

# ***FAITH A LEAP OR A STUMBLE?***

Each step into the future is a step into the Unknown.

Each step into the Unknown is a step of faith.

Every day we enter the unknown future, whether we wish to or not.

As I step into the future,

I could be trusting a God I cannot see,

or I could be trusting an idol of dubious value.

My idol could be money, my intellect, my favorite rock star, athlete, philosopher, politician, preacher or just plain me.

Whether I trust God or my idol I have no proof that I will be safe.

Will God get me through?

Will my idol sustain me?

Forty centuries ago the Jews proclaimed that the universe is ruled by an invisible God who pervades all things.

To the Jews this God is so holy that they never dare to utter his name.

They claim that this God speaks.

That he helps those who seek to do what is right.

That he judges those who lie, deceive and destroy what is good.

One day, right in the middle of the Jewish world, a young Jewish man announced,

***“The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand.  
Repent and believe the good news.”***

***“Repent and believe!”***

***Turn around and have faith!***

People began to follow this man.

To follow him you had to take a leap of faith from this world right into another world: *God’s World.*



People didn't stumble into *God's World*. They leapt into it.

They left their old lives behind and followed this man on a magnificent new road.

They lived by faith in God.

They learned to forgive.

They spoke the truth.

They loved their enemies and prayed for their persecutors.

They possessed a peace never seen before.

Once you get to know this Jewish man (and you can get to know him), you discover that he is more than a man.

He is a man who has passed through death and emerged as a new creation.

In this man, Jesus, God manifests himself on a human level, speaks our human language.

### **When faith is a leap**

Every time we hear his voice Jesus helps us take another leap of faith as we walk in his footsteps.

Every time we take that leap of faith in obedience to his words we land in *God's World*, where God's will is done on earth as it's done in heaven.

### **When faith is a stumble**

Faith in an idol is always a stumble.

It's a stumble in the dark, whether I'm trusting in money or my own brains.

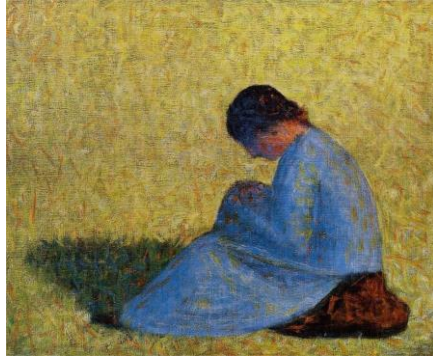
Faith in an idol is faith in a lie, which sooner or later leads to death.

### **Faith in God**

Jesus lays out the path of faith in words that will still resonate when heaven and earth have passed away.

***Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying...***

**“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”**



Then followed a description of life in *God's World*, a life Jesus empowers us to live by faith. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, and 7) describes life as it is lived in *God's World*. This sermon concludes with the choice offered to every soul that has heard the voice of God.

***"Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.***

***And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."***

Each of us steps into the future by faith, one day at a time.

God grant that it may be a leap into *his World*, one day at a time!

*Prayer- Lord Jesus, help us to leap into a faith that causes us to not only listen to your words but to obey them and to remain determined to follow your footsteps even into the unknown. May we be determined to leap into your world, where we will find love, truth, forgiveness and peace. Where we will not stumble on our own pride and stubbornness. Where we seek to give what you have given us.*

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THE LAMB  
WHO WAS SLAIN  
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN

