

THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH

TEXT: (Hebrews 11:1-6, NCV)

¹ Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it. ² Faith is the reason we remember great people who lived in the past. ³ It is by faith we understand that the whole world was made by God's command so what we see was made by something that cannot be seen.

⁴ It was by faith that Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. God said he was pleased with the gifts Abel offered and called Abel a good man because of his faith. Abel died, but through his faith he is still speaking.

⁵ It was by faith that Enoch was taken to heaven so he would not die. He could not be found, because God had taken him away. Before he was taken, the Scripture says that he was a man who truly pleased God. ⁶ Without faith no one can please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that he is real and that he rewards those who truly want to find him.

INTRODUCTION

1. "Immediately the father cried out, 'I do believe! Help me to believe more!'" (Mark 9:24, NCV).
2. "Increase our faith!" (Luke 17:1, NIV).

I. Definition Of Faith

1. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, KJV).
2. "Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it" (Hebrews 11:6, NCV).

A. Evidence Is Future Tense

1. "Yet [Abraham] did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised" (Romans 4:20-21, NIV).
2. "If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king" (Daniel 3:17, NIV).

II. THE POSSIBILITIES OF FAITH

A. Faith Makes All Things Possible

1. "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13, NIV).
2. "'If you can?'" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes" (Mark 9:23, NIV).
3. "It is impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18, NIV).
4. "Do not be afraid or terrified...for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6, NIV).
5. "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom" (Isaiah 40:28, NIV).
6. "For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone" (James 1:13, NIV).

B. Faith That Sustains

1. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD" (Psalm 33:12, NIV).
2. "I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I

was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked" (II Corinthians 11:23-27, NIV).

III. Faith Produces a Good Report

1. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13, NIV).
2. "This is what the ancients were commended for" (Hebrews 11:2, NIV).

A. Abel—Sacrifice

1. "By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead" (Hebrews 11:4, NIV).
2. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2, KJV).

B. Enoch—Testimony

1. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God" (Hebrews 11:5, KJV).

C. Noah—Reverence

1. "By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith" (Hebrews 11:7, NIV).

D. Abraham—Obedience

1. "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going" (Hebrews 11:8, NIV).
2. "And the scripture was fulfilled that says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,' and he was called God's friend" (James 2:23, NIV).

E. Moses' Parents—Courage

1. "By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict" (Hebrews 11:23, NIV).

CONCLUSION

A. Faith Provides an Understanding

1. "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible" (Hebrews 11:3, NIV).