God Wants You to Be Fully Persuaded

Faith Is Believing, and Here's How It's Done

Faith is not a leap in the dark. It is being fully persuaded of what God has said, and acting on it. A plain study of faith and believing, with verses to write on index cards, memorize with understanding, and keep.

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Anchor Passage

> **Romans 4:20** *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*
> **Romans 4:21** *And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

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Introduction

A. "Have faith, brother"

Ask a hard question in many churches and you may hear an answer like this: "We can't understand everything. You just have to take it on faith." Or: "Trust God. We may never know. Just have faith, brother."

It sounds humble. It sounds spiritual. But it leaves a person with nothing in his hands. He came with a question and goes home with a feeling, and the feeling does not last.

Many people have walked away from church because of it. In a five-year study of young adults who grew up in church, the Barna research group found that one of the six main reasons they left was that the church "feels unfriendly to those who doubt." More than a third, 36 percent, said they could not "ask my most pressing life questions in church." In a later Barna survey, 47 percent of people with some tie to Christianity said they feel the church "cannot answer their questions."

The trouble is not that people have questions. The trouble is that they have been taught that faith means believing without answers, and that asking for answers shows a lack of faith. Scripture teaches the opposite.

In short: "Just have faith" leaves people with a feeling instead of an answer. Scripture never teaches faith that way.

B. What faith really is

Here is the whole study in one sentence:

Faith is being fully persuaded of what God has said, and acting on it.

That is how Scripture describes Abraham, the man the Bible calls the father of all who believe:

> **Romans 4:20** *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*
>
> **Romans 4:21** *And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

God spoke a promise. Abraham heard it. He was "fully persuaded" that God would do what He said. That is faith. It is not a leap in the dark. It is not guessing. It is not trying hard to feel sure. It is being persuaded by what God has said, because God cannot lie.

This study is written for anyone, especially someone who has never been taught this. It uses a few Greek words, but only a few, and each one is explained in plain English. It quotes the King James Version throughout. And it ends with a practical way to start: verses to write on index cards, carry everywhere, learn by heart, understand, and use.

In short: Faith is being fully persuaded of what God has said. This study shows it simply, from Scripture, and ends with a way to put it into practice.

Chapter 1 — One Greek Word, Two English Words

A. Faith and believe are the same word

Here is something most Bible readers are never told. In the Greek of the New Testament, "faith" and "believe" are the same word. One is the noun, the other is the verb.

- The noun is *pistis*. The King James Version translates it "faith."
- The verb is *pisteuō*. The King James Version translates it "believe."

English has no verb "to faith." We cannot say "I faith God." So the translators used "faith" for the noun and "believe" for the verb. That is good English, but it hides something. When you read "faith" in the New Testament, you can always read "believing," and when you read "believe," you are reading the action of faith.

So "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22) means "Believe God." And "he that believeth" means "he that has faith." There is no mysterious extra thing called faith, floating somewhere above believing. Faith is believing.

In short: "Faith" and "believe" are one Greek word, noun and verb. Faith is believing.

B. The root of the word: "persuade"

Both words come from a simpler Greek verb, *peithō*. Strong's Greek Dictionary defines it:

> **Strong's G3982** — *peitho; to convince (by argument, true or false); ... reflexively or passively, to assent (to evidence or authority), to rely (by inward certainty): agree, assure, believe, have confidence, ... obey, persuade, trust.*

And it defines the noun built from it:

> **Strong's G4102** — *pistis; from 3982; persuasion, i.e. credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially reliance upon Christ for salvation: assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity.*

Notice the words: *convince*, *persuasion*, *assent to evidence*, *inward certainty*. Faith is what happens when a person has been persuaded. Someone has given a word, and the hearer is convinced it is true and relies on it.

That is the opposite of "take it on faith." "Take it on faith" means "believe it without being persuaded." Biblical faith means "believe it because you have been persuaded."

In short: The root of "faith" is "persuade." Faith is the result of being persuaded, not a substitute for it.

C. The family of words

A few more words from the same family appear often in the New Testament:

- *pistos* — "faithful" or "believing." God is *pistos*: **"he is faithful that promised" (Hebrews 10:23)**. A believer is also *pistos*: "be not faithless, but believing" (John 20:27).
- *apistia* — "unbelief," literally "no-faith."
- *oligopistos* — "little faith," literally "little-believing." Jesus used it gently to His disciples: **"O ye of little faith" (Matthew 6:30)**.

Every one of these is about the same thing: being persuaded of God's word or not being persuaded of it.

In short: Faithful, believing, unbelief and little faith all come from the same word: being persuaded, or not, of what God says.

D. Hebrews 11:1 — substance and evidence

The best-known definition of faith in the Bible is this:

> **Hebrews 11:1** *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

Look at the words. Faith is the **substance** of things hoped for. It is not airy or vague. It is solid. And faith is the **evidence** of things not seen. The Greek word for "evidence" is *elegchos*, which Strong's defines simply as **"proof, conviction."**

So Hebrews does not say faith is believing without evidence. It says faith *is* evidence. When God has promised something you cannot yet see, your believing His promise is the proof that it is coming, because the One who promised cannot fail. "Things not seen" does not mean "things with no reason to believe them." It means things God has said that have not yet appeared.

In short: Hebrews 11:1 calls faith "substance" and "evidence," proof and conviction. Faith is not believing without evidence; it rests on the surest evidence there is, God's word.

Chapter 2 — Faith Needs Something to Believe

A. Faith comes by hearing

Where does faith come from? Paul answers in one sentence:

> **Romans 10:17** *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Faith does not come from trying hard. It does not come from feelings or from a church atmosphere. It comes by hearing, and the hearing is of the word of God. First God speaks. Then a person hears what God said. Then that person can believe it.

So before anyone can have faith about something, there has to be a word from God about it. Faith is always a response to something God has said.

In short: Faith comes by hearing God's word. No word from God, nothing to believe yet.

B. Abraham: God spoke first

Abraham is Scripture's great example of believing, and his story shows the order clearly. God spoke first:

> **Genesis 15:5** *And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.*
>
> **Genesis 15:6** *And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*

God gave Abraham a promise. Abraham believed the promise. God counted that believing as righteousness. Paul repeats it: **"Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Romans 4:3)**.

Abraham did not believe something he made up. He did not "take it on faith" that God might do something. He believed exactly what God told him: **"according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be" (Romans 4:18)**.

In short: God spoke a promise, and Abraham believed what was spoken. That is the pattern of all faith.

C. Every example in Hebrews 11 began with God's word

Hebrews 11 lists men and women of faith. Read it carefully and you will see that each one believed something God had said or shown:

- Noah built the ark **"being warned of God of things not seen as yet" (Hebrews 11:7)**.
- Abraham went out **"when he was called" (Hebrews 11:8)**.
- Sarah **"judged him faithful who had promised" (Hebrews 11:11)**.
- Moses' parents hid him, and Moses later left Egypt, because they believed God's promise to His people (Hebrews 11:23-27).

None of them believed in the dark. Each one heard from God and acted on what God said. That is why Hebrews says:

> **Hebrews 11:6** *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

To come to God, a person must believe "that he is," that God is real, and that He "is a rewarder" of those who seek Him. Both are things God has told us.

In short: Every believer in Hebrews 11 was acting on something God had said. None of them took a leap in the dark.

D. When God has not spoken

If faith comes by hearing God's word, then something important follows. Where God has not spoken about a matter, there is nothing yet to believe about it.

That does not mean we may not ask. It means we should be honest. Scripture itself draws the line:

> **Deuteronomy 29:29** *The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

Some things God has kept to Himself. The things He has revealed belong to us. So when a question comes up, the honest answer is one of three:

1. **"Scripture says..."** — and then show where.
2. **"Scripture does not say."** — and leave it there, without inventing an answer.
3. **"Let's search it out."** — and then do it. **"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter" (Proverbs 25:2)**.

What is not honest is to make up an answer, or to tell someone to believe something God never said and call that "faith."

In short: Where God has spoken, believe it. Where He has not, say so, or search it out. Never call a guess "faith."

Chapter 3 — God Gives Reasons

A. "Come now, and let us reason together"

God does not ask people to stop thinking. He invites them to reason with Him:

> **Isaiah 1:18** *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*

God reasons with people. He explains. He makes His case. And the case He makes is good news.

In short: God says, "Let us reason together." He invites thinking, not blind acceptance.

B. Proofs, reasons, and certainty

The New Testament is full of the same thing. God gave proofs. The apostles gave reasons. The writers wrote so that their readers could be certain.

After Jesus rose from the dead, He did not ask His disciples to take it on faith:

> **Acts 1:3** *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:*

"Many infallible proofs." When Paul preached, he did not say "just believe." He reasoned:

> **Acts 17:2** *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,*
>
> **Acts 17:3** *Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.*

When the people of Berea heard Paul, they checked what he said against Scripture, and God's word calls them noble for it:

> **Acts 17:11** *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

Luke wrote his Gospel so that his reader could be certain:

> **Luke 1:3** *It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,*
>
> **Luke 1:4** *That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.*

And Peter tells every believer to be ready to give a reason:

> **1 Peter 3:15** *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

Proofs, reasoning, checking, certainty, reasons. That is how Scripture presents believing. None of it says, "Don't ask."

In short: Jesus gave infallible proofs, Paul reasoned from the Scriptures, the Bereans checked, Luke wrote for certainty, and Peter says to give a reason. Faith welcomes questions.

C. "These are written, that ye might believe"

John tells us exactly why he wrote his Gospel:

> **John 20:30** *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*
>
> **John 20:31** *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

The record is written so that we might believe. God does not expect us to believe without His word. He gave us His word so that we could believe.

Just before this, John tells of Thomas, who would not believe that Jesus had risen until he saw Him. Many preachers use Thomas as a warning against wanting evidence. But look at what Jesus did. He did not scold Thomas for asking. He showed him:

> **John 20:27** *Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

And then Jesus said: **"blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29)**. That blessing is for us. We have not seen Him as Thomas did. But we are not left with nothing. The very next verses say that these things "are written, that ye might believe." We believe because of what is written. The written word is our evidence.

In short: John wrote so that we might believe. Jesus showed Thomas the evidence; we have the written word as ours.

Chapter 4 — What "Take It on Faith" Gets Wrong

A. Believing everything is not faith

If faith meant believing without a reason, then the person who believes the most things would have the most faith. Scripture says the opposite:

> **Proverbs 14:15** *The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.*

Believing every word is not faith. It is foolishness. The prudent person checks. Biblical faith is not believing anything at all; it is believing God, because God is faithful and His word is true.

In short: "The simple believeth every word." Believing without reason is not faith but foolishness.

B. Where the idea came from

The idea that faith means believing what makes no sense did not come from the Bible. A saying, "I believe because it is absurd," is often credited to the early Christian writer Tertullian, though he never wrote those exact words. And the phrase "a leap of faith" is usually traced to the Danish writer Søren Kierkegaard, in the 1800s. Over time these ideas spread until many people came to think that faith and reason are enemies, and that the less sense something makes, the more faith it takes.

The Bible never says this. In Scripture, faith rests on God's word, and God's word makes sense, because God is wise and true.

In short: "Faith is believing what makes no sense" came from later writers, not from Scripture.

C. Why the phrase is so harmful

"Take it on faith" does three kinds of harm.

First, it **puts faith in the wrong place.** Instead of believing what God said, a person is asked to believe what a teacher could not explain. The object of faith quietly changes from God's word to a man's opinion.

Second, it **teaches people not to search.** If questions are a sign of weak faith, people stop asking. Then they never find the answers God has actually given, and they never grow.

Third, it **leaves people helpless.** When trouble comes, a person who has only "faith" as a feeling has nothing to stand on. A person who knows what God has said can stand on that word.

Jesus never answered hard questions with "just have faith." When He was tempted, He answered every time with a specific word of God: **"It is written" (Matthew 4:4)**. That is the believer's pattern.

In short: "Take it on faith" moves faith off God's word, stops people searching, and leaves them helpless. Jesus answered with "It is written."

Chapter 5 — What to Believe: What Is Written to Us

A. All Scripture is for us, but not all is addressed to us

If faith is believing what God has said, then the next question is: what has God said to *me*?

All Scripture is God's word, and all of it is for us:

> **2 Timothy 3:16** *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*
>
> **2 Timothy 3:17** *That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

But not every word in the Bible was spoken to every person. God told Noah to build an ark. He told Abraham to leave his country. He gave Israel the Law of Moses. Those words were true, and we learn from them, but we are not told to build an ark. Paul tells us how to handle the Word:

> **2 Timothy 2:15** *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

"Rightly dividing" means seeing who a passage was written to, and when. Paul names three groups of people in the world:

> **1 Corinthians 10:32** *Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:*

The Jews, the Gentiles (everyone who is not a Jew), and the church of God. Some parts of the Bible were spoken to Israel. Some speak about the nations. Some are written to the church. If you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you are part of the church of God, and the parts written to the church are written to you.

In short: All Scripture is for us, but not all of it is addressed to us. Rightly dividing means asking: who was this written to, and when?

B. When our time began

God has dealt with people in different ways at different times. Paul calls the way God deals with us today **"the dispensation of the grace of God" (Ephesians 3:2)**. A dispensation is an administration: the way God runs His household for a certain time. The time we live in is the administration of grace. Here is how it began, step by step.

1. Jesus came to Israel, under the Law. When Jesus walked the earth, the Law of Moses was still in force, and He was born under it:

> **Galatians 4:4** *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,*
>
> **Galatians 4:5** *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

His ministry was to Israel. He said so plainly:

> **Matthew 15:24** *But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

When He first sent out His twelve apostles, He told them, **"Go not into the way of the Gentiles" (Matthew 10:5)**. Paul sums it up: **"Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision" (Romans 15:8)**, that is, to Israel.

2. He died, rose, and ascended. Jesus died for our sins, God raised Him from the dead, and forty days later He went up into heaven:

> **Acts 1:9** *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

3. The day of Pentecost. About ten days after He ascended, on the day of Pentecost, God poured out the gift of holy spirit:

> **Acts 2:1** *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*
>
> **Acts 2:2** *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*
>
> **Acts 2:3** *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*
>
> **Acts 2:4** *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Peter explained what had happened. God had raised Jesus, exalted Him to His right hand, and from there He poured out the promised gift:

> **Acts 2:32** *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*
>
> **Acts 2:33** *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

That day the church began. **"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47)**. This is the beginning of our time, the administration of grace.

4. More was revealed. Before He went to the cross, Jesus told His disciples there was more to come that He could not tell them yet:

> **John 16:12** *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.*
>
> **John 16:13** *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

Much of that "more" was revealed to the apostle Paul. God showed him what had been kept secret in every age before, that Jews and Gentiles who believe are now one body, equal heirs in Christ:

> **Ephesians 3:5** *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;*
>
> **Ephesians 3:6** *That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:*

In short: Jesus ministered to Israel under the Law. He died, rose and ascended. On the day of Pentecost God poured out holy spirit and the church began. That is when our time, the administration of grace, began.

C. Which books are written to us

With that in mind, here is a simple guide to the New Testament.

Acts tells how our time began. It records the ascension, the day of Pentecost, the first believers, and the spread of the Word to the Gentiles. It is the history of the rise of the Christian church; **"the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26)**.

Romans through 2 Thessalonians are letters written to churches: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians. They are written to believers in this administration of grace. They are written to you. When they tell you who you are in Christ and what God has given you, you can believe it as said straight to you.

1 and 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon are Paul's letters to men who served in the church. They were written in our time, and they show how believers live and serve together.

Hebrews through Jude were also written after Pentecost, but several were written first to believers of Israel. James writes **"to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1)**, and Peter **"to the strangers scattered" (1 Peter 1:1)**. They hold much for us, but read them asking who they were first written to.

Revelation looks ahead to the time that comes after ours.

The Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, were written down after Pentecost, but they record what happened before it: Jesus' life and ministry to Israel while the Law was still in force. They are precious. They show us our Lord, His love, His words and His works, and much of what He taught holds true for us. But they are not written directly to us. When Jesus told His apostles not to go to the Gentiles, He was not giving that command to the church today; later God sent Paul as **"the apostle of the Gentiles" (Romans 11:13)**.

The Old Testament was written before Christ came, for Israel, and it too is for our learning:

> **Romans 15:4** *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

To say it once more, simply: **The letters to the church, Romans through Thessalonians, are written to you. Acts tells how your time began. Everything else is for your learning.**

In short: Acts tells how our time began. Romans through Thessalonians are written to us. The Gospels record Jesus' ministry to Israel before Pentecost, and the Old Testament was written before Him. All of it is for our learning.

D. Why this matters for believing

This is not a small point. It is the difference between confidence and confusion.

Many believers read a promise spoken to Israel under the Law, with a condition attached, and think they must earn God's blessing by their own goodness. Then they fail, as everyone does, and decide God's promises are not for them. Their believing collapses.

Read a promise to Israel, and you will often find a condition: keep My commandments, walk uprightly, and I will bless you. Under the Law, blessing followed obedience. But Romans through Thessalonians tell you that in Christ you already have what the Law could never give:

- You are made righteous, not by works but by believing: **"to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5)**.
- You are accepted already: **"he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6)**.
- You are blessed already: **"who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3)**.

So when you read an Old Testament promise to "them that walk uprightly," remember: you are righteous now, made so by what Jesus Christ did, not by your works. He bought you back to God. Walking uprightly, for you, is simply believing and living what God has made you. You are not earning the promise; you are standing in it.

Here is a simple way to read any verse:

1. **Who was it written to?** Look at the beginning of the book or chapter.
2. **If it is written to the church,** believe it as said to you.
3. **If it was spoken to someone else,** learn from it what God is like, for He does not change, and then look for what He has said to the church about the same thing.

In short: Promises to Israel under the Law often came with conditions. In Christ you are already righteous, accepted and blessed. Read every verse asking who it was written to, and you will believe with confidence instead of confusion.

E. Believe what God says about salvation

The first thing God asks anyone to believe is about His Son. Jesus Himself said:

> **John 6:28** *Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*

> **John 6:29** *Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*

And Paul writes exactly how a person is saved:

> **Romans 10:9** *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*
>
> **Romans 10:10** *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Confess Jesus as Lord, and believe God raised Him from the dead. God raised Him, and exalted Him to His own right hand, and from there the gift of holy spirit was poured out (Acts 2:32-33). Salvation is not earned:

> **Ephesians 2:8** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*
>
> **Ephesians 2:9** *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Notice how simple it is. Not a leap. Not a feeling. A word from God, believed.

In short: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe God raised Him. Salvation is by grace, received by believing.

F. Believe what God says about you

Once a person is saved, God's word tells him who he now is. These are not things to hope might be true. They are things God says are already true, written to every believer:

- You are a new creature: **"if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17)**.
- You are a son of God: **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God" (1 John 3:2)**.
- You are complete: **"ye are complete in him" (Colossians 2:10)**.
- You are free from condemnation: **"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)**.
- You are made righteous: **"that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21)**.

A believer does not have to feel these things first. He believes them because God said them, and then, by believing, he begins to live them.

In short: God's word tells you who you are in Christ: new, a son, complete, uncondemned, righteous. Believe it because He said it.

G. Believe what God says about His care for you

God's word also tells us what He will do for those who believe:

- **"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19)**.
- **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6)**.
- **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7)**.
- **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14)**.

These are promises, written to us. Faith takes God at His word on each one.

In short: God has promised to supply, to hear, to give peace instead of fear. Faith takes Him at His word.

Chapter 6 — How Believing Works, Day by Day

A. Hear, be persuaded, act

Believing is simple, and it has three parts:

1. **Hear** what God says.
2. **Be persuaded** that it is true, because God said it.
3. **Act** on it.

The third part matters. Believing that does nothing is not really believing:

> **James 2:17** *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*
>
> **James 2:18** *Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*

When Abraham believed, he acted. When Noah believed, he built. Believing shows itself in what a person says and does. That is what Paul means:

> **2 Corinthians 5:7** *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

In short: Hear God's word, be persuaded of it, and act on it. Believing always shows in what you do.

B. A word not mixed with faith

It is possible to hear God's word and get nothing from it. Hebrews tells why:

> **Hebrews 4:2** *For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*

Israel heard the promise but did not believe it, so it did them no good. The word has to be "mixed with faith," believed by the one who hears it. That is why simply sitting in church, hearing verses, is not enough. A person has to take the word for himself and believe it.

In short: God's word profits the one who believes it. Hearing alone is not enough; it must be mixed with believing.

C. Little faith and great faith

Jesus often spoke of "little faith." When His disciples were afraid in a storm, He asked them:

> **Matthew 8:26** *And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.*

When Peter walked on the water and then began to sink, Jesus said:

> **Matthew 14:31** *And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*

Notice what "little faith" looked like. It looked like fear and doubt. The disciples knew who was in the boat with them, but they looked at the wind and waves instead. Peter had Jesus' own word, "Come," and he walked, but when he looked at the wind he doubted and sank.

Little faith is not a small amount of some mysterious substance. It is believing God's word a little and believing what you see a lot. Great faith is believing God's word more than what you see.

And Jesus said even a small seed of real believing is powerful:

> **Matthew 17:20** *And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*

In short: Little faith is believing what you see more than what God said. Even a small seed of real believing, in God's word, is powerful.

D. "Help thou mine unbelief"

A father brought his suffering son to Jesus and asked for help, "if thou canst do any thing." Jesus answered:

> **Mark 9:23** *Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*
>
> **Mark 9:24** *And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

This father is a comfort to everyone. He believed, and he also struggled with unbelief, and he said so honestly. Jesus did not send him away. He healed the boy.

You do not have to pretend to be sure. You can bring your unbelief to God honestly and ask for help. And the help God gives is His word, because "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

In short: You can say, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." God helps unbelief by His word.

Chapter 7 — The Renewed Mind: Receive, Hold Fast, Release

A. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind

Believing God's word changes a person's thinking. Paul writes:

> **Romans 12:2** *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

The world fills a mind with its own ideas: fear, worry, guilt, and "you'll never change." God's word replaces them. Paul describes it as taking off old clothes and putting on new:

> **Ephesians 4:22** *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*
>
> **Ephesians 4:23** *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*
>
> **Ephesians 4:24** *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

The mind is renewed one thought at a time, as God's word takes the place of the world's thinking. That does not happen by accident. It happens as a believer takes God's word in, keeps it, and uses it.

There are three steps to this, and each one is in Scripture. **Receive** the word with meekness. **Hold** it fast with conviction. **Release** it with boldness.

In short: Your mind is renewed as God's word replaces the world's thinking. Three steps: receive, hold fast, release.

B. Receive the word with meekness

The first step is to receive God's word as what it is: God's word.

> **James 1:21** *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*

"Meekness" means a teachable heart, ready to take in what God says without arguing back. The church at Thessalonica did this:

> **1 Thessalonians 2:13** *For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

They received it "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God," and it worked in them because they believed. To receive the word is to read it or hear it and say, "This is God speaking to me."

In short: Receive God's word with a teachable heart, as God's own word, not man's.

C. Hold fast with conviction

The second step is to keep what you have received. Jesus described the good ground in His parable of the sower:

> **Luke 8:15** *But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.*

They hear the word, **keep it**, and bring forth fruit. Paul says the same:

> **Hebrews 10:23** *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*
>
> **2 Timothy 1:13** *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*

"Hold fast" means grip it and do not let go, "without wavering." This is where memorizing comes in. A verse you have learned by heart, and understand, is a verse you can hold. David wrote:

> **Psalms 119:11** *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

Hiding the word in your heart is holding it fast. It stays there, ready, even when you do not have a Bible in your hand.

In short: Keep the word you have received. Learn it by heart and understand it, and hold it without wavering.

D. Release with boldness

The third step is to bring the word out and use it, to speak it and act on it when it is needed. Paul writes:

> **2 Corinthians 4:13** *We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;*

Believing leads to speaking. The early believers prayed for boldness to speak God's word, and God answered:

> **Acts 4:29** *And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,*
>
> **Acts 4:31** *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*

And when fear comes, the believer can answer it out loud with God's own word:

> **Hebrews 13:6** *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

This is exactly what Jesus did when He was tempted. Three times He answered with "It is written," and three times the temptation failed (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10). He did not argue with feelings. He released the word He had kept.

In short: Speak and act on the word you hold. Answer fear and temptation with "It is written," boldly.

E. Taking thoughts captive

Paul describes this whole process as a battle in the mind, won by God's word:

> **2 Corinthians 10:5** *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

When a fearful or false thought comes, you do not have to let it stay. You can cast it down and replace it with what God has said. And Paul tells us what to think about instead:

> **Philippians 4:8** *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

In short: Cast down wrong thoughts, take them captive, and think on what is true: God's word.

F. Examples

Here is how receive, hold fast and release work in real life.

Worry about money. The thought comes: "How will I pay this?" *Receive:* God says **"my God shall supply all your need" (Philippians 4:19)**. *Hold fast:* you have learned that verse by heart and understand that "all your need" means what it says. *Release:* you say it, you pray about the need with thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6), and you do what you can do, trusting God for what you cannot.

Fear. The thought comes: "Something terrible is going to happen." *Receive:* **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7)**. *Hold fast:* you know where fear does not come from. *Release:* you say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear" (Hebrews 13:6), and you go on with a sound mind.

Guilt. The thought comes: "God could never accept me after what I did." *Receive:* **"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)**. *Hold fast:* "no condemnation" means none. *Release:* you thank God that you are accepted in Christ and refuse to carry what He has removed.

Feeling worthless. The thought comes: "I am nothing." *Receive:* **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God" (1 John 3:2)** and **"ye are complete in him" (Colossians 2:10)**. *Hold fast:* that is who God says you are, whether you feel it or not. *Release:* you speak it and begin to live like a son of God.

Temptation. The pull comes to do what you know is wrong. *Receive:* **"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful" (1 Corinthians 10:13)**. *Hold fast:* God has made a way to escape. *Release:* you take the way out, and say no, as Jesus did, with "It is written."

In short: In worry, fear, guilt, worthlessness and temptation: receive the verse, hold it fast, release it. That is the renewed mind at work.

Chapter 8 — Getting Started

A. Write it down and carry it with you

God told Israel to keep His words close, all day long, everywhere they went:

> **Deuteronomy 6:5** *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 6:6** *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:*
>
> **Deuteronomy 6:7** *And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 6:8** *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 6:9** *And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*

His words were to be in their hearts, spoken at home and on the road, at bedtime and on waking, bound on their hands, before their eyes, and written on their doorposts. God's word was meant to go everywhere with them.

Here is a simple way to do that today. **Write a verse on an index card, and carry it with you everywhere.** Put it in your pocket, your purse, your wallet, or on the dashboard of your car. Take it out when you are waiting in line, on a break, before bed, and when you wake up.

Appendix A gives you the verses to start with. On the front of each card, write the reference and the verse, word for word. On the back, write a few words of what it says and when you will use it. Some cards will be one verse; some will be several verses. That is fine. Write the whole passage.

In short: Write each verse on an index card and carry it everywhere, as God told Israel to keep His words before them all day long.

B. Three steps for every card

For each card, follow the three steps of Chapter 7.

1. Memorize it. Read it aloud, several times a day. Say it from memory, then check the card. Keep going until you can say it word for word, with the reference, without looking.

2. Understand it. Think about what it is saying. Who wrote it, and to whom? What does God promise, or tell you, in it? What does it mean for you today? Appendix A gives a little help with each verse under **What it says**. Do not just memorize words; learn what they mean. A verse you understand is a verse you can use.

3. Keep it ready, and release it. Now the verse is in your renewed mind, like a file kept ready in a folder. When the situation comes, the worry, the fear, the temptation, the decision, bring it forth. Speak it. Act on it. Appendix A suggests under **Bring it forth when** the kind of situation each verse is made for.

In short: Memorize the verse, understand what it says, and keep it ready to bring forth and use when the moment comes.

C. One at a time, at your own pace

There is no schedule to keep. Do not rush. Take one card and stay with it until you have truly mastered it: you can say it word for word, you understand it, and you have used it at least once in real life. Then move on to the next.

Keep your finished cards together, and go back through them now and then, so that you hold fast to all of them. Over time you will have a growing stack of God's own words, learned, understood and ready.

You can start anywhere in Appendix A. Many people begin with the group "Walking by Faith," because those verses show how believing works. Others begin with "Peace in Place of Fear," because that is what they need most right now. Start where you are.

In short: Master one card before moving to the next. Keep your stack, review it, and let it grow.

D. Teach them to others

God told Israel, **"thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children" (Deuteronomy 6:7)**. What you learn, share. Teach a card to your children, your spouse, or a friend. Teaching a verse is one of the best ways to hold it fast yourself.

And when someone asks you a hard question, you will not have to say, "Just have faith." You can open your Bible, or your stack of cards, and say: "Here is what God says."

In short: Teach what you learn. Then, instead of "just have faith," you can say, "Here is what God says."

Appendix A — Verses to Memorize with Understanding and Keep

These verses are grouped by subject. Write each card's verse or verses on an index card, word for word, with the reference. On the back, write a few words from **What it says** and **Bring it forth when** in your own words. Carry the card everywhere. Memorize it, understand it, and use it. When you have mastered it, move on to the next.

Old Testament verses are included because **"whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4)**.

A reminder before you begin, from Chapter 5. Some of these verses were first spoken to Israel, or by Jesus before the day of Pentecost. They are here because they show what God is like, and He does not change. Where a verse speaks of "them that walk uprightly," "the righteous," or "them that love him," remember who you are: you are righteous now, not by your works, but because Jesus Christ bought you back to God. You are not earning these promises; you are standing in them. The notes on those cards say so.

1. Who God Is

Knowing the One you believe.

Card 1 — Numbers 23:19

> **Numbers 23:19** *God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*

What it says: God does not lie and does not change His mind. What He says, He does.

Bring it forth when: You doubt whether God will keep His word.

Card 2 — Titus 1:2

> **Titus 1:2** *In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*

What it says: God cannot lie. His promise of eternal life was made before the world began.

Bring it forth when: You wonder whether God's promises can be trusted.

Card 3 — Deuteronomy 7:9

> **Deuteronomy 7:9** *Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;*

What it says: God is faithful. He keeps His covenant and mercy to a thousand generations of those who love Him. These words were spoken to Israel under the Law, where blessing followed keeping the commandments. Today we love God because He first loved us (1 John 4:19), and we are accepted in Christ, not by our keeping. What carries over is the heart of the verse: God is faithful.

Bring it forth when: You need to remember that God keeps His word.

Card 4 — Malachi 3:6

> **Malachi 3:6** *For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

What it says: God does not change. Spoken to Israel, but true for all time: the God who kept His word to them keeps it to you.

Bring it forth when: You wonder whether God is still the same as in the Bible.

Card 5 — James 1:17

> **James 1:17** *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

What it says: Every good gift comes from God, and He never changes or turns.

Bring it forth when: You are tempted to think God sent you something evil.

Card 6 — 1 John 4:8-10

> **1 John 4:8** *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*
>
> **1 John 4:9** *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.*
>
> **1 John 4:10** *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

What it says: God is love, and He showed it by sending His Son. He loved us first. The opening words are not a threat; they mean that love comes from knowing God.

Bring it forth when: You wonder whether God really loves you.

Card 7 — 1 Timothy 2:5

> **1 Timothy 2:5** *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

What it says: There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Bring it forth when: You want to be clear about who God is and who Jesus is.

Card 8 — Psalms 46:1

> **Psalms 46:1** *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

What it says: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Bring it forth when: Trouble comes.

Card 9 — Lamentations 3:22-23

> **Lamentations 3:22** *It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*
>
> **Lamentations 3:23** *They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

What it says: God's mercies do not fail; they are new every morning. Great is His faithfulness.

Bring it forth when: You wake up discouraged, or feel you have used up God's mercy.

Card 10 — Isaiah 40:28-31

> **Isaiah 40:28** *Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.*
>
> **Isaiah 40:29** *He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*
>
> **Isaiah 40:30** *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:*
>
> **Isaiah 40:31** *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

What it says: God never grows tired, and He gives strength to the weak. Those who wait on Him renew their strength.

Bring it forth when: You are weary and worn out.

Card 11 — Psalms 103:2-5

> **Psalms 103:2** *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:*
>
> **Psalms 103:3** *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;*
>
> **Psalms 103:4** *Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;*
>
> **Psalms 103:5** *Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

What it says: Remember everything God does: He forgives, heals, redeems, crowns with lovingkindness, and satisfies.

Bring it forth when: You are tempted to forget God's goodness.

2. What He Has Done

What God did for you through His Son.

Card 12 — John 3:16

> **John 3:16** *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

What it says: God loved the world so much that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes has everlasting life.

Bring it forth when: Anyone asks what the gospel is.

Card 13 — Romans 5:8

> **Romans 5:8** *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

What it says: God showed His love by Christ dying for us while we were still sinners.

Bring it forth when: You feel you must earn God's love first.

Card 14 — 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

> **1 Corinthians 15:3** *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:4** *And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

What it says: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day, as the Scriptures said.

Bring it forth when: You need to state the heart of the gospel.

Card 15 — Acts 2:32-33

> **Acts 2:32** *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*
>
> **Acts 2:33** *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

What it says: God raised Jesus, exalted Him to His right hand, and from there He poured out the promised gift of holy spirit.

Bring it forth when: You want to remember the whole of what God did: raised, exalted, and gave.

Card 16 — Romans 4:25

> **Romans 4:25** *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

What it says: Jesus was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification.

Bring it forth when: You wonder whether your sins are really dealt with.

Card 17 — 2 Corinthians 5:21

> **2 Corinthians 5:21** *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

What it says: God made Christ to be sin for us, so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Bring it forth when: You feel unworthy before God.

Card 18 — Galatians 3:13

> **Galatians 3:13** *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:*

What it says: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

Bring it forth when: You feel under a curse or condemned.

Card 19 — Colossians 1:12-14

> **Colossians 1:12** *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*
> **Colossians 1:13** *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*
> **Colossians 1:14** *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*

What it says: God has made us fit to share the inheritance, delivered us from darkness, and given us redemption and forgiveness.

Bring it forth when: You feel trapped or unforgiven.

Card 20 — Ephesians 1:7

> **Ephesians 1:7** *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

What it says: In Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, by the riches of His grace.

Bring it forth when: You are troubled about past sins.

Card 21 — Ephesians 2:8-9

> **Ephesians 2:8** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*
> **Ephesians 2:9** *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

What it says: You are saved by grace through believing. It is God's gift, not earned by works.

Bring it forth when: You think you have to earn salvation.

Card 22 — Romans 10:9-10

> **Romans 10:9** *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*
> **Romans 10:10** *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

What it says: Confess Jesus as Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead, and you are saved.

Bring it forth when: You or someone else wants to know how to be saved.

3. Who You Are in Christ

What God says is true of you now.

Card 23 — 2 Corinthians 5:17

> **2 Corinthians 5:17** *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

What it says: In Christ you are a new creature. The old is gone; all is new.

Bring it forth when: Your past tells you that you cannot change.

Card 24 — 1 John 3:1-2

> **1 John 3:1** *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*
>
> **1 John 3:2** *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

What it says: God has made us His sons. We are sons of God now.

Bring it forth when: You feel like an outsider to God.

Card 25 — Galatians 4:6-7

> **Galatians 4:6** *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*
>
> **Galatians 4:7** *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*

What it says: God has sent the spirit of His Son into your heart. You are no longer a servant but a son and an heir.

Bring it forth when: You feel like a servant trying to earn favour.

Card 26 — Colossians 2:9-10

> **Colossians 2:9** *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*
>
> **Colossians 2:10** *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

What it says: You are complete in Christ. Nothing is missing.

Bring it forth when: You feel something is lacking in you.

Card 27 — Romans 8:1

> **Romans 8:1** *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

What it says: There is no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. The last words, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," are not a condition you must meet to be free from condemnation. They describe how a believer is to walk, as verse 4 says. Many of the oldest Greek manuscripts end this verse at "in Christ Jesus."

Bring it forth when: Guilt or condemnation comes.

Card 28 — Romans 8:16-17

> **Romans 8:16** *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*
> **Romans 8:17** *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

What it says: God's spirit in you witnesses that you are His child, an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ. The words "if so be that we suffer with him" do not make you any less a child of God; that rests on the new birth. Paul means that those who share Christ's sufferings now will share His glory too (2 Timothy 2:12).

Bring it forth when: You doubt that you belong to God.

Card 29 — Ephesians 1:3

> **Ephesians 1:3** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

What it says: God has blessed you with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Bring it forth when: You feel spiritually poor.

Card 30 — Colossians 1:27

> **Colossians 1:27** *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:*

What it says: Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Bring it forth when: You feel alone or hopeless.

Card 31 — 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

> **1 Corinthians 6:19** *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*
> **1 Corinthians 6:20** *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

What it says: Your body is the temple of the holy spirit in you. You were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body.

Bring it forth when: You are tempted to misuse your body.

Card 32 — 2 Corinthians 5:20

> **2 Corinthians 5:20** *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

What it says: You are an ambassador for Christ, bringing God's message of reconciliation.

Bring it forth when: You wonder what your purpose is.

Card 33 — Ephesians 2:10

> **Ephesians 2:10** *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

What it says: You are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.

Bring it forth when: You feel your life has no purpose.

Card 34 — 1 Peter 2:9

> **1 Peter 2:9** *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

What it says: You are chosen, a royal priesthood, God's own people, to show His praises.

Bring it forth when: You feel worthless or overlooked.

4. His Provision

God's care for every need.

Card 35 — Philippians 4:19

> **Philippians 4:19** *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

What it says: God will supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Bring it forth when: Bills, lack, or any need comes up.

Card 36 — Matthew 6:31-33

> **Matthew 6:31** *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?*
>
> **Matthew 6:32** *(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*
>
> **Matthew 6:33** *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

What it says: Do not worry about food or clothing. Your Father knows you need them. Seek His kingdom first and they will be added. Jesus spoke these words to His disciples before Pentecost, and the same care is written to you in Philippians 4:19.

Bring it forth when: Worry about daily needs takes over.

Card 37 — 2 Corinthians 9:8

> **2 Corinthians 9:8** *And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:*

What it says: God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that you always have enough for every good work.

Bring it forth when: You feel you do not have enough to give or do what is right.

Card 38 — Romans 8:32

> **Romans 8:32** *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

What it says: God gave His own Son for us; He will freely give us all things with Him.

Bring it forth when: You doubt God will provide.

Card 39 — 2 Peter 1:3

> **2 Peter 1:3** *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

What it says: God's power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through knowing Him.

Bring it forth when: You feel unequipped for life.

Card 40 — Psalms 23:1-3

> **Psalms 23:1** *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*
> **Psalms 23:2** *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*
> **Psalms 23:3** *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

What it says: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He leads, restores and guides.

Bring it forth when: You feel lost, empty or uncared for.

Card 41 — Psalms 84:11

> **Psalms 84:11** *For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*

What it says: God is a sun and shield. He gives grace and glory, and withholds no good thing from those who walk uprightly. "Them that walk uprightly" includes you. You are righteous now, not by your works: Jesus Christ bought you back to God (2 Corinthians 5:21). He will not withhold any good thing from you.

Bring it forth when: You wonder whether God is holding back good from you.

Card 42 — Psalms 37:25

> **Psalms 37:25** *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*

What it says: David never saw the righteous forsaken nor his children begging bread. "The righteous" includes you, made righteous in Christ, not by your works.

Bring it forth when: You fear being abandoned in need.

Card 43 — Proverbs 3:5-6

> **Proverbs 3:5** *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*
> **Proverbs 3:6** *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

What it says: Trust the LORD with all your heart, not your own understanding. Acknowledge Him and He will direct you.

Bring it forth when: You must make a decision and cannot see the way.

5. Peace in Place of Fear

God's answer to fear and worry.

Card 44 — 2 Timothy 1:7

> **2 Timothy 1:7** *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

What it says: God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.

Bring it forth when: Fear comes.

Card 45 — Philippians 4:6-7

> **Philippians 4:6** *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*
> **Philippians 4:7** *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

What it says: Do not be anxious. Pray about everything with thanksgiving, and God's peace will guard your heart and mind.

Bring it forth when: Worry starts.

Card 46 — Isaiah 26:3

> **Isaiah 26:3** *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

What it says: God keeps in perfect peace the one whose mind is stayed on Him, because he trusts in Him. Keeping your mind on God is believing Him, not earning His peace.

Bring it forth when: Your mind is restless.

Card 47 — John 14:27

> **John 14:27** *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

What it says: Jesus gives His peace, not as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid.

Bring it forth when: Your heart is troubled.

Card 48 — Psalms 56:3-4

> **Psalms 56:3** *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*
>
> **Psalms 56:4** *In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.*

What it says: When I am afraid, I will trust in God. I will not fear what flesh can do to me.

Bring it forth when: You are afraid of a person or situation.

Card 49 — Hebrews 13:5-6

> **Hebrews 13:5** *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
>
> **Hebrews 13:6** *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

What it says: God will never leave you nor forsake you, so you can boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear."

Bring it forth when: You feel alone or threatened.

Card 50 — 1 John 4:18

> **1 John 4:18** *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*

What it says: There is no fear in love. Perfect love casts out fear.

Bring it forth when: Fear of God's punishment comes.

Card 51 — Isaiah 41:10

> **Isaiah 41:10** *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*

What it says: Do not fear, for God is with you. He will strengthen, help and uphold you.

Bring it forth when: You face something frightening.

Card 52 — Romans 8:38-39

> **Romans 8:38** *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*
>
> **Romans 8:39** *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

What it says: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Notice Paul's words, "I am persuaded": the same root as faith.

Bring it forth when: You fear losing God's love.

Card 53 — 1 Peter 5:7

> **1 Peter 5:7** *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

What it says: Cast all your care on God, because He cares for you.

Bring it forth when: Cares weigh you down.

Card 54 — Psalms 91:1-2

> **Psalms 91:1** *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*
>
> **Psalms 91:2** *I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.*

What it says: Dwell in the secret place of the most High. The LORD is my refuge and fortress; in Him will I trust. To "dwell in the secret place" is to stay close to God by believing Him. In Christ you are already near to God.

Bring it forth when: Danger or threat surrounds you.

Card 55 — Romans 8:28

> **Romans 8:28** *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

What it says: All things work together for good to those who love God. "Them that love God" are those who believe Him; we love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).

Bring it forth when: Things go wrong and you wonder whether any good can come of it.

6. Prayer

Coming to God with confidence.

Card 56 — 1 John 5:14-15

> **1 John 5:14** *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:*

> **1 John 5:15** *And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*

What it says: When we ask according to God's will, He hears us, and we know we have what we asked. God's will is in His word. When you ask for what He has promised, you know you are asking according to His will.

Bring it forth when: You pray for something God has promised.

Card 57 — Hebrews 4:16

> **Hebrews 4:16** *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

What it says: Come boldly to God's throne of grace for mercy and help in time of need.

Bring it forth when: You hesitate to come to God.

Card 58 — Matthew 7:7-8

> **Matthew 7:7** *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:*
>
> **Matthew 7:8** *For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*

What it says: Ask, seek, knock. Everyone who asks receives.

Bring it forth when: You wonder whether asking God is worth it.

Card 59 — James 1:5-6

> **James 1:5** *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*
>
> **James 1:6** *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.*

What it says: If you lack wisdom, ask God; He gives freely. But ask believing, not wavering.

Bring it forth when: You need wisdom for a decision.

Card 60 — John 16:23-24

> **John 16:23** *And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.*
>
> **John 16:24** *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*

What it says: Ask the Father in Jesus' name, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. Jesus spoke of "that day" before Pentecost; it has come. Today we ask the Father in Jesus' name.

Bring it forth when: You pray and want to know how.

Card 61 — Ephesians 3:20-21

> **Ephesians 3:20** *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,*
>
> **Ephesians 3:21** *Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

What it says: God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think.

Bring it forth when: Your need seems too big to ask for.

Card 62 — Jeremiah 33:3

> **Jeremiah 33:3** *Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

What it says: Call to God and He will answer and show you great things you do not know. Spoken to Jeremiah; the same God hears you when you call (1 John 5:14-15).

Bring it forth when: You need understanding God has not yet shown you.

Card 63 — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

> **1 Thessalonians 5:16** *Rejoice evermore.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 5:17** *Pray without ceasing.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 5:18** *In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

What it says: Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in everything.

Bring it forth when: You need a habit of prayer and thanks.

7. Walking by Faith

How believing works.

Card 64 — Romans 10:17

> **Romans 10:17** *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

What it says: Faith comes from hearing God's word. If you want to believe more, hear more of what God has said.

Bring it forth when: You feel your believing is weak, or you are not sure what to believe.

Card 65 — Romans 4:20-21

> **Romans 4:20** *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*
>
> **Romans 4:21** *And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

What it says: Abraham did not waver at God's promise. He was fully persuaded that God would do what He said, and he gave God the glory. That is faith.

Bring it forth when: A promise of God seems too big, or things look impossible.

Card 66 — Hebrews 11:1

> **Hebrews 11:1** *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

What it says: Faith is solid, not vague. Believing what God has promised is the proof that it is coming, even before you see it.

Bring it forth when: You are waiting for something God has promised and cannot see it yet.

Card 67 — Hebrews 11:6

> **Hebrews 11:6** *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

What it says: To please God you must believe two things: that He is real, and that He rewards those who seek Him.

Bring it forth when: You wonder whether seeking God makes any difference.

Card 68 — 2 Corinthians 5:7

> **2 Corinthians 5:7** *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

What it says: We live by what God says, not by what we see.

Bring it forth when: Circumstances look different from what God's word says.

Card 69 — Mark 11:22-24

> **Mark 11:22** *And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.*
>
> **Mark 11:23** *For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.*
>
> **Mark 11:24** *Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

What it says: Believe God. Speak to the obstacle, do not doubt in your heart, and when you pray, believe that you receive.

Bring it forth when: You are praying about something and tempted to doubt.

Card 70 — Mark 9:23-24

> **Mark 9:23** *Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*
>
> **Mark 9:24** *And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

What it says: All things are possible to the one who believes, and God helps the one who honestly says, "help thou mine unbelief."

Bring it forth when: You want to believe but struggle with doubt.

Card 71 — James 1:22

> **James 1:22** *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

What it says: Do not only hear the word; do it. Hearing without doing deceives yourself.

Bring it forth when: You know what God says but have not acted on it.

Card 72 — Hebrews 10:23

> **Hebrews 10:23** *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*

What it says: Hold on to what you believe without wavering, because the One who promised is faithful.

Bring it forth when: You are tempted to give up on a promise.

Card 73 — 2 Corinthians 4:13

> **2 Corinthians 4:13** *We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;*

What it says: Believing leads to speaking. What you believe, say.

Bring it forth when: You need to answer fear, doubt or a lie with God's word.

Card 74 — 1 John 5:4

> **1 John 5:4** *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

What it says: Everyone born of God overcomes the world, and the victory is our believing.

Bring it forth when: The world's pressure feels too strong.

Card 75 — Romans 1:16-17

> **Romans 1:16** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

> **Romans 1:17** *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

What it says: The gospel is God's power to save everyone who believes. The just live by believing.

Bring it forth when: You are tempted to be ashamed of the gospel.

Card 76 — 1 Corinthians 10:13

> **1 Corinthians 10:13** *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

What it says: No temptation is beyond what is common to man, and God is faithful to make a way to escape.

Bring it forth when: Temptation comes.

Card 77 — James 4:7-8

> **James 4:7** *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*
>
> **James 4:8** *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

What it says: Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. James wrote first to the twelve tribes scattered abroad (James 1:1). His call, "ye sinners… ye double minded," is to wavering people to come back to God. If you are in Christ you are already righteous; drawing near is believing Him again.

Bring it forth when: You are under spiritual pressure.

8. The Word That Renews the Mind

Keeping God's word in heart and mouth.

Card 78 — Romans 12:2

> **Romans 12:2** *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

What it says: Do not be shaped by the world. Be changed by renewing your mind with God's word, and you will prove God's good will.

Bring it forth when: The world's thinking is pulling at you.

Card 79 — 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

> **2 Corinthians 10:4** *(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)*

> **2 Corinthians 10:5** *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

What it says: God's weapons are mighty. Cast down wrong thoughts and bring every thought captive to obey Christ.

Bring it forth when: A fearful, angry or false thought will not leave.

Card 80 — Philippians 4:8

> **Philippians 4:8** *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

What it says: Choose what you think about: what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report.

Bring it forth when: Your mind keeps going back to what is dark or worrying.

Card 81 — Psalms 119:11

> **Psalms 119:11** *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

What it says: Hiding God's word in your heart keeps you from sin.

Bring it forth when: You are memorizing, and wonder if it is worth it.

Card 82 — Psalms 119:105

> **Psalms 119:105** *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

What it says: God's word shows you where to step and where you are going.

Bring it forth when: You need direction or a decision.

Card 83 — Joshua 1:8

> **Joshua 1:8** *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

What it says: Keep God's word in your mouth, think on it day and night, and do it. That is the way of real success. Spoken to Joshua about the Law of Moses. The practice carries over to us: keep God's word in your mouth and mind, and do it.

Bring it forth when: You are setting your priorities for the day.

Card 84 — James 1:21

> **James 1:21** *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*

What it says: Put away what is wrong, and receive God's word with a teachable heart. It is able to save.

Bring it forth when: You come to read or hear the Word.

Card 85 — 1 Thessalonians 2:13

> **1 Thessalonians 2:13** *For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

What it says: Receive the Bible as what it truly is, God's word, not man's. It works in those who believe.

Bring it forth when: You are tempted to treat Scripture as one opinion among many.

Card 86 — 2 Timothy 3:16-17

> **2 Timothy 3:16** *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*
>
> **2 Timothy 3:17** *That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

What it says: All Scripture is breathed by God and makes the believer complete, equipped for every good work.

Bring it forth when: You wonder whether the Bible is enough.

Card 87 — 2 Timothy 2:15

> **2 Timothy 2:15** *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

What it says: Study to rightly divide the word: see who each part was written to and why.

Bring it forth when: You are reading a promise and wondering whether it is written to you.

Card 88 — Romans 15:4

> **Romans 15:4** *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

What it says: The Old Testament was written for our learning, to give us patience, comfort and hope.

Bring it forth when: You are reading the Old Testament and wonder what it is for.

Card 89 — Matthew 4:4

> **Matthew 4:4** *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

What it says: Jesus answered temptation with "It is written." We live by every word of God.

Bring it forth when: You are tempted, and need to answer it.

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Sources Consulted

Primary text. The King James Version is the base text throughout. Every verse block and index-card verse was generated by machine from the 1769 text of the King James Version, in the open-source edition of the aruljohn *Bible-kjv* project, and every inline quotation was checked against the same text.

Greek. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance (Greek dictionary) in this library's Sources folder supplied the definitions of *pistis* (G4102), *pisteuō* (G4100), *pistos* (G4103), *peithō* (G3982), *apistia* (G570), *oligopistos* (G3640) and *elegchos* (G1650).

Surveys. Barna Group, "Six Reasons Young Christians Leave Church" (September 27, 2011), from its Faith That Lasts project, for the figure of 36 percent quoted in the Introduction. Barna research reported in November 2019 (via the Christian Post) for the figure of 47 percent.

History. The saying "I believe because it is absurd," commonly credited to Tertullian, and the phrase "leap of faith," commonly traced to Søren Kierkegaard, are described from standard historical background, and are named only to show where the idea did not come from.

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