

# THE 4 BUILDING BLOCKS OF FAITH

## DEFINITIONS OF FAITH: CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING 2 STATEMENTS

“ Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”  
(Hebrews 11:1, NIV)

“ True faith is not only a sure knowledge by which I hold as true all that God has revealed to us in Scripture; it is also a wholehearted trust, which the Holy Spirit creates in me by the gospel, that God has freely granted, not only to others but to me also, forgiveness of sins, eternal righteousness, and salvation.”  
(Heidelberg Catechism, Lord’s Day 7, A 21)

### GENERAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

WEAK 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 STRONG

*In light of these definitions, how would you rate your faith?*

## BREAKING IT DOWN: THE BUILDING BLOCKS

Faith can be built using 4 foundational “building blocks.” Consider the statement and rate your level of agreement for each building block.

### BELONGING

WEAK 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 STRONG

*“I belong to Jesus and to his body, the church.”*

### KNOWLEDGE + UNDERSTANDING

WEAK 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 STRONG

*“I know and understand the story of God’s faithfulness, of which I am a part.”*

### HOPEFULNESS

WEAK 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 STRONG

*“That story has a hopeful conclusion! I have hope, through Christ, in all of God’s promises. God is making all things new, and God is using us to accomplish that.”*

### CALLING + EQUIPPING

WEAK 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 STRONG

*“Inside that story, I am called to work in God’s kingdom, and I am equipped to do that work.”*

## LEANING INTO YOUR STRENGTH

Which of the four building blocks scored highest in your self assessment? (If there was a tie, choose the one that seems stronger or more comfortable to you.) Read the suggestions for strengthening this building block on the back of this assessment. Building up your strengths can be an effective way of lifting up the “health” of your faith life, because it is often easiest to improve what you are “good at,” and that puts you in a better position to address your weaknesses.

## ADDRESSING YOUR WEAKNESS

Which of the four building blocks scored lowest in your self assessment? (Again, in the case of a tie, choose the one that seems weakest or least comfortable to you.) Read the associated section on the back. In some cases our weaknesses can be a kind of bottleneck restricting the benefits that we receive from other, stronger building blocks. When this is the case, working on a weakness can have a disproportionately positive effect on the vitality of our overall faith.

# HELP FOR BLOCK-BUILDING



## BELONGING

Recall a time in your life when you really felt like you belonged to a group or community that was a blessing to you. What were the key factors that led to that belonging? What kept your belonging engaged? What did you do to enhance your belonging? Are there similar ways that you could pro-actively use those same skills or do those same things to increase your sense of belonging in your church?

If you aren't already connected in ministry, consider volunteering to serve as part of a ministry team or committee at your church. Serving alongside others is a great way to nurture belonging.

If your church doesn't have a ministry that appeals to your gifts and interests, seek to start one.

Explore different models of prayer – through silent thoughts, spoken words, sung prayer, “borrowed” prayers written by others, praying Scripture (especially Psalms). Which nourishes your sense of closeness to God?

Pray for greater insight into what it would take for you to better belong to God and his church.

## KNOWLEDGE + UNDERSTANDING

What kind of learner are you: visual, auditory or tactile? Try taking an online text if you are not sure, then adapt the suggestions for your personal Bible study.

Sometimes the best way to learn a subject is to teach it to someone else. Consider leading a Sunday School class, youth group session or small group Bible study—even once.

Sign up to give your testimony or “faith story,” at your church, a campus ministry or other setting.

Do you have a Bible program on your smartphone? Many of them have daily devotional options you can access when you have downtime on the bus, on your lunch break or just before bed. Easily accessed Bible software can also be helpful when thinking or praying through a challenging time.

## HOPEFULNESS

Find and memorize 3 Bible passages that clearly articulate God's promises for the future.

Keep a journal or diary of the things you are praying for. Every so often, look back in your journal to remind yourself of the ways that God has been answering your prayer.

Ask friends or family to share ways that God has been helpful to them in the past. Talk together about hopes for the future.

Look through the newspaper or online for news stories of good things happening in your city and around the world. Remind yourself that it's not all bad!

## CALLING + EQUIPPING

What are the helping opportunities that capture your attention, and make your heart beat faster? Is it helping someone overcome injustice? Or nurturing children? Or gathering people together for prayer? Or something very different? Another way to put it is to ask, what needs to you tend to notice? Our own interests and inclinations are the best indicator of how God may be seeking to use us?

Ask others what they think you are particularly good at. Sometimes the people around us notice things about us that we either take for granted or tend to downplay. The observations of others can be a part of God's external call.

Take an online survey to discover your gifts, to get a better idea of how God has created and equipped you. An excellent one from Faith Alive Resources can be found at <https://form.jotform.us/71223564145148>.

Try new things. Dip your toes in different serving opportunities, without making a lifelong commitment. As you experiment, take note of how your heart responds, and the effectiveness of your service.