. We believe in God's acts of salvation and in His promises. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him [God], for he who comes to God must believe that He is..." (Hebrews 11: 6).

Such faith is the foundation upon which we build. This is to be illustrated using the following example.

### Tell

#### *Peter professes his faith*

While the Lord Jesus was active on earth only a few people recognised Him as God's Son. One day He asked His disciples what the people were saying about who He was. The disciples said that some thought He was John the Baptist, or Elijah, or Jeremiah, or another prophet. The Lord Jesus then asked His disciples, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter, who believed like the other disciples and followed Jesus, acknowledged, "**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**"





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The Lord Jesus was able to build on such faith. In response to this profession of Peter, Jesus Christ replied: "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16: 17-19).

### Explain

People who believe in God often try to interpret the divine workings in a human fashion. Personal assessments and explanations of the divine workings have led to the development of many different beliefs.

### *Personal interpretation of God's workings*

### *Conviction*

By grace God grants His children the understanding for His plan of salvation. Through experiences of faith we increasingly understand the divine intentions.

### *Confidence*

Belief in the merciful and gracious God, by whom all salvation is bestowed, brings us great confidence. In the letter to the Hebrews it says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11: 1).

## The main points

**I also want to ...** ... **believe with all my heart.**

### Homework

If no further lessons in series 28 will be covered the confirmands are to again concern themselves with the confirmation vow.

### Hint

For lesson 29 the confirmands' parents are invited.