

WHAT KIND OF FAITH DO I HAVE?

FAI-06

Hebrews 11:1-10

Introduction: Hebrews 11:1-3

1. Faith is confident assurance for that which we hope.
 - a. A conviction of the things (reality) we do not see.
 - b. Faith is the **eye** of the soul (“conviction of things not seen)
 - c. Obedience is the **hand** of the soul.
2. Hebrews 11:2 – Examples from the ancient fathers.
 - a. For their faith - men of old gained approval from God.
 - b. [For introduction also see Focus on Faith, Hebrews, by Tom Holland, p. 69.]
3. Two relationships of faith
 - a. The future - a hopeful outlook
 - b. The unseen - the evidence of their reality

I. A WORSHIPING FAITH - v. 4 – Abel - (Genesis 4)

1. Offers sacrifice. (Gen 4)
 - a. Faith prompted him to worship in accordance to God’s Word — Rom. 10:17
 - 1) Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.
 - 2) We concluded therefore that God had directed him how to worship.
 - b. See Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25; Heb. 11:4, for the importance of being faithful in truth.
2. His faithful worship (sacrifice) showed his righteousness (being right with God.)
 - a. Three kinds of sacrifice is expected from the Christian.
 - 1) Heb. 13:15 - sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips. (praying and singing)
 - 2) Rom. 12:1-2 - a living sacrifice, our bodies.
 - 3) Phil. 4:18 - our gifts or offerings to God are termed as sacrifice
3. Influence continues - Still speaking to us. Gen. 4:10 “blood cries from the ground”
 - a. What does his blood cry out?
 - b. That only faithful worship is pleasing to God - Heb. 12:24
He made the right **sacrifice** - man needs to sacrifice self today - Rom. 12:1
4. Abel’s faith was a faith that prompted worship according to God’s word.

II. A WALKING FAITH - v. 5 – Enoch - Gen. 5:22, 24

1. Enoch walked with God in a day when others were walking away from God. Gen. 5:22-24; 6:5
 - a. “Walking” has to do with the way one lives.
 - b. This kinds of faith lives the way God wants you to live.
2. This kinds of faith has the power to form character, and does not fear death.

Rev. 1:18 - Jesus has the keys of death and hades.

 - a.. Was not found. Illustration: I like the way a girl retold this Bible story. “Enoch went walking with God one day and they walked so far God said, “Enoch, you just come on home with me.”
 - b. God made him His man.
 - c. “Translated” – Col. 1:13 into kingdom. STAR TREK = “transporter”

3. A play on words “Was not found” – Many places where a Christian is not to be found.
4. He pleased God – His life was pleasing to God (in a very wicked world). Without faith we can’t be pleasing.
 - a. What about your life? How are you living? walking? Doing? Saying? Church? Family?
 - b. Enoch’s was a faith that lived the way God wanted him to live.

III. A WORKING FAITH - v. 7 – Noah - Gen. 6:13-22

1. What did Noah Do? He heeded the warning of God.
 - a. Noah took God at His word. The only proof Noah had of an impending flood was what God told Noah. (Gen. 6).
 - b. Again we see that his faith was founded on God’s word.
2. Noah “Prepared” an ark for the saving of his family from the flood.
 - a. This kind of faith “prepare” for a great day of God’s judgment.
 - b. Noah’s preparation involved:
 - 1) A work of a great magnitude – it was a great ark!
 - 2) A work of a great duration – worked apparently 120 building the ark. (Gen. 6:3)
 - c. Are you working? What are you doing? Are you continuing, enduring faithfully?
2. The faith that pleases God is a faith that prepares for the great day of judgment.!
 - a. Christians heeded Christ’s warning regarding the fall of Jerusalem, 70 A.D. Matt. 24:16 - let hose in Judea flee to the mts.
 - b. Do we heed the warning not to get entangled with the world today? 2 Tim. 2:4.
 - c. Noah “prepared” for the great Day of God? Men need to prepare now!
4. Noah worked as God directed - Gen. 6:22
 - a. Did what God said, the way God said. God made the revelation, Noah followed.
 - b. Started with His own house. Salvation of own house is of first importance.
 - c. Noah’s faith was an example to that world. His obedience stood as condemnation to those who would not obey God.
5. His obedience to faith shows his righteousness.
 - a. Make righteous by his obedience to faith.
 - b. Noah was the first man in the Bible to be called “righteous” or “just”.

IV. A WILLING FAITH - vs. 8 - 10 – Abraham - (Gen. 12:1-3)

1. Left his home country. By faith Abraham obeyed. Called “Friend of God.”
 - a) God called him and he responded. Abraham had faith in God’s word - Gen. 12:1-3.
 - b) He made the right choice.
 - c) Gen. 22 - he was willing to offer his son. Obeyed when a considerable sacrifice was involved. Obedience is the acid test of Faith!
2. Make his dwellings temporary (lived in tents, not “houses” - he lived in a country strange - v. 9.
 - a) Let us realize this earth is NOT our home. We are THE aliens here – Phil. 3:20

3. He looked for a heavenly city. v. 10.
 - a) Abraham's faith looked beyond this world. He was willing to make life an adventure. And willing to have patience.
 - b) This kind of faith believes the future is directed by the present. The future will
[See Wm. Barclay, Daily Study Bible Series, Hebrews, p. 146. Nero vs. Paul]
4. The faith that pleases God is the faith that obeys - John 14:15; Heb. 5:8,9
 - a. We say, "I want to wait until I know just where I'm going"!
 - b. Don't say, "I want to wait until I am sure I can live as a Christian?"
 - c. WHAT KIND OF A FAITH DO YOU HAVE?

Conclusion: - Hebrews 11:6

1. The writer had defined faith, vs. 1-3, and gives examples of men of great faith, and what their faith did to please God.
 - a. Without **this kind of faith** we cannot be pleasing to God.
 - b. This is the kind of faith the writer is talking about in verse 6, which stands as our conclusion.
2. Just assenting to the intellectual truths of the Bible is not enough –
 - a. The kind of faith that is pleasing to God - is the kind illustrated here in Heb. 6.
 - b. A "nodding" ("yes, yes, I believe that!") faith will no do! Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:8-9.
3. Our faith to please God must be:
 - 1) a **WORSHIPING** faith – that worships according to God's directions
 - 2) a **WALKING** faith – that transforms character and lives the way God wants us to.
 - 3) a **WORKING** faith – that will prepare oneself for God's great day of judgment.
 - 4) a **WILLING** faith – that will obey God's every command - and look beyond this world.

[Moses - a Warring Faith]
 [Joshua & Rehab - A Winning Faith]

– Windell Gann

Possible Illustrations:

A Persian legend tells us that a certain king needed a faithful servant and had to choose between two candidates for the office. He took both at fixed wages and told them to fill a basket with water from a nearby well, saying that he would come in the evening to inspect their work. After dumping one or two buckets of water into the basket, one of the men said, "What is the good of doing this useless work? As soon as we pour the water in, it runs out the sides."

The other answered, "But we have our wages, haven't we? The purpose is the master's business, not ours."

"I'm not going to do such a fool's work," replied the complainer. Throwing down his bucket, he went away.

The other man continued until he had drained the well. Looking down into it, he saw something shining at the bottom that proved to be a diamond ring. "How I see the use of pouring water into the basket!" he exclaimed. "If the bucket had brought up the ring before the well was dry, it would have been found in the basket. Our work was not useless."

When God's blessings does not fully coincide with your expectations, remember to wait until the well is dry. There may be something precious at the bottom. There may be a very good reason why God has placed you where you are, doing what you are doing.

Do you apply the same standard of faithfulness to your Christian activities that you expect from other areas of your life?

If your car starts once every three tries, is it reliable?

If your paperboy skips delivery every Monday and Thursday, is he trustworthy?

If you don't go to work once or twice a month, are you a loyal employee?

If your refrigerator stops working for a day or two every now and then, do you say, "Oh, well, it works most of the time"?

If your water heater provides an icy-cold shower every now and then, is it dependable?

If you miss a couple of loan payments every year, does the bank say, "Ten out of twelve isn't bad"?

If you fail to worship God one or two Sundays a month, would you expect to be a faithful Christian?

We do expect faithfulness and reliability from things and other people. Does not God expect the same from us? The problem is that in our religious activities we see ourselves as volunteers rather than as duty bound (1 Cor. 9). For a volunteer, almost anything seems acceptable. For a bond-servant who is duty bound, faithfulness is expected (Matthew 15:21).

When Pompeii was destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, there were many people buried in the ruins. Some were found in cellars, as if they had gone there for security. Some were found in the upper rooms of buildings. But where was the Roman sentinel found? Standing at the city gate where he had been placed by the captain, with his hands still grasping his weapon. There, while the earth shook beneath him—there, while the floods of ashes and cinders covered him— he had stood at his post. And there, after a thousand years, was the faithful man still to be found.

Faithful progress in the Christian life is a necessity. We should get "better" as time goes on. This is illustrated by what many consider to be the greatest horse race every run. When Secretariat won the Kentucky Derby, each successive quarter-mile in the race was run faster than the one before. The longer the race went, the faster the horse ran.

The story is told of an eleventh-century German king, King Henry III, who, having grown tired of court life and the pressures of being a monarch, applied to a monastery to be accepted for a life of contemplation. The religious superior of the monastery, Prior Richard, is reported to have said, "Your Majesty, do you understand that the pledge here is one of obedience? That will be hard because you have been a king?"

Henry replied, "I understand. The rest of my life I will be obedient to you, as Christ leads you."

"Then I will tell you what to do," said Prior Richard. "Go back to your throne and serve faithfully in the place where God has placed you."

When King Henry III died, a statement was written: "The King learned to rule by being obedient."

Like King Henry, we too need to be reminded that God has placed each of us in a particular place to be faithful there. Be it as a plumber, accountant, mother, father, or whatever, God expects us to be faithful here he has placed us.