



To Help You Build a Rock-Solid Faith

By Kathy Howard

Women are usually prepared for anything and everything. We have dozens of recipes for ground meat when money is tight. We carry everything from safety pins to tiny sewing kits in our purses to tighten loose buttons. Those of us who travel with children pack take-along snacks in case they get hungry and extra clothes for when they happen to fall in a puddle. We keep ourselves - and our families - together and running smoothly.

Is our faith prepared to withstand whatever comes our way? Difficulties and trials bombard us constantly. Everything, from the normal stresses of daily life to the grief of loss, threatens to shake our faith, leaving us and our families resembling a pile of rubble. But an unshakeable faith will keep us standing firm through all the storms of life.

We can learn a lot about unshakeable faith from the Apostle Peter. God actually allows us to watch Peter's faith grow as we read the Gospels, the book of Acts, and Peter's two letters. As I studied Peter's life, I particularly noticed eight characteristics God instilled in his faith as Peter walked with Jesus. As these faith traits developed, Peter's faith transformed from shaky to unshakeable!

We cannot grow our own faith. That is solely the work of the Holy Spirit. However, we can position ourselves to cooperate with His activity! Check your faith against the eight characteristics below.

1. **Secure in the God Who Loves and Chooses You** – If you are a Christian you are a child of God! Have you ever seriously contemplated the implications of that truth? God choose you for Himself. He picked you out and said, “She is mine!” He loves you with an unfailing love that reaches to the heavens. Truly accepting this truth can sustain you through those times when you feel lonely, rejected, unloved, or betrayed. No matter who else may turn away from you, God never will.

2. **Confident in Your All-Powerful, All-Knowing, Sovereign God** – God is bigger than any trial or problem life may throw at you. Nothing touches your life that He doesn't know about. He is able to use whatever trial He allows into your life to strengthen your faith and shape your character. He has the power and authority to remove it or use it, and walk with you through it. Just hang on tightly to Him!
3. **Submitted to the One Who Knows the Future and Has a Plan** – Why do we argue with and resist the One who knows everything our future holds? Our all-knowing God has a plan for your life and mine. Our pain and trials do not surprise Him. But we still want to try to do things our way and control our own lives. Seems a little silly when we stop and consider who God really is. When we submit every area of our lives to God – even the heartache – He will work His plan in His way.
4. **Determined to Stay Alert and Guard Against Temptation** – In the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus told Peter to “watch and pray,” Peter did not heed his warning. Shortly afterwards, Peter denied even knowing Jesus. We will always be tempted to turn away from Jesus. We must identify our areas of vulnerability and ask God to help us protect those weaknesses.
5. **Live by the Power of the Indwelling Holy Spirit** – If you are a Christian you have the Spirit of God living inside you! His presence not only enables us to hear and obey God, He also comforts our grief, gives us peace in times of difficulty, guides our steps, and strengthens our weaknesses. Unfortunately, many Christians try to live their lives their way, in their own power and never submit themselves to the Holy Spirit's authority. Believer, the same power that raised Christ from the dead is living inside you. Submit to His authority and let His power work in you!
6. **Pursues Holiness with Eyes Focused on the Father** – “Without holiness no one will see the Lord” (Heb 12:14). When we allow our lives to become cluttered and messy with the stuff of this world, we ruin the intimate fellowship with our heavenly Father. But a holy life fosters intimacy with God. Ask God to show you what “clutter” fills your life. Then do a little spring cleaning. Learn what pleases God and do it!
7. **Prepared to Endure Persecution for the Sake of Christ** – About the only thing not tolerated in our tolerant society these days is Christianity. Jesus warned us that persecution would come. It may be difficult, but God promises unique blessings for those who endure it. Suffering persecution because you belong to God will result in a fuller, richer knowledge of Christ. Decide now that you will not deny your Lord!
8. **Connected to a Local Church Body with Love and Service** – When God saved you, He saved you into His family. We can never be all God intends for us to be outside of a vital connection to a local church. That's the way He designed it. If you do not have a church home, find one. If you attend but are not serving, find your place of service. God has a specific place reserved just for you!

So, how did your faith measure up? Mine still has some growing to do, but the Holy Spirit is working! If you want to dig deeper into these eight faith traits consider doing the study “Unshakeable Faith: 8 Traits for Rock-Solid Living.” God work the same kind of miracle in your faith that He did in Peter.