

LESSON

1



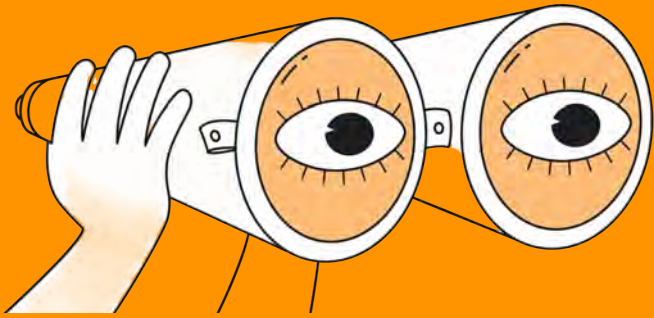
When you meet Jesus at the judgement, will He consider you “Faithful and True” (Rev. 19:11)?

Jesus declared: “And blessed is he that is found **faithful** unto my name at the last day, for he shall be lifted up to dwell in the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world” (Ether 4:19).



What does being “faithful” mean?

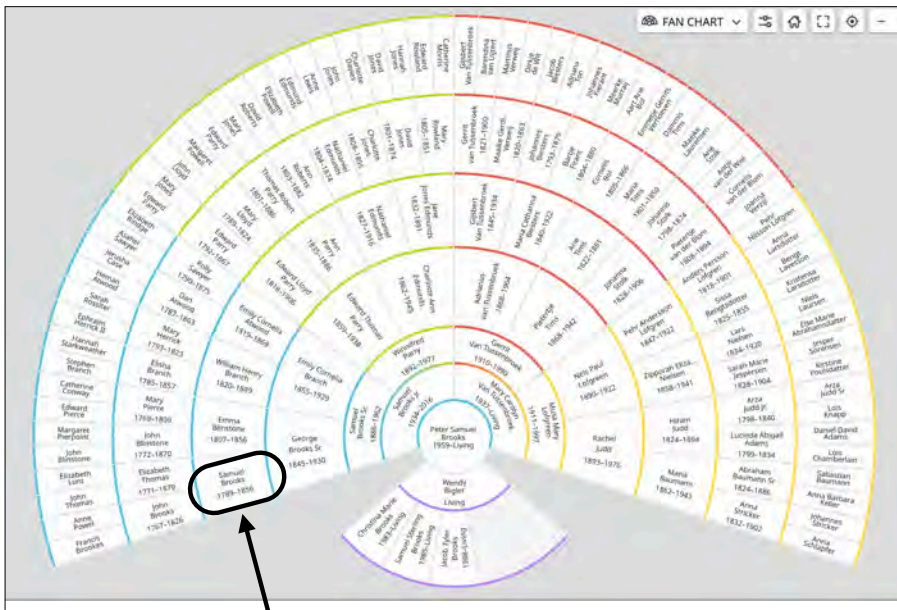
How do you stay loyal, devoted, unwavering, steadfast and true to the Savior and His Church?



What does
faith look like?



Everything I
know about faith
in one story.



This is the story of Samuel Brooks, my great-great-grandfather.

Peter Samuel Brooks

Father: Samuel Brooks (1934)

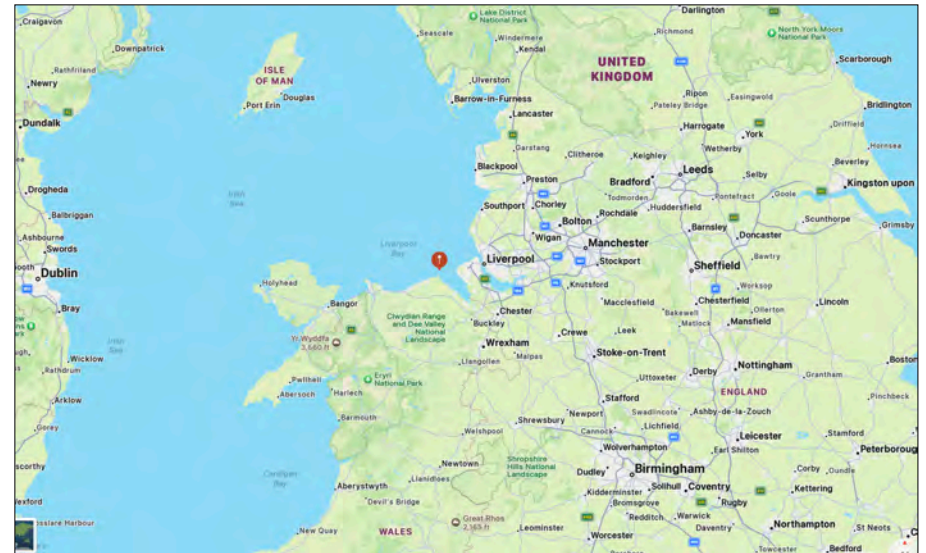
Grandfather: Samuel Brooks (1886)

Great-Grandfather: George Brooks (1845)

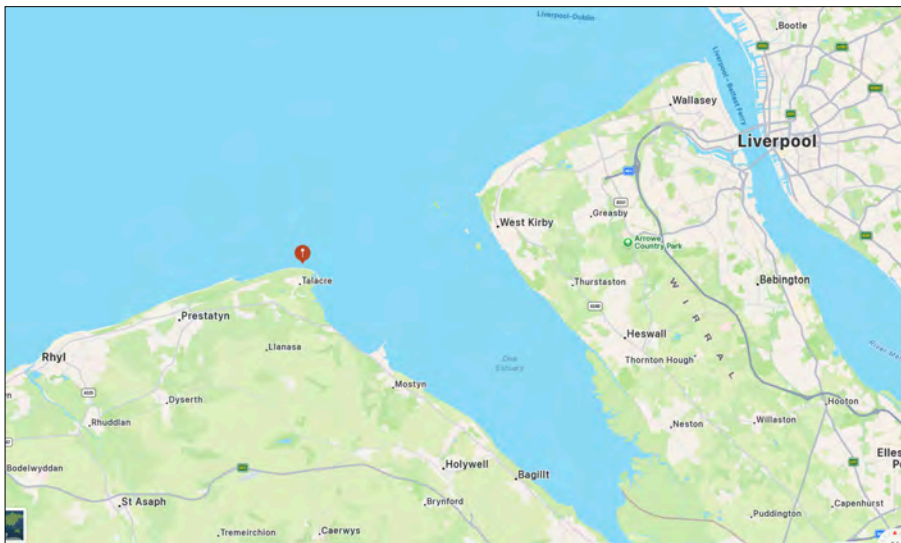
Great-Great: Samuel Brooks (1789)



He lived in Wales.



He was born in 1789 and lived Point of Ayr.



Point of Ayr is the northernmost point of the mainland, located north of Talacre (population 347).



In 1835, at age 46, he married Emma Blinston age 29.

In 1841, at the age of 52, he was a lighthouse keeper of this historic lighthouse built in 1776.



**They had three children:
Mary 1839, George 1845, Frank 1850.**



They joined the church around 1855.



**They were asked to go to Zion in Salt Lake.
They boarded the *Samuel Curling* April 19, 1856.**

Nationality	Adults	Children	Infants	Total
England	121	26	2	149
Scotland	1	0	0	1
Ireland	22	4	2	28
Wales	426	79	23	528
American	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	571	109	27	707

There were 707 people on the *Samuel Curling*.

These are the ages when they boarded there ship:

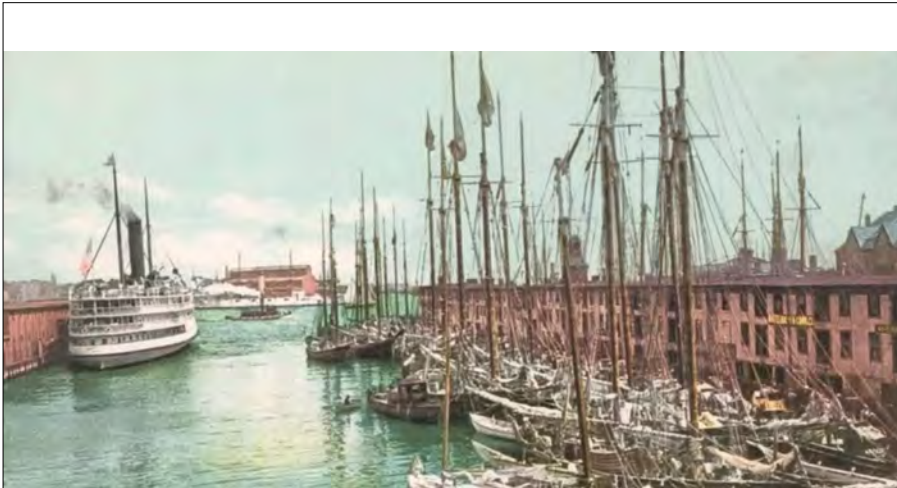
Samuel Brooks (65)

Emma (48)

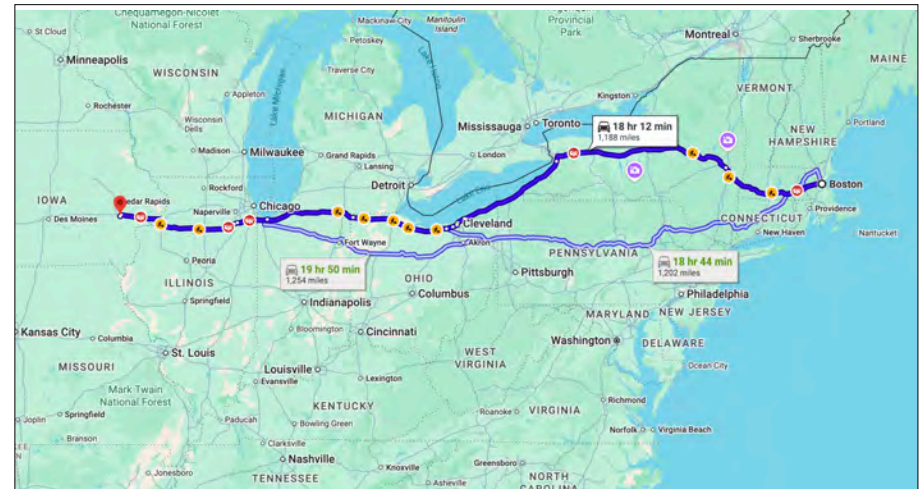
- Mary (17)

- George (11)

- Frank (6)



They arrived in Boston harbor on May 23, 1856 (34 days at sea).



From Boston, they traveled to Iowa City, Iowa by train—about 1,254 miles



**When they arrived in Iowa City,
they got their handcart.**

No.	Year	Captain	Persons	Handcarts	Wagons	Left Iowa City	Left Florence	Arrived SLC	Deaths en route
1	1856	Ellsworth	274	52	5	9 June	20 July	26 Sept.	13
2	1856	McArthur	221	48	4	11 June	24 July	26 Sept.	7
3	1856	Bunker	320	64	5	23 June	30 July	2 Oct.	7 or less
4	1856	Willie	500	120	6	15 July	17 Aug.	9 Nov.	67
5	1856	Martin	576	146	7	28 July	27 Aug.	30 Nov.	135-150

**There were 10 handcart companies
from 1856 to 1860.**

No.	Year	Captain	Persons	Handcarts	Wagons	Left Iowa City	Left Florence	Arrived SLC	Deaths en route
6	1857	Evans	149	31	1	22 May	20 June	11, 12 Sept.	[?]
7	1857	Christiansen	330	68	3	13 June	7 July	13 Sept.	6 [?]
8	1859	Rowley	235	60	6	—	9 June	4 Sept.	5 [?]
9	1860	Robinson	233	43	6	—	6 June	27 Aug.	1
10	1860	Stoddard	124	21	7	—	6 July	24 Sept.	0
Totals			2962	653	50				about 250

**Approximately 2,962 people
traveled by handcart.**



**In the 10 handcart companies, about 250
died en route, the majority of the deaths
(86%) in Willie and Martin companies.**

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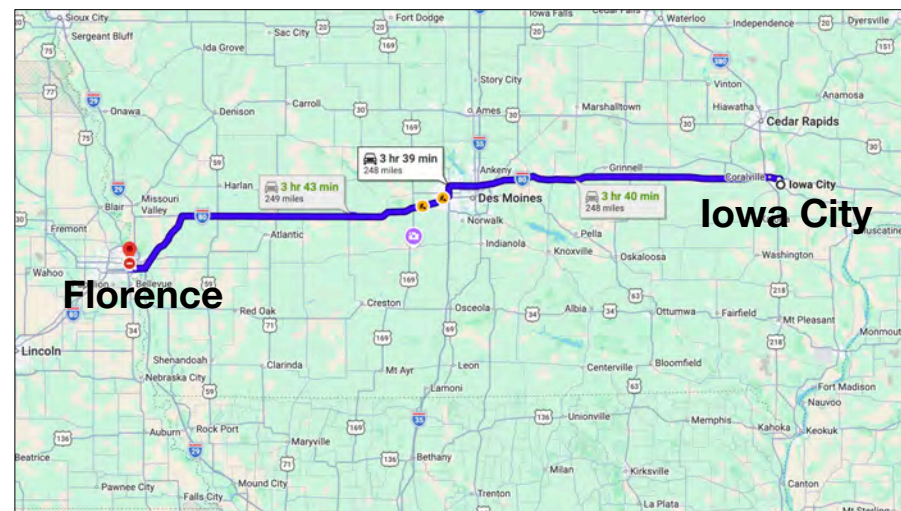
My ancestors travelled in the third handcart company.



They left Iowa City on June 28, 1856



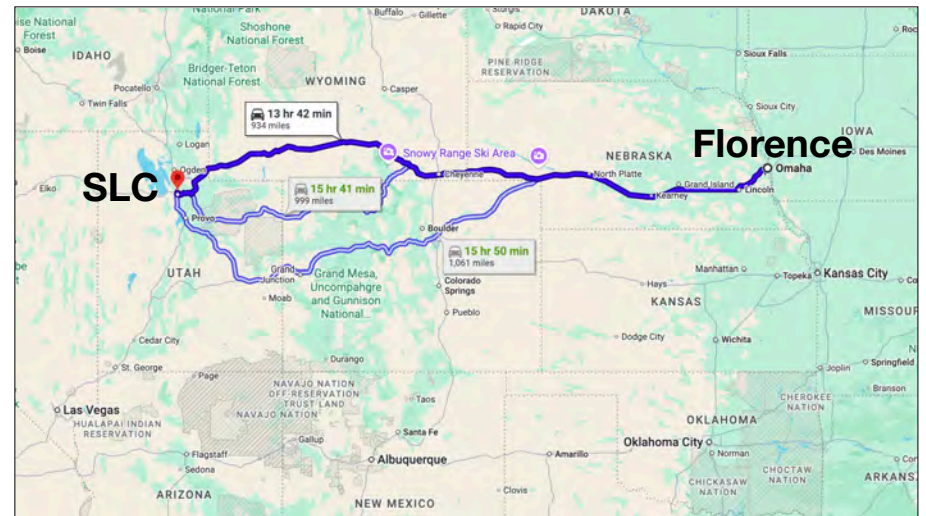
This is the 1,300 mile “Mormon Trail” route.



They arrived in Florence (now Omaha), Nebraska on July 19 with a little more than 300 miles covered.



Emma died in Florence leaving Samuel with three kids.



From Florence, they still needed to walk another thousand miles to reach the Great Salt Lake.



Samuel kept going with Mary (17) pulling, George (11) pushing and Frank (6) riding. Frank had a disability.



They left Florence on July 30 after burying their mother. They still had another 65 days of walking until Utah.



They arrived in Salt Lake City on October 2, 1856.



Later in his life, George summed up their arrival in Salt Lake: “My father [Samuel] was sick when we arrived in Salt Lake City. He was taken into a house near the camp.”

George continued to tell his story: “I called once to see him [my father], I believe the next day after he was taken to the house. I remember he was sitting up in a chair very sick, possibly on account of poor food and fatigue, but this was the last time I ever saw him.”



George finishes the story: “On the 8th of October, 1856, Edward L. Parry came to our tent. He had been a friend to our fold in Wales; he informed us that he had just been to father’s funeral and told me was buried in the City Cemetery.”



E. L. Parry



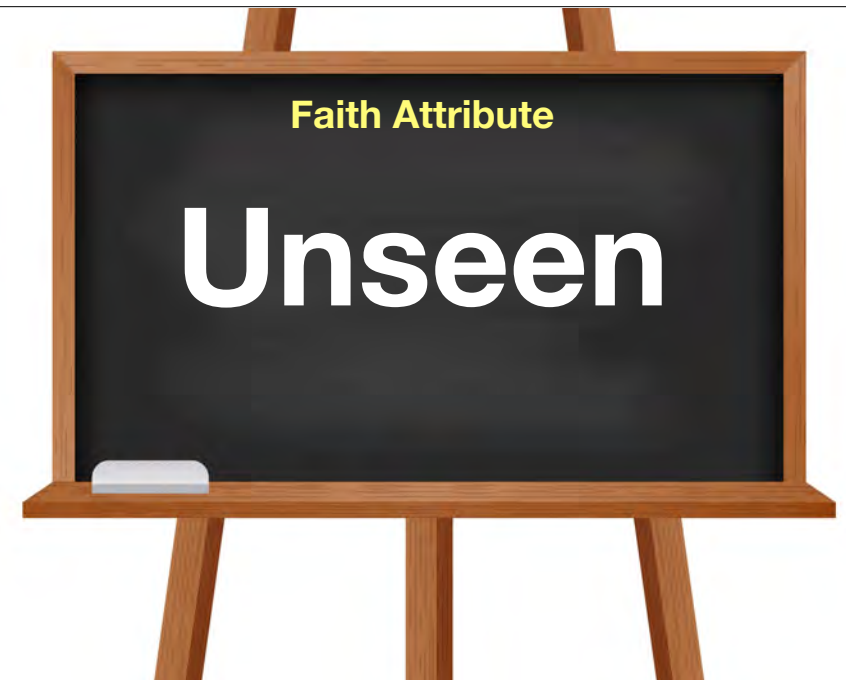
SUMMARY

Samuel Brooks joins the Church in Wales, agrees to come to Zion, travels by ship to Boston, travels by rail to Iowa City, travels by handcart to Florence where his wife died, is left a widower with three kids ages 17, 11 and 6, continues to travel to Salt Lake and dies within days of arrival where his three children are adopted by three different families.



What are the attributes of faith?

An **attribute** is a quality, feature, characteristic, trait, element, or aspect of something. Here are a few attributes of **faith**:





Faith is not a perfect knowledge

“And now as I said concerning faith—faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things...” (Alma 32:21)

Faith is one the of the reasons we were sent to earth. The Lord said, “And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;” (Abraham 3:25)

But it can grow to a perfect knowledge: “And now, behold, is your knowledge perfect? Yea, your knowledge is perfect in that thing, and your faith is dormant” (Alma 32:34)

“...wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith”
(Ether 12:6)

QUESTION



The pioneers did not have a “perfect knowledge” of where or why they went to Zion? **Why didn't God simply show and tell them the future?**

Faith Attribute

Hope

**Faith is
hope in
things
not seen**



“...therefore if ye
have faith ye hope
for things which
are not seen....”
(Alma 32:21)



Elder Bednar said: “Recall
how the Israelites came to
the river Jordan and were
promised the waters would
part, and they would be able
to cross over on dry ground.

David A. Bednar, “Seek Learning by Faith,” Ensign, Sept. 2007



“Interestingly, the waters did
not part as the children of
Israel stood on the banks of
the river waiting for
something to happen; rather,
the soles of their feet were
wet before the water parted.

David A. Bednar, “Seek Learning by Faith,” Ensign, Sept. 2007



“The faith of the Israelites
was manifested in the fact
that they walked into the
water before it parted.”

David A. Bednar, “Seek Learning by Faith,” Ensign, Sept. 2007

QUESTION



The pioneers hoped their travels to Zion would be what God wanted. **How do you have hope in something you cannot see?**

Faith Attribute

True



Faith is hope in things that are true

“And now as I said concerning faith—faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, **which are true.**”
(Alma 32:21)

How do you know if it is true?

“For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night” (Moroni 7:15).

QUESTION



The pioneers knew that going to Zion was true and good.

How do you know if something is true if you have never done it before?

Faith Attribute

God's Will



The result of your faith is rewarded according to God's will and timing.



Your will: stay in Wales



God's will: go to Zion

God will reward you:
“I, the Lord, am bound when
ye do what I say; but when
ye do not what I say, ye have
no promise.” (D&C 82:10)

“There is a law, irrevocably
decreed in heaven before the
foundations of this world, upon
which all blessings are predicated
—And when we obtain any
blessing from God, it is by
obedience to that law upon which
it is predicated.” (D&C 130:20–21)



In fact, God will do more than what is best for us. He will do what is best for us and for all of our Heavenly Father's children. The conviction that the Lord knows more than we do and that **he will answer our prayers in the way that is best for us** and for all of his other children is a vital ingredient of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
(Dallin H. Oaks, "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," April 1994)



Faith must include trust. I am glad that each member of the presidency stressed that fact in her talk. When we have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we must have trust in him.
We must trust him enough that we are content to accept his will, knowing that he knows what is best for us. (Dallin H. Oaks, "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," April 1994)



The Savior gave us the model for that kind of faith and trust. Remember how he prayed to the Father in the agony of Gethsemane? This was the culminating event of his life, the climactic fulfillment of his mission as our Savior. The gospel of Luke, as corrected in the inspired translation of the Prophet Joseph Smith, describes how he knelt down and prayed: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; **nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done**" (JST, Luke 22:42).
(Dallin H. Oaks, "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," April 1994)



Here the Savior reminds us that faith, no matter how strong it is, cannot produce a result contrary to the will of him whose power it is. The exercise of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is always subject to the order of heaven, to the goodness and will and wisdom and timing of the Lord. **That is why we cannot have true faith in the Lord without also having complete trust in the Lord's will and in the Lord's timing.** When we have that kind of faith and trust in the Lord, we have true security in our lives. President Spencer W. Kimball said, "Security is not born of inexhaustible wealth but of unquenchable faith"
(Dallin H. Oaks, "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," April 1994)

QUESTION



The pioneers trusted God's will and timing.
What can we do to overcome our doubts when we don't understand the Lord's will and timing?

Faith Attribute

Action



**Faith is action.
It's movement.
It's doing.**

Doctors use the term “practicing medicine” to indicate that they are actively engaged in the application of medical knowledge. This term reflects the **ongoing nature** of education.



Lawyers use “practicing” law for the same core reason: it emphasizes **hands-on, active application** of training to real matters, not just theoretical knowledge.



QUESTION



The pioneers obeyed and traveled to Zion.
Why is the application of faith more important than the belief in faith?

Faith Attribute

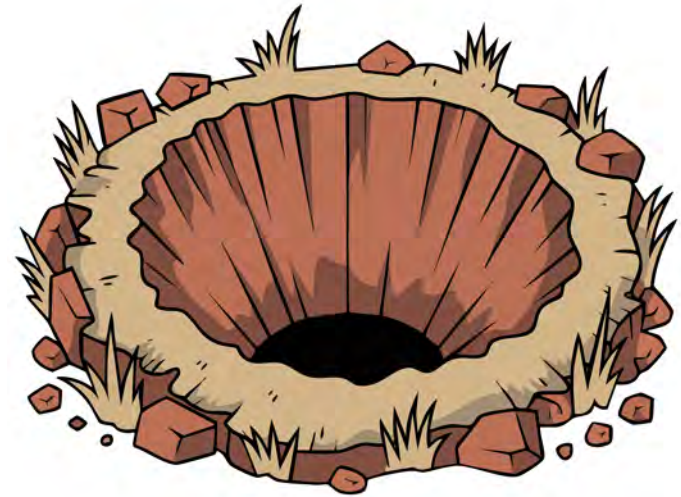
No Fear



Faith is not fearing.



May we choose to have conviction at the crossroads of life and exercise faith in Jesus Christ. My prayer is that we will live by faith and not by fear. (Quentin L. Cook, "Live by Faith and Not by Fear," Oct. 2007)



And if thou shouldst be cast into the pit...

D&C 122:7-8



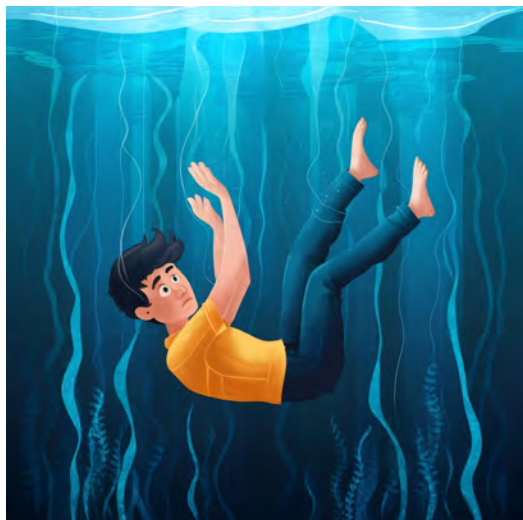
...or into the hands of murderers...

D&C 122:7-8



and the sentence of death passed upon thee...

D&C 122:7-8



...if thou be cast into the deep...

D&C 122:7-8



...if the billowing surge conspire against thee

D&C 122:7-8



...if fierce winds become thine enemy...

D&C 122:7-8



...if the heavens gather blackness...

D&C 122:7-8



**...and all the elements
combine to hedge up the way...**

D&C 122:7-8



**...and above all, if the very jaws of hell shall
gape open the mouth wide after thee...**

D&C 122:7-8



**... know thou, my son, that all these things
shall give thee **experience**,
and shall be for thy **good**....**

D&C 122:7-8



**The Son of Man hath descended below
them all. Art thou greater than he?**

D&C 122:7-8



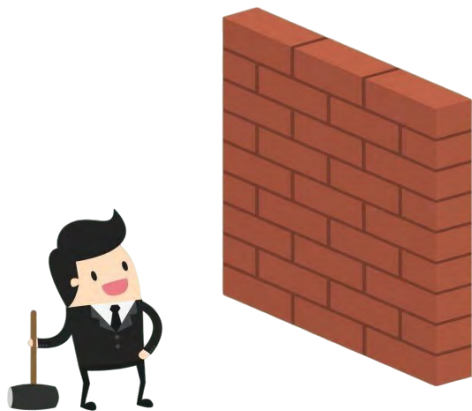
Therefore, hold on thy way...

D&C 122:7-8



...and the priesthood shall remain with thee...

D&C 122:7-8



...for their bounds are set, they cannot pass...

D&C 122:7-8



**Thy days are known, and thy years
shall not be numbered less...**

D&C 122:7-8



Therefore, fear not what man can do...

D&C 122:7-8



for God shall be with you forever and ever.

D&C 122:7-8

QUESTION



Traveling to Zion was not easy. **How do you keep going when the “jaws of hell” gape open at you?**

Faith Attribute

Choice



**Faith is a choice.
You choose to
have faith or not.**

And this is the manner after
which they were ordained... in
the first place being **left to
choose good or evil**; therefore
they having **chosen good, and
exercising exceedingly great
faith...** (Alma 13:3)



Because of the conflicts and challenges we face in today's world, I wish to suggest a single choice—a choice of peace and protection and a choice that is appropriate for all. **That choice is faith. Be aware that faith is not a free gift given without thought, desire, or effort.** It does not come as the dew falls from heaven. The Savior said, "Come unto me" (Matthew 11:28) and "Knock, and it shall be [given] you" (Matthew 7:7). These are action verbs—come, knock. They are choices. **So I say, choose faith.** Choose faith over doubt, choose faith over fear, choose faith over the unknown and the unseen, and choose faith over pessimism. (Richard C. Edgley, "Faith—the Choice Is Yours," Oct. 2010)



Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is not something ethereal, floating loosely in the air. Faith does not fall upon us by chance or stay with us by birthright. It is, as the scriptures say, "substance ... , the evidence of things not seen." Faith emits a spiritual light, and that light is discernible. Faith in Jesus Christ is a gift from heaven that comes **as we choose to believe and as we seek it and hold on to it. Your faith is either growing stronger or becoming weaker.** Faith is a principle of power, important not only in this life but also in our progression beyond the veil. By the grace of Christ, we will one day be saved through faith on His name. **The future of your faith is not by chance, but by choice.** (Neil L. Andersen, "Faith Is Not by Chance, but by Choice," Oct. 2015)



These Six Destructive Ds—doubt, discouragement, distraction, lack of diligence, disobedience, and disbelief—all erode and destroy our faith.

We can choose to avoid and overcome them.

(Kevin W. Pearson, “Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” April 2009)

QUESTION

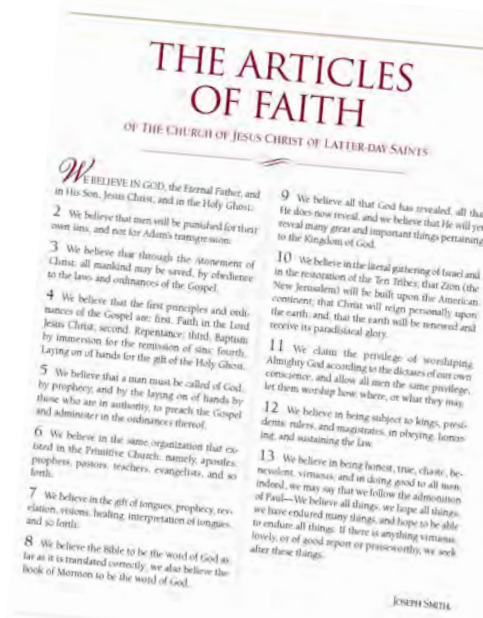


The pioneers chose to come Salt Lake. **How can you increase your desire to have faith?**

Faith Attribute

Christ

“We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, **Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ” (Article of Faith 1:4)**





Elder Bednar said: “Faith in Christ is inextricably tied to, and results in, hope in Christ for our redemption and exaltation. And assurance and hope make it possible for us to walk to the edge of the light and take a few steps into the darkness—expecting and trusting the light to move and illuminate the way.”

David A. Bednar, “Seek Learning By Faith,” February 3, 2006 broadcast to Church Educational System

QUESTION



The pioneers had faith in Christ. Why do we have faith in only Jesus Christ?

(Let’s talk about this next week.)

✓
TO DO

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

WEEK 1 CHALLENGE

Will you exercise faith by moving forward and taking righteous action without a perfect knowledge of the outcome, trusting in Jesus Christ, hoping for things not seen but true and good, and remaining strong and faithful through the trials of life?



READINGS



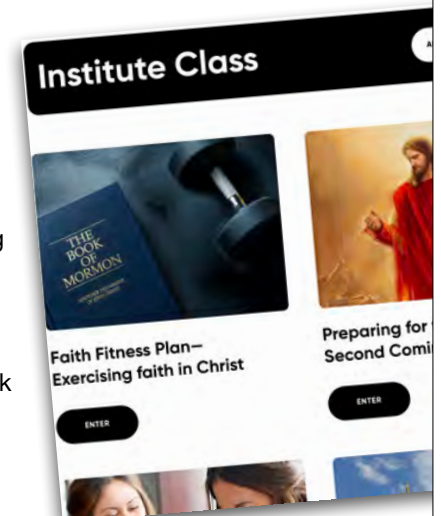
- Dallin H. Oaks, "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," April 1994
- Neil L. Andersen, "Faith Is Not by Chance, but by Choice," Oct. 2015
- Quentin L. Cook, "Live by Faith and Not by Fear," Oct. 2007
- Richard C. Edgley, "Faith—the Choice Is Yours," Oct. 2010
- Kevin W. Pearson, "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," April 2009

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NEXT CLASS: AUGUST 27

The Master Trainer

In Lesson 2, we'll talk about The Master Trainer. Why is Jesus Christ the object of your faith? How do you develop greater trust in His ways?





The name of this course is
**“Faith Fitness Plan: A 12-Week
Spiritual Workout for Becoming a
More Faithful Disciple of Christ.”**



Why the fitness theme?

The scriptures repeatedly invite us to
“exercise” our faith. That idea became
the theme for this course.

Most of us know what faith is. But do
we actually exercise it? Do we put it into
action? Do we practice it every day?

**Every
disciple
experiences
moments
when faith
feels weak.**



Perhaps...



**Your prayers
aren’t answered
the way you had
hoped (Lesson 6).**

**Your faith is shaken
by the actions of
another Church
member (Lesson 2).**



**You obey but don't
receive the blessings
you expected
(Lesson 10).**



**You are
overwhelmed with
challenges that seem
impossible to bear
(Lesson 4).**



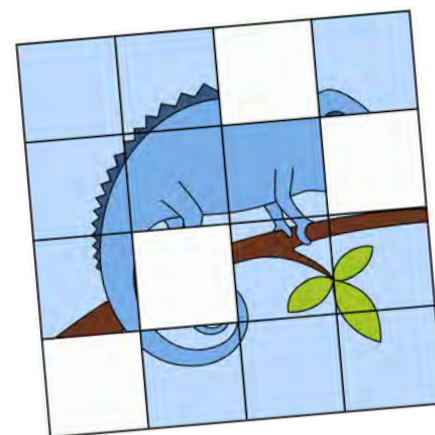
**You wonder if God
has forgotten you
during difficult times
(Lesson 7).**





If you've felt any of these things, you are not alone. Even prophets have asked difficult questions. Think of Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail crying, "O God, where art thou?" (D&C 121:1). If your faith wavers from time to time, you're not a failed disciple. You're a normal disciple.

Faith has always required trusting God without seeing the entire picture. If we could always see the ending, there would be no need for faith. Even the best-laid plans often change when we allow the Lord to guide our lives.



The good news is that your faith can grow stronger.



Everything you need to understand faith—and countless examples of people exercising it in real life—can be found in the scriptures. (Lesson 5.)



Maybe you're still learning exactly what faith is and how it works (Lesson 1).



Maybe you're waiting for a dramatic sign before believing (Lesson 3).



Maybe you've been depending on someone else to carry your faith (Lesson 9).



Maybe you don't know how to strengthen the faith of others (Lesson 8).



**Together we'll learn how
daily spiritual habits
strengthen our faith, so we
remain faithful to Jesus
Christ throughout our lives
(Lesson 11).**



**If our goal is to dwell with Heavenly Father
and Jesus Christ forever, then strengthening
our faith may be the most important thing
we do in this life (Lesson 12).**