

Question 7: Is not faith the principle of action in spiritual things as well as in temporal?

Question 8: How do you prove it?

12 And as faith is the moving cause of all action in temporal concerns, so it is in spiritual; for the Savior has said, and that truly, that he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. (Mark 16:16)

13 As we receive by faith, all temporal blessings that we do receive, so we, in like manner, receive by faith all spiritual blessings, that we do receive. But faith is not only the principle of action, but of power, also, in all intelligent beings, whether in heaven, or on earth. Thus says the author of the epistle to the **Hebrews. (11:3):**

14 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God: so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

It is.

Hebrews 11:6: Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Mark 16:16: He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.

JST Rom. 4:16: Therefore *ye are justified* of faith *and works, through* grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to *them* only *who are* of the law, but to *them* also *who are* of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

For these Lectures on Faith I will just add what I think are the most important things that people should take from it. I believe the Lectures do a very good job speaking for themselves, but I understand bullet points or breakdown summaries to be very effective ways to learn and teach.

1. There are temporal things and spiritual things but there are not temporal commandments and spiritual commandments. In 2 Nephi Lehi teaches us that there are “things to act and things to be acted upon”. Spirit matter as well as temporal matter can both be acted upon- you cannot create or destroy matter and our spirit bodies are created with spirit matter i.e., things spiritual. The way we act upon things of a temporal nature is the same way we act upon things of a spiritual nature. This does not mean however that a commandment from the Lord to act in a temporal nature i.e., Moses puts his physical staff in the physical water, is a temporal commandment, for there are no temporal commandments. (D&C 29:29-35)

2. The way we treat the acting on things temporal is exactly way we should treat the acting on things spiritual. A man would not expect (or at the very least shouldn't expect) to receive fair wages for a job he never showed up for. Likewise, a man should not expect things from the Lord without doing the work e.g. be baptized or be damned. We obtain temporal blessings by obedience to true knowledge regarding temporal things; that obedience based on true knowledge is faith. We obtain spiritual blessings by obedience to true knowledge regarding spiritual things; that obedience based on true knowledge is faith.

3. Faith is power, which we will get to in the next point. But with that said, this is a perfect example of something that personally frustrates me. What does the word power mean when said here? Going to the 1828 Webster's Dictionary we learn some definitions including:

- Faculty of the mind, as manifested by a particular mode of operation; as the *power* of thinking, comparing and judging; the reasoning powers.
- Ability, natural or moral. We say, a man has the *power* of doing good; his property gives him the *power* of relieving the distressed; or he has the *power* to persuade others to do good; or it is not in his *power* to pay his debts. The moral *power* of man is also his *power* of judging or discerning in moral subjects.
- In mechanics, that which produces motion or force, or which may be applied to produce it. Thus the inclined plane is called a mechanical *power* as it produces motion, although this in reality depends on gravity. The wheel and axle, and the lever, are mechanical powers, as they may be applied to produce force. These powers are also called forces, and they are of two kinds, moving *power* and sustaining *power*
- That quality in any natural body which produces a change or makes an impression on another body; as the *power* of medicine; the *power* of heat; the *power* of sound.
- Influence; that which may move the mind; as the *power* of arguments or of persuasion.

So how is faith a principle of “power”? If one had a belief that he would get paid if he worked that would give him power to get up and do the work. This is why as Elder Bednar taught, “taking action is the exercise of faith...true faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to action” (Exercise Faith in Christ, video) (and many other prophets and apostles have taught the same thing). And why? Because faith is a principle of power. It gives power to the individual, to the mind, to keep going, to do. Or as the Bible Dictionary for “Grace” explains,

“It is likewise through the grace of the Lord that individuals, through faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ and repentance of their sins, receive strength and assistance to do good works that they otherwise would not be able to maintain if left to their own means. This grace is an *enabling power* that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts.”

So where does my frustration come in? If you were to take this 1828 definition of the word power and bring it into the 21st century, what would be a word that you would use? The Bible Dictionary already gives us the answer: Enable or enabling:

- to make able; give power, means, competence, or ability to

Maybe some already know where I am going with this... It frustrates me when an apostle quotes something and then the Church explodes with merchandise and memes with that “new quote” as though it was some new, ground-breaking, earth shattering way of viewing something. When Elder Bednar penned his “the enabling power of the atonement” he was doing nothing more than modernizing words taught in the Lectures on Faith. It was nothing new or earthshattering and if he was worried that members in his words “just don’t get it” he should have suggested to them reading and studying the Lectures on Faith.

So in summary, when you think of faith and power, think of enabling or enabling power.

Question 9: Is faith any thing else beside the principle of action?

Question 10: What is it?

Question 11: How do you prove it?

15 By this we understand that the principle of power, which existed in the bosom of God, by which the worlds were framed, was faith; and that it is by reason of this principle of power, existing in the Deity, that all created things exist—so that all things in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, exist by reason of faith, as it existed in HIM.

16 Had it not been for the principle of faith the worlds would never have been framed, neither would man have been formed of the dust—it is the principle by which Jehovah works, and through which he exercises power over all temporal, as well as eternal things. Take this principle or attribute, (for it is an attribute) from the Deity and he would cease to exist.

17 Who cannot see, that if God framed the worlds by faith, that it is by faith that he exercises power over them, and that faith is the principle of power? And that if the principle of power, it must be so in man as well as in the Deity? This is the testimony of all the sacred writers, and the lesson which they have been endeavoring to teach to man.

18 The Savior says, (Matthew 17:19-20), in explaining the reason why the disciples could not cast out the devil, that it was because of their unbelief: "For verily, I say unto you," said he, "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."

19 Moroni, while abridging and compiling the record of his fathers, has given us the following account of faith as the principle of power: He says, in Ether 12:13, that it was the faith of Alma and Amulek which caused the walls of the prison to be wrent, as recorded in Alma 14:23-29; it was the faith of Nephi and Lehi which caused a change to be wrought upon the hearts of the Lamanites, when they were immersed with the Holy Spirit, and with fire, as seen in Helaman 5:37-50; and that it was by faith that the mountain Zerin was removed, when the brother of Jared spake in the name of the Lord. See also Ether 12:30.

20 In addition to this we are told in Hebrews, 11:32-35, that Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets, through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens; and that women received their dead raised to life again, etc.

21 Also, Joshua, in the sight of all Israel, bade the sun and moon to stand still, and it was done. (Joshua 10:12)

22 We here understand, that the sacred writers say, that all these things were done by faith—It was by faith that the worlds were framed—God spake, chaos heard, and worlds came into order, by reason of the faith there was in HIM. So with man also—he spake by faith in the name of God, and the sun stood still, the moon obeyed, mountains removed, prisons fell, lions' mouths were closed, the human heart lost its enmity, fire its violence, armies their power, the sword its terror, and death its dominion; and all this by reason of the faith which was in them.

23 Had it not been for the faith which was in man, they might have spoken to the sun, the moon, the mountains, prisons, lions, the human heart, fire, armies, the sword, or to death in vain!

It is.

It is the principle of power, also (1:13)

First, It is the principle of power in the Deity, as well as in man. Hebrews 11:3: Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. (1:14-16)

Secondly, It is the principle of power in man also. Book of Mormon, Alma 14:23-29: Alma and Amulek are delivered from prison. Helaman 5:37-50: Nephi and Lehi, with the Lamanites, are immersed with the Spirit. Ether 12:30: The mountain Zerin, by the faith of the brother of Jared, is removed. Joshua 10:12: Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. Joshua 10:13: And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves of their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. Matthew 17:19: Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? 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. Hebrews 11:32 and the following verses: And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again, and other were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection. (1:16-22)

This section is pretty self explanatory. Nothing would be done by God, in fact God would cease to exist as He does now without the principle of faith exercised in Him. If God did not believe that “bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” had value to Himself or was possible, He would not have made it “His work” (faith). If it is a principle in deity and we are to become like our father in heaven it reasons that faith is never to be done away with, it is an attribute that is to be eventually perfected.

Question 12: How would you define faith in its most unlimited sense?

Question 13: How do you convey to the understanding more clearly, that faith is the first great governing principle, which has power, dominion and authority over all things?

24 Faith, then, is the first great governing principle which has power, dominion, and authority over all things: by it they exist, by it they are upheld, by it they are changed, or by it they remain, agreeably to the will of God. Without it, there is no power, and without power there could be no creation, nor existence!

It is the first great governing principle, which has power, dominion, and authority over all things.
(1:24)

By it they exist, by it they are upheld, by it they are changed, or by it they remain, agreeably to the will of God; and without it there is no power; and without power there could be no creation, nor existence! (1:24)

This is one of those cases in the Lectures on Faith where Josphe Smith puts forth a doctrine and basically just wants you to memorize it. In other locations in the Lectures he will flat out say “memorize this.”