

“Never, never pin your whole faith on any human being: not if he is the best and the wisest in the world. There are a lot of nice things you can do with sand; but do not try building a house on it.” This quote from C. S. Lewis examines how we as a culture can put all our faith in one human being, and **how we are** overwhelmed with disappointment when **he/she** does not live up to our expectations. It could be a parent, a teacher, a spouse, or a pastor. We admire these relationships and put all our faith in them and forget that they **too** have faults and are merely human. It is like building a house on sand. The ground is not stable and secure, and with every wave that passes the sand washes away more and more of the foundations. When we put our faith in people, it could lead us to a loss of our identity, discouragement and a sense that our expectations are not being fulfilled.

According to the dictionary the first meaning of the word faith is allegiance to duty or a person. The second meaning is to believe or trust. We therefore could have a balance of faith in our lives. It is important to have trust in any close relationship. However, when we completely become obsessive in our behavior it can lead to problems with the people in our lives. It is important to balance our faith with logic of understanding of where our personal foundation comes from. **This paragraph is like a second introduction. It really is not needed.**

**This start is not the example. Begin with a good, clear topic sentence that links back to the thesis, like this: In society today, and particularly during anxious times like the current war in Iraq, people seek out their pastor to help guide them. The danger comes when we place too much faith in a religious leader, without balancing that faith with healthy skepticism. [Here you can bring in an example from history, and then you can follow with a personal example]. What follows in your paragraph is not a specific example, and you need that. some people will decide to attend a wonderful church. The people are like family, the music is exactly what they enjoy and the pastor speaks in a language that they understand. Often times the problems occur when all the faith that should be in our religion, is on our pastor. We will take his word only and not investigate what the faith of the religion is. The foundation is solely on the word of the pastor. Many churchgoers will put their pastors on a pedestal. They are to live sinless lives and do no wrong in the eyes of the congregation. This may be a reason a church will not succeed because of the demands of the people and the expectations of some. Having all your faith in one human for your foundation of your religion is a disillusion to the truth.**

**Here is your specific example for the previous paragraph.** An illustration I have in my personal life is with my own pastor. I have been attending the same church for about six years. There is never a perfect church in my eyes; there is always something that could be better. I believe that you go and learn and serve the community the best way you can. My pastor was not only my teacher, but also a man that was like my father. I had a lot of faith in him and really trusted everything about him. One day reality hit me in the face. My pastor and friend came to me and said the he had something to tell me. He looked so sad, like the life had been sucked out of him. His eyes where filled with tears and he was joyless. He began to speak and he shared with me about a sin he was struggling with. He said that the official board knows about it and he will share it with the congregation soon, but wanted to tell me personally. After an emotional meeting and feeling very let down in my relationship, I walked out of the office in shock. Asking myself many questions. How could I have not known? Is he a hypocrite? He basically lied to me and my anger

came out as well. I really had my foundation shook by this man that I called my pastor and father. Due to the recognition of the confession, many people from the congregation left the church. We had what some may call a “church split.” I personally stayed and supported him as he went on a sabbatical leave. I learned a lot from putting too much faith into my pastor. I know that he is not perfect and I have begun to trust again. Forgiveness played a big part, since at anytime I may need some forgiveness as well.

**Excellent personal example.**

Another person we may put too much faith in is our spouse. These are the people that we are to live the rest of our life with and to love and cherish with our whole heart and soul. Where is the balance of faith? It can be achieved with careful communication and self-confidence. We live with this person day in and day out. Their habits are a part of our lives whether we like them or not. At times two people can be around each other so much that they end up picking up some of their habits or acting like them. Mostly we hear of women losing their identity in a relationship. This may be because they have too much faith in the man that they married and their whole world is wrapped up in this one person. Our spouses should compliment our life by bringing out the best in our character. This however can be very hard at times. In my own life, with my husband I came into the marriage with a whole list of expectations. **In this paragraph, it takes you a long time to get to the personal example, and then we really never get a specific one as in the paragraph on the pastor.** I had a lot of faith in him that he would be molded into the man that I think he should be. I expected him to basically think the same way that I did. I struggled with putting too much of my faith into him and not putting enough faith in what our marriage was based upon. I am working on my ninth year of marriage and it has been a road of curves and bumps. We have learned to balance our faith and not put too many expectations on each other. Everyday we try a bit harder to be a bit less selfish and to communicate better. Allowing faults to happen and accepting our flaws is a way of balancing our faith and not putting too much faith in the relationship that should last a lifetime.

Another person who can have too much of our faith is our parents. From a small child our parents are the first people we have faith in. If we continue to have too much faith in them, as we grow older, we may become discouraged. If we never venture out and discover life in our own way then how are we ever going to make a conclusion about the world around us? Our parents could be the best people we know, they could be the wisest people we know or the most knowledgeable. However putting all our faith in them will lead to frustration and isolation. Our parents teach us what they were taught about life and show us how to live in this world. As we grow and become more aware of our surroundings, we may see that what we were taught may not be correct. Our parents are people who have come from a different generation. They grew up believing a certain way and that way is passed on. As I personally have become a woman I look back on the answers my mother gave to my questions; I have come to the conclusion that she is wrong. If all my faith were in my mother instead of finding my own way of thinking then I would have lost my uniqueness. I remember a time when my mother was having a girl talk with me about life. I was just entering middle school and I decided that I wanted a “training” bra. I never knew why they would call it a “training” bra because I didn’t understand how it was supposed to train my breasts. My mother’s advice was to always wear a bra or your breasts will sag. This is totally not a correct statement. If your breasts

want to say they will find a way whether you wear a bra or not. This is just a small example of how my faith went beyond my mothers. I took some of her suggestions on life and kept them for use and others I have not. I am thankful to be able to have the freedom to expand my thinking. I am balanced in my loyalty to the people in whom I choose to have faith in.

The second part of C. S. Lewis's quotation talks of how there are many nice things you can do with sand but do not build a house on it. This is suggesting to have our foundation on solid ground and to be balanced as we build faith into our lives. We can be loyal to anything and everyone, but we need to be careful of how far we will go in our loyalty. Jesus says, "Anyone who listens to my teaching and obeys me is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rains comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against the house, it won't collapse, because it is built on rock. But anyone who hears my teaching and ignores it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come the winds beat against the house, it will fall with a might crash." This is another example of how it is important to have a solid foundation. When building a house the first step is to dig and then pour footer. Footer is strong concrete for the walls of the house to sit upon. It is a strong foundation for the house. When the winds blow and the rain come the house will stand. It gives a sense of security knowing that the home is going to withstand the torrents of the weather.