The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians
The Danger of Believing in Vain
1 Corinthians 15:1-4

1. **A Faith that _____ is Useless**
   The gospel message is full of objective truth claims which a person must believe in order to receive salvation (John 3:16, 36; 6:47). A person does not need to know and believe all true doctrine in order to be saved, but there are several vital constants of the faith that must be believed in order to receive salvation. These truths are directly related to the Person of Jesus Christ (John 1:1), His deity (John 8:24), His humanity (John 1:14), His sacrificial and atoning death on the cross (Matt 26:28; 1 Pet. 2:24), His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:13ff), and that salvation is only received by faith in Him alone (Eph. 2:8-9).

2. **A Faith that _____ is Useless**
   The dangerous parallel to not believing what the Bible says to be true is believing things to be true which the Bible does not teach (cf. Ps. 119:160; Prov. 30:5; Rev. 22:18). Paul argues later that if Jesus had not risen from the grave that believing He had risen would be of no value (cf. 1 Cor. 15:12-19). A regular struggle in the early church was between the apostles and those who preached that certain acts of obedience were also required along with faith in order to be saved (cf. Gal. 5:2).

3. **A Faith that _____ is Useless**
   Someone who once professed to believe in Christ but later, by profession or by action, no longer believes in Christ is someone who had believed in vain. Several of Jesus' parables show the reality that unbelievers will be mixed in with genuine believers and may be impossible to tell apart for some time (Matt 7:21-23; 13:1ff). Jesus experienced the fickleness of several of His own disciples (John 6:59-66), the most significant example is Judas (Matt 26:6ff; John 12:6). Christians ought not be surprised when we witness the defection of believers in our time (cf. 1 John 2:19; Acts 20:29-30).