

*This midweek study will explore why it's important for students to recognize that all humanity has inherited a sin nature that can only be overcome through the power of the Holy Spirit. Use the following main points, Scriptures, teaching/discussion ideas, and questions to help students gain a better understanding of the essential doctrine for this session.*

#### Essential Doctrine: Faith

Biblical faith is the resting, or trusting, in Christ alone for salvation (John 3:16-21). More than being a mental agreement of historical facts, genuine faith begins with a recognition and confession of the truth of the gospel (1 John 4:13-16), followed by receiving Christ as Lord and Savior of one's life (John 1:10-13). Biblical faith is not blind faith because it rests on the historical life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

#### 1 Faith rests on historical facts, primarily Jesus' death and resurrection, and God's previous promises (2 Chron. 20:1-12; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:13-16).

- ▶ True faith is a blind leap in the dark. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why or why not?
- ▶ Who is someone or something you would consider faithful? What makes them faithful?
- ▶ What is that person or thing's track record? Is trusting someone with such a track record "blind" faith?

#### Read 1 John 4:13-16.

- ▶ What did John emphasize about his personal history, especially in verse 14?

#### Read 1 John 1:1-3.

- ▶ How does this passage make his role as historical eyewitness even more important?
- ▶ Is our trust of God blind trust? How is faith more like a look in the rear view mirror or looking through the old photo album?
- ▶ In God's great photo album, what one "picture" is the biggest demonstration of His trustworthiness?

#### Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-12.

- ▶ What big problem did King Jehoshaphat have?
- ▶ Look at his prayer. What "history" filled his prayer? How did the history of God's work build Jehoshaphat's faith?

#### 2 Faith acts in reliance on the promises of God (2 Chron. 20:13-21; Gal. 2:20; 2 Pet. 1:4).

- ▶ Imagine you are at Old Faithful. It is almost time for the geyser to go off, but it hasn't yet. Do you still think it will go off? Why or why not?
- ▶ Faith looks back at past performance, but it also looks forward to fulfillment. What are some non-spiritual ways you show faith everyday (e.g., showing up to the school cafeteria trusting that they will have food prepared for you)?

#### Read 2 Peter 1:4.

- ▶ What does God give us to place our faith in for the future?

#### Read Galatians 2:20.

- ▶ What kind of life did Paul live in this passage? What might a life of faith look like? How does it rest on God's promises?

#### Read 2 Chronicles 20:13-21.

- ▶ What changed since the first part of Jehoshaphat's story? Was the enemy army still out there?
- ▶ What did God give through Jahaziel?
- ▶ How did God's promise change the attitude and actions of Jehoshaphat and Judah? How should God's promises affect our attitudes and actions?

#### 3 Faith brings glory to God because it displays that He is the source of power, wisdom, and righteousness, not us (2 Chron. 20:22-28).

- ▶ Salvation by faith is unique to Christianity. In many other religions, how do people get saved or achieve enlightenment?
- ▶ Why do you think God set up faith as the specific means by which we come into right relationship with Him?
- ▶ What is God's foremost concern? What is most important to Him? (Hint: Look at Ps. 46:10; Isa. 42:8, and Rom. 11:36.)
- ▶ When you trust someone, how does that trust make the person look? How does our faith make God look?
- ▶ How does faith exalt God as good, mighty, beautiful, powerful, and praiseworthy?

#### Read 2 Chronicles 20:22-28.

- ▶ After Jehoshaphat's victory, how did the people react? Why did they give God so much praise?
- ▶ How does our faith bring God praise?

#### WRAP IT UP

- ▶ What history do we need to brush up on so we can trust God?
- ▶ What promises do we need to take to heart?
- ▶ How can we show how great God is with our faith this week?