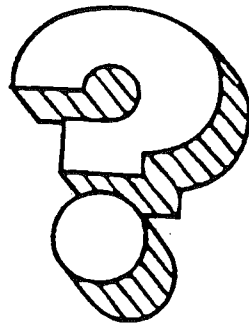


POWER IN FAITH

(How Faith Works In A Very Practical Way)
Hebrews 11:1-19



- ◆ Faith's Description
- ◆ Faith's Demonstration
- ◆ Faith's Deliverance

“Without faith it is impossible to please God; for He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6)

Bill Kirk

“POWER IN FAITH”

Text: Genesis 4:4 & 5/ 5:24/ 6:14/ 12:1/ Hebrews 11:1-19

Subject: What Faith Is And What Faith Does!

Introduction

1. Hebrews was written to Jewish converts in Palestine.
2. These believers were being persecuted and tempted to abandon the new covenant.
3. They were being enticed to return to the old system of ceremony, ordinances and sacrifices.

Question: Why was Hebrews written?

Answer: To show us how Jesus is “Better” than the Old Testament system of law.

In chapter 1 – Jesus is Better than the Prophets	In chapter 7 – Jesus is Better than Melchisedec
In chapter 2 – Jesus is Better than the Angels	In chapter 8 – Jesus is a Better Covenant
In chapter 3 – Jesus is Better than Moses	In chapter 9 – Jesus is a Better Sanctuary
In chapter 4 – Jesus is a Better Rest	In chapter 10 – Jesus is a Better Sacrifice
In chapter 5 – Jesus is Better than Aaron	In chapter 11 – Jesus is a Better Faith
In chapter 6 – Jesus is a Better Anchor	In chapter 12 – Jesus is a Better Example (and)

(In chapter 13 – Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever)

Question: Pastor, why is it so important to live by faith?

Question: Pastor, how is it possible to walk by faith?

Question: Pastor, what exactly is the definition of faith?

Question: And pastor, what difference does it make in my life, in my mind, in my heart, in my plans, in my future, in my praying and in my daily routine?

I. Faith’s Description

Question: What is the biblical definition of faith?

- #1. It isn’t a blind optimism.
- #2. It isn’t some magical formula.
- #3. It isn’t humanistic that makes God subservient to our wishes.
- #4. It isn’t something that gets sour when it doesn’t get its way.

Question: What is faith? **Answer:** It is defined clearly by God in Hebrews 11:

(3 Words Describe Faith)

#1. Is the word “**Substance**” (v. 1)

- ◆ The word “substance” means: “To stand under and support”.
- ◆ Faith here, is to a believer, what a foundation is to a house.
- ◆ It gives confidence and assurance that you will stand (regardless of what’s put on you)
- ◆ Like a house foundation, faith is the substance (or confidence that stands under and supports you).

#2. Is the word “**Evidence**” (v. 1)

- ◆ The word evidence means “Conviction”
- ◆ This word is an inward conviction from God.
- ◆ It is a conviction from God that God will do what God has promised.
- ◆ You are convicted (or convinced) that God will be true to you and His Word.

#3. Is the word “**Witness**” (v. 4)

- “Abel obtained witness” (which means:)
- ◆ God witnessed about each one in Hebrews 11.
 - ◆ God witnessed His approval on their life.
 - ◆ God witnesses to us through those who have gone on before us.

Question: So what is faith?

Answer: #1. Substance (or confidence) #2. Evidence (or conviction)

(Pg. 1 of 4)

#3. Witness (or approval)

(So Biblical Faith Is:)

- ◆ A confident obedience to God's Word in spite of our circumstances and consequences. (I repeat)

(In Other Words)

- #1. God speaks to us and we hear His Word.
- #2. We act upon the Word regardless of what we see.
- #3. We obey God and believe Him even when the circumstances seem impossible to us.

II. Faith's Demonstration

Fact: Once we know what faith is, then we discover what faith does (how it works).

Question: Pastor, what does faith do in my own life day by day?

Question: How does it enable me to overcome every temptation?

Question: How does God show me what real faith looks like day by day?

(God Uses 4 Pictures To Speak To Us)

#1. Abel reveals that faith enables you to "Worship"

(V. 4) "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous".

(Genesis 4:4 & 5 Declares:)

- ◆ The Lord had respect for Abel's offering.
- ◆ But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.

Question: Why did God accept Abel's worship but not Cain's? (One reason)

Answer: Abel worshipped God exactly how God had said – through the sacrifice of another.

- ◆ Abel put his faith in God's way of salvation,
- ◆ Abel sacrificed an animal and brought blood to the altar.
- ◆ Abel was putting trust in Christ's future sacrifice (so he could come and worship).
- ◆ Abel recognized that he was a sinner and couldn't worship God until forgiven.
- ◆ Abel knew his sins must be removed so that his guilt was paid for.
- ◆ Abel was counted righteous because he let another bear his sins for him.

(But Not Cain)

- ◆ Cain approached God with the fruit of his own efforts.
- ◆ Cain approached God with his own good works.
- ◆ Cain approached God but he had the wrong ticket to get on board. **(In Other Words)**
- ◆ God had no respect for Cain's offering because Cain didn't get his sins forgiven.
- ◆ And Cain couldn't worship God through his own labors (his deeds couldn't clear his conscience).
- ◆ And Cain's rejection is a message to us all that:

- #1. Faith enables me to worship (not because of what I earn, but because of what God did).
- #2. Faith enables me to worship with a clear conscience (because of my trust in the one who carries my sin).
- #3. Faith enables you to approach God today, because God has respect to the once-and-for-all offering that we all must receive.

Question: Pastor, how can I live so that I have an open heaven in prayer?

Question: Romans 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God".

- ◆ Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace you are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves".

(#1. Abel reveals that faith enables you to worship)

#2. Enoch reveals that faith enables you to "Walk"

(V. 5) Why was Enoch translated to heaven one day?

(V. 5) "...For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God".

Question: How does this verse encourage you?

Question: How does Enoch pleasing God encourage us all?

Question: How does Enoch's testimony put faith in your heart? (Because:)

- #1. Enoch lived during the most difficult time in world history.
- #2. It was the period of time just before the flood.
- #3. It was a time of wickedness, sinfulness, corruption and temptation.
- #4. It was a time when people were breaking the heart of God (and suffering for their stubbornness).

Question: Pastor, how does Enoch help me?

Answer: Enoch reveals that God can keep you pure in the midst of a polluted world.

(In Other Words)

- ◆ God has the spiritual resources for you to stand strong.
- ◆ God has the grace to sustain you in school.
- ◆ God has the power to overcome every temptation.
- ◆ God has the enablement to keep you from falling.
- ◆ God has the spirit to give you the courage.
- ◆ God has the boldness to crush every fear.
- ◆ God has the strength for you to walk and please God in the face of every demon, devil and distraction.

(Doesn't God Say)

- ◆ "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4)

Question: Why does God want you to possess the Enoch kind of faith?

Answer: He had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Question: How many of you want to please God?

Question: How many of you don't want to backslide?

Question: How many of you want power over sin?

Question: How many of you have been tempted in recent days to be drawn into sin?

#3. Noah reveals that faith enables you to "Work"

Question: How does Noah encourage me pastor?

Answer: Noah had never seen rain or a flood, yet continued to work on the boat.

- ◆ He received much ridicule.
- ◆ He was enticed to quit and give up.
- ◆ He was tempted to get weary.
- ◆ He had cause to give in to depression.

#1. The comparison syndrome

- ◆ Noah preached 120 years - a preacher of righteousness.
- ◆ Noah never made it in who's who of charisma magazine.
- ◆ Noah never made it in the top 100 churches in the Pentecostal Evangel.
- ◆ Noah averaged one convert every 17 years for 120 years.
- ◆ And he encountered fiery darts of feeling unimportant and insignificant in the total plan of God.

#2. Isolation fatigue

- ◆ Away from the mainstream of success.
- ◆ In the minority while building the Ark.
- ◆ Wondering "Does anybody know where I am? Does anybody care who I am?"

#3. Unexpected disappointments

- ◆ In excitement Noah sends out a dove to find dry land.
- ◆ What happens? The dove returns and Noah is disappointed.
- ◆ Joseph was disappointed ("Butler, don't forget me").

- ◆ Elijah was disappointed (he went to Cherith and the brook dried up).
- ◆ Paul was disappointed (ready to go to a city and God closed doors in his face).

#4. Prolonged waiting

- ◆ 120 years preaching righteousness,
- ◆ Years building a boat,
- ◆ 411 days on a boat in the middle of nowhere,
- ◆ Noah needs something to help him to learn how to wait!!!

Ask: What is it pastor, that will help me as I work when I am...

- 1...feeling insignificant in the plan of God
- 2...facing isolation fatigue – in the minority
- 3...having unexpected disappointments
- 4...in prolonged waiting in need of patience?

Ask: What is it that God will give you when you find yourself with Noah?

(V. 7) By “**Faith**” ...

...God will, on days like today,

...supernaturally impart to you, faith to see the hand of God when you feel –

- Isolated - Fatigued - In the minority - Disappointed unexpectedly

- ◆ God will meet you at your altar,
- ◆ Like God met Noah at his altar!!!
- ◆ Noah’s mind was warned by God.
- ◆ Noah’s heart was moved to fear the Lord.
- ◆ Noah’s will acted on what God said to do, (and)
- ◆ Noah obeyed the Lord in spite of the consequences.

#4. Abraham Reveals That Faith Enables You To “Wait”

Question: How many of you have difficulty waiting?

Question: How many of you have ever been impatient?

Question: How many of you have ever been tempted to push or shove or assert your own timing?

Question: Why is Abraham in Hebrews 11?

Answer: Because Abraham teaches us how to wait (and obey God in the meantime).

In verses 8-10, Abraham didn’t know his future. (No one does)

In verses 11-12, Abraham didn’t know how God would provide.

In verses 13-16, Abraham didn’t know how the promises would be fulfilled.

In verses 17-19, Abraham didn’t understand why God would ask for Isaac.

(But Abraham Did Know 2 Things)

#1. That God would intervene before slaying Isaac (or)

#2. God would raise Isaac from the dead if Isaac had to die.

Question: Why is Abraham in your Bible?

Answer: Genesis 22:14, “And Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah Jireh” (Which means the Lord will provide)

III. Faith’s Deliverance

Question: How does faith deliver us from discouraging doubt and unbelief?

#1. Like Abel, faith to worship God overcomes condemnation and a guilty conscience.

#2. Like Enoch, faith to walk with God overcomes temptation in a polluted world.

#3. Like Noah, faith to work for God overcomes weariness and all thoughts of quitting.

#4. Like Abraham, faith to wait for God, overcomes impatience – and believes that God will do what He said He will do!!! (He’s your provider)