

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 13TH, 2025 // HEBREWS

## FAITH (HEBREWS 11:1-3) FAITH IS

The writer begins this section with a description of what faith does and how it works. It's more about the character of faith.

- **Faith is not blind optimism or a feeling, and it certainly is not believing in spite of evidence.**
- **Faith is confident obedience to God's Word in spite of circumstances and consequences.**

## REALITY AND PROOF

It is the character of faith that gives reality to our hope. We trust for things which are yet unseen but faith gives us assurance and confidence to continue in hope.

- **All the proof we need comes from the source and object of our faith: God. We live with conviction, knowing that what He has promised, He will perform.**

## WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE BEFORE CHRIST?

Back in Chapter 10, the writer declared that they are the ones who have faith and are saved. This is after clearly showing that Jesus is the Savior. Now, he answers the burning question about those who died before Christ was born.

- **Faith has always been faith. It has always been salvation by grace through faith. It has always been faith in God and His plan.**

## UNDERSTANDING

The writer clarifies that even the simplest Believer can comprehend the mystery of creation.

- The universe, time, and everything that continues, came into existence by the word of God.
- **Because we have faith, we grasp the truth that only God has the power to create something from nothing. Faith is powerful because the source and object of our faith is powerful!**

## HISTORY OF FAITH (HEBREWS 11:4-10)

### EXAMPLES THROUGH TIME

After describing the nature and character of faith, the writer will now give examples of faith throughout the history of humanity.

- Abel offered sacrifices to God before the law was written and one sacrifice cost him his life; and yet, his faith speaks to us today.
- Enoch lived 365 years in an excessively sinful culture, but because of his faith, he pleased God. And then it pleased God to take Enoch without passing through death.

## IMPOSSIBLE OR REASONABLE?

Did Enoch do something impossible? NO. He pleased God by living in the faith that God had given to him.

- As we draw near to God, we do it with the faith that He gives us.
- **He gives us faith as we believe Him. He reveals who He is and what Christ has done. He calls us to Him. We follow Christ into His presence. He rewards us with adoption, purpose, and eternal life.**

## NOT YET SEEN

Noah had the faith to build something that was unneeded because it seemed its purpose would never be fulfilled. The coming storm had never been seen in all of history. Noah's faith made him trust God more than the taunts of men.

- **When we trust God above the culture, we are prepared for the storms that the culture cannot even see.**
- **Faith and obedience will shine a light and reveal (condemn) the darkness around us.**

## CALLED

Abraham is an example of faith and obedience when he answers the call to go. It was not clear where he would end up, but he trusted God with his future. He knew the land would be his but he never built a house and only purchased land to bury his wife. He was content looking to heaven.

- **Following Christ means trusting His promises of the future even when those promises are not fulfilled like we expected.**
- **It's easier to go if we look beyond what we see.**

## TRUE FAITH (HEBREWS 11:11-19)

### WHAT'S MISSING?

God kindly overlooks the flaws of the faithful men and women in this chapter. Only their obedience and patience are highlighted, despite their occasional fear, friction, doubts, or misgivings. This is especially noticeable in Sarah's case. When she heard that she would have children, she laughed in unbelief. When confronted, she denied laughing. She was guilty of unbelief and lying.

- **Faith is the mark of the faithful, not failure.**

## GOD MATH

Abraham, already naturally dead as far as offspring were concerned, becomes the father of a nation. On the principal of faith, Abraham (100 years old) and his wife Sarah (90 years old) become the grandparents of innumerable descendants; a family and a nation.

- **That kind of faith is remarkable because of the impossible promise. What promise has God given us that we believe is impossible? Is it believing that we are forgiven?**

## DIED IN FAITH

Verse 13 takes us back as far as Abel and all of these OT figures. They lived trusting God to keep His promises and they died according to those promises. They saw God with eyes of faith, and saw what their physical eyes never saw: God's future fulfillment of His promises.

- **It is one thing to live in faith, but it is an entirely different thing to be facing your own death and still trust God to fulfill His promises. Do we believe it will get better?**

## TESTED

Abraham's faith was tested. He was given a promise. The promise became possible through Isaac, then he was asked to sacrifice him. The faith that believed God would fulfill His promise is the same faith that believed God would deliver or resurrect Isaac. It was true faith.

- **This chapter is full of extremes that should give us perspective and courage. We are not exempt from trials and suffering, but, through faith, we are sustained for our good and His glory.**

## TRUSTING FAITH (HEBREWS 11:20-40)

### WHO GIVES FAITH

The writer shares how Isaac blessed his sons and, when he was dying, he blesses his grandsons. Joseph even gives instructions concerning his bones. Is this how faith is passed down?

- **Faith is not hereditary; it is not naturally transmitted to offspring. But, God does often graciously permit parents to see the development of faith in their children and grandchildren. Whose faith do we have? Are we trusting the faith of our parents? Mentors?**

## BEYOND THE BEGINNING

The writer jumps forward around 400 years to Moses. Faith continues to be the center of this chapter. He is telling the story of Moses and how God used him to deliver the Israelites. This is a story of faith and how God continued to be faithful through individuals and generations.

- **Faith removes fear. Faith aligns with God's plan. Faith chooses Christ over sinful treasure or pleasure. Faith gives us courage to stand up and lead when no one else will.**

## JERICHO AND RAHAB

Without one word about the 40 years in the wilderness, the writer moves to the promised land and the battle of Jericho. We see the faith of Israel and their obedience as the walls fell down.

- Rahab's faith assures us that genealogy and race are not a factor when it comes to God honoring the faithfulness of Believers.

## VICTORIES AND VICTORS

The writer lets us know that there are many more accounts of faith leading people into victory and there is not time or space to share them all.

- **There continues to be amazing stories of God's faithfulness to the faithful today. Are we taking the time to recognize them? Have we seen this reality in our own lives? Are we living in faith?**

## APPROVED THROUGH THEIR FAITH

The writer wants his audience to remember that these were all accepted by God because of their faith in God's promise before the promise was seen.

- **They lived their lives in expectation, believing that the Messiah would come. They believed that God would fulfill that promise, but they did not receive the fulfillment of that promise in their lives.**

## BETTER FOR US

Just because they did not see that fulfillment in their lives does not mean that God denied them the promise.

- **They had the faith to wait. We do not have to. The promise has been fulfilled. We can see Christ. But we still need faith to believe, live, and endure. It is from God, but it is OUR faith that trusts Christ to make us His.**

## STRONG

- We want to be strong.
- **We do not always know what strong should look like.**
- **The problem is that strength has as many definitions as there are cultures. Is it physical, emotional, spiritual, financial, political, or mental?**

## SOURCE

- Each definition requires a source.
- **Real strength is only as strong as its source.**
- **If strong faith is what we desire, we can make the mistake of rooting that faith in a list of strengths, talents, or abilities.**

## REAL FAITH

- God created and gives faith.
- **When God is the source and object of our faith, it becomes God sized faith.**
- **Faith is no longer what we THINK, it is what we KNOW because it is based on God's promises and Christ's work. Can we see with the faith that God has given us? Are we still fighting for everything in our own strength? Are we strong enough to continue?**