
God Revealed

Part 8 - A Living Faith

What is it to have a Living Faith?

The glorious foundational truths about Christ that we have seen so far.

- + Giving Himself once and for all as a final sacrifice for our sins (Hebrews 9:14)
- + Perfecting us for all time by a single offering (Hebrews 10:19)
- + Giving a clean conscience to us by His own blood shed on the cross (Hebrews 9:14; 10:22)
- + Being our sympathetic High Priest before God (Hebrews 4:14-16)
- + Interceding for us day after day in Heaven (Hebrews 7:25)
- + Putting His law in our minds and writing them on our hearts
- + Being our God (Hebrews 8:10) and walking among us as His people
- + Remembering our sins, no more (Hebrews 8:12)
- + Promising to never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5-6)

The Hall of Fame of Faith

As it says in Hebrews Chapter 11 verse 39- all were commended for their faith. Would you still choose the dangerous path of love - in order to walk in obedience and bring the love of God to others?

They each had a future oriented faith, they stepped out in obedience into the unknown, to catch sight of, taste and see from a distance His promises, that enabled them to put aside and overcome what was their present reality, to lay hold of their inheritance.

A Grid for Faith - Hebrews 11:1-3

Faith always has an object. There is always something in which to believe. The author in Hebrews is reminding us that Faith is not just a future sense, but is as much about looking back - back to the very act

of creation – where God’s word spoken brought into being what did not exist.

Hebrews 11:1 *Now Faith is that assurance (or in Greek ‘hupostasis’ that translates as substance) of things hoped for... The conviction (or evidence) of things not seen.*

The author in Hebrews is emphasising that faith is more than just feeling confident that something might happen someday... faith gives present substance to something that is future.

Hebrews 11:3 *By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what is visible.*

Paul was reminding us, as is the author of Hebrews, that Faith does not ‘create’ anything – it only apprehends ‘what God has created’.

Romans 1:20

Put simply – Faith is taking God at His word, the word of God being the object of our Faith – so that we can be convinced and confident, assured.

Without Faith it is impossible to please God – Hebrews 11:4-6

The author is drawing our attention not to what was done (offering given) but pointing out the heart condition motivating **how** the sacrifice was offered. **Hebrews 11:4**

Enoch walked with God – he had a ‘living faith’ **Hebrews 11:5 & 6;**
Genesis 5:22 & 24

AS we know more and more of the **Word of God** – we have more and more to trust! **John 17:17**

The more we trust, the easier it is to apply the word of God and exercise a ‘living obedient faith’. **1 Thessalonians 4:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:15**

Walking with God is pleasing to God – His radical love moves in the pathways of obedience!

Noah, Abraham and Sarah – Hebrews 11:7-12

Despite and irrespective of their circumstances... they each clung to the enduring truth that God is FAITHFUL. It was not merely a single act – it was a day-by-day lifestyle of faith.

The author knew that people whose faith is firmly built upon the foundation of God's truth, can live lives of radical, risk-taking, sacrificial love!

Living in the now and not yet – Hebrews 11:13

The letter of Hebrews is so beautifully written for both the pre and post Christ believers!

- + Noah was saved, but he was still an heir – he had not come into his full inheritance
- + Abraham did find the promised land, he prospered immensely, but he stayed in tents looking for a city whose architect was the living God
- + Sarah got her miracle baby – but she never saw as verse 12 describes, her seed as sand on the seashore

The full end result of God's promises are not always seen in our lifetime!

Exiles and Sojourners – Hebrews 11:14-19

The author of Hebrews is drawing from a thread throughout scripture that we are exiles on this earth... sojourners...

- + Genesis 3:24 – Abraham goes to Seth to request land to bury Sarah
- + Genesis 47:9 – Jacob, at the end of his life talking to Pharaoh describes his life as a 130-year long journey as a refugee, in exile, a sojourner on this earth
- + Psalm 39 – King David pours out his heart to God declaring himself to be a sojourner like all his fathers before him
- + John 18:36 – Jesus answered Pilate 'My kingdom does not belong to this world...But now my Kingdom is from another place.'
- + Philippians 3:20 – Paul describes his citizenship and homeland as heaven

- + 1 Peter 2:11 – Peter urges us as aliens and strangers to not conform to this world

A life of faith is a life of a sojourner. As these sojourners, we are ambassadors representing a different Kingdom and a different King.

The choice is ours. The heart of FAITH is all about what we DESIRE. Do you DESIRE the better?

God is saying: Do you DESIRE ME? Are you seeking and do you desire me – above all other things?

Discussion Questions

1. Revisit Hebrews 10:35 and 36 and compare with Hebrews 11:39. What does it look like for you, to persevere, to 'joyfully' embrace the high price of love, and do what it demands, no matter what the consequences?
2. Read Hebrews 11:1 and 11:3 as well as Romans 1:20. How is faith to be understood as evidence?
3. Read Hebrews 1:3 and Hebrews 11. What do we mean when we say – Just as Jesus is God made real – Faith is Hope made real?
4. How does Ephesians 2:8-9, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 2:3-8 and Hebrews 11 speak to a 'saving faith'?
5. We see this principle that the author is trying to instil repeated – in Hebrews 6:11-12, Hebrews 11, then in Hebrew 13:7 where the author even urges the audience to draw from Godly contemporaries, people who illustrate a living faith – who can build their confidence, to encourage each to persevere and endure. Who are your contemporary Heroes of Faith that encourage you to persevere and endure? Why?