

Study Guide: Faith and Its Meanings

To study the topic on the Church's teaching about faith, consult the Scripture passages listed and paragraphs indicated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC). **Note that the "In Brief" sections of the Catechism may help answer the questions below.**

1. How does the Catechism define faith? How does the Book of Hebrews define faith? How did Abraham give us a model of the obedience of faith? (Heb. 11:8; CCC 26, 145,150)
2. Why does Scripture call our response to God the "obedience of faith" (see Rom. 1:5, 16:26)? What is the Latin origin of "obey"? What is the relation between this obedience and the first of the 10 commandments? (CCC 143, 144, 2087-2089)
3. What are some of the ways we come to know God? What does it mean to "prove" God's existence? Why is reason essential for faith? (CCC 31-38)
4. Why does the Catechism call Mary the most perfect embodiment of faith? (CCC 148-149, 494).
5. What form does faith in God take? If faith is free assent, why does Christian faith demand belief in Jesus the Son and in the Holy Spirit? (CCC 150-152)
6. Where does faith in God come from to the human person? How is faith a grace of God? (CCC 153)
7. If we need grace to believe in God, in what sense is faith a natural human act? Why is belief in God **not** contrary to human dignity? What is the connection between the human mind and will and the grace of God? (CCC 154-155)

8. What moves mankind to faith in God? What are some of the “motives of credibility” showing that belief in God is “by no means a blind impulse of the mind?” (CCC 156)

9. In what sense can faith be considered certain? What is the relation between faith and human understanding? (CCC 157-158)

10. Why is it not possible for faith and science really to be at odds with one another? (CCC 159)

11. Can faith in God be forced? Why or why not? If it cannot, how can we say that faith in God is necessary for salvation? (CCC 160-162)

12. How is faith the “beginning of eternal life?” (CCC 163-165)

13. Although faith is a personal act, why can't it be private? If salvation comes from God alone, what is the role of the Church? (CCC 166-169)

14. If Christians don't believe in formulas, what do we believe in? Why is the language of faith important? (CCC 170)

15. What does it mean to call the Church the “pillar and bulwark of the truth?” (CCC 171)

16. Since cultures differ all over the world, how can we hold that there is only one faith? Why must the Church always be conservative in matters of faith? (CCC 172-175)