

Hebrews 11

1 Here is the definition of faith that a righteous person is to live by. Assurance, confidence, substance of our hope, some translate it “title deed”. The last chapter tells us to tie ourselves to this hope. See 10:23 The conviction or proof of what we do not see. When you flip a light switch, sit in a chair, or dial a phone, you are demonstrating faith. When you pray and expect an answer, you are demonstrating faith. You are sure that what you can't see will happen. Jesus often said, "your faith has saved you" or “according to your faith be it done unto you”. Have you demonstrated faith lately? When? How much faith is required? Did you ever believe you had faith yet not see results?

2 The one ingredient common in the life of all great men and women of God is faith! It is the faith they possess that makes them commendable. What would you have said makes a person commendable? Will you be commendable when you stand before God?

3 Genesis 1, “God said... and there was...” He makes something out of nothing by the words He utters. Hebrews 1:3 By that word those things spoken into existence are sustained. Physics proves this true. Energy is matter times the speed of light squared. Reverse the formula and you have substance from energy. How often the Scriptures declare God's voice to be power! (Ps 29:7-9) We begin a walk through scripture and see it is all based on this thing we call faith. God has no vocal chords, so what does it mean for him to speak?

4 There are several interpretations as to why God accepted Abel's sacrifice, but at least we can say with certainty that God looks at the heart and Abel offered his gift with a heart of faith that trusted that God would receive it. His testimony lives on. Notice in Genesis 4 it tells us that God accepted Abel and his sacrifice. Abel's faith believed God would provide a way to be right and the lamb was a picture of that faith in His provision.

5 Enoch is mentioned in only 8 verses, Jude 14,15, Gen 5:22-24, and here. He was a prophet, seventh generation from Adam, walked with and pleased God, earnestly seeking him and God took him home without death. What a testimony! Wouldn't you love for those things to be said about you?

6 Want to please God? You must have faith! Here is an interesting formula. If you want to come to God you must believe that He exists. Not only that, you must believe that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. Are you a person of faith? Does this describe your life? I wonder how much we truly believe He exists when our lives don't demonstrate that we do. If we truly believe God rewards those who earnestly seek Him, wouldn't we be a little more earnest in searching Him out?

That word “seek” can be translated: scrutinize, investigate, beg, crave, demand back, require. Which do you see as applicable?

7 Noah had never seen rain, let alone a flood. Notice there is holy fear. His belief in the voice of God, walking with God (Genesis 6:9) and years of obedience to that voice, condemned the world that chose to ignore it daily. He inherited righteousness that comes by faith. His actions merely were an outward sign that his heart believed what he could not see. Who did he inherit righteousness from? Revelation 13:8

8 We are up to Genesis 12. God says "Go, and I'll show you later where." Now think about the faith that required. Apply it to yourself. Most of us are pretty comfortable. Could we just - GO? The key here is that he obeyed. That is all God really requires, our obedience. But that is a result of faith that believes and earnestly seeks, knowing God will reward.

9-10 He was an early missionary, realizing that he was not of this world, a stranger and foreigner in it. His heart was not here but in New Jerusalem. How attached we get to our situations and dwellings. The Psalmist said we think they will last. (Psalm 49:11) But here is the only one that lasts, New Jerusalem. (Revelation 21:2) Don't forget this is the family of God (the bride) of which we see living stones here and now.

11 How does a ninety nine-year-old man and a ninety-year-old woman conceive? By being sure of what they hoped for, certain of what she could not see. They were sure of the One who made the promise. In John 7:38 Jesus said that whoever believed in Him, out of their belly (womb) would flow living water. Believing faith creates life where there is none. It can cause birth where there is barrenness. Whether a person or a church, city or nation, the transformation from death to life is by faith! Do you believe your town can come to life?

12 This was not literal but figurative of a great number that could not be counted. At the time of the writing of the book it was considered fulfilled. The idea is that from what looks impossible could come fruitfulness beyond imagination. Food for thought: Is God speaking something to your Spirit that you think is an impossibility? Is anything impossible with God?

13 They died without receiving the promises. They labored toward it all their life but never saw it. Is the promise we long for and desire to receive something in this life? Or is it something we will not receive until after we die? If your desire is something attainable here, it is far short of what God has for you. If your goal and the promise you desire is after this life you are declaring yourself to be in transit, a tourist here, on your way somewhere else much better. The fullness of the

promise is there. I hope it can be said of me, “He died in faith, not yet receiving the promise.” 1Peter 1:1

14 – 16 He looks at the example of Israel and Abraham. We leave the culture we are born into and aim for a heavenly culture and a heavenly place. Many become discouraged because their needs, wants, expectations, and demands aren't met here. The focus is here.

If we want to turn back and seek satisfaction here, we can. But what we can't see is there, prepared and waiting for us, the city of God, beyond our wildest dreams!

Revelation 21:1-2

17-19 Abraham had received the promise of a son at the age of 100, and now God asked for another step of faith, to sacrifice him. Abraham is our Father of faith because after finally receiving what he wanted in this life, he was ready to give it back, believing in God's promise that somehow God would bring him back from the dead. This is type and shadow of what God was willing to do for us.

20 When Isaac blessed his sons, he still believed the promise his father Abraham had heard and that was confirmed to him would be fulfilled through his seed. He gave them blessings he believed would be fulfilled in the future.