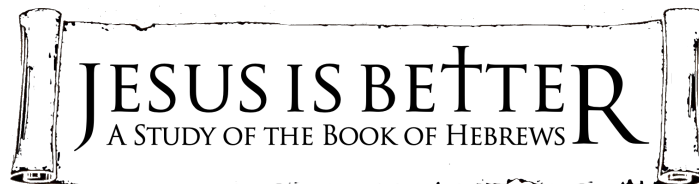


15: **Living By Faith** (Heb 11:1-6)

Followers of Jesus should expect others to question why they swim upstream instead of going with the flow. Today we discover the difference between those **Living by Faith** in God and those who aren't.



teachingnotes

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* All Scripture is from CSB (Christian Standard Bible)

CATCH THE CONTEXT

Last week we asked the question, Are we **"Living Like He's Returning?"** If so,

- We would LOVE more graciously, SERVE more purposefully, & OBEY more passionately.

Hebrews 10:37-39 For yet in a very little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. But **my righteous one will live by faith**; and if he draws back, I have no pleasure in him. But we are not those who draw back and are destroyed, but **those who have faith and are saved**.

Hebrews 11 is often called "The Faith Chapter" or "The Faith Hall of Fame". In its 40 verses it contains the word **"faith"** 18 times.¹ This kind of faith trusts & believes in the God who has promised something we are still waiting for. Though we haven't seen the fulfillment of the promise, we know it is on the horizon, because the ONE who has promised is faithful. That's what it means to be **Living by Faith** - the kind of faith that led the ancestors of the Hebrews receiving this letter to trust God through the good times and the bad times. And now the author calls the ones he later calls "great cloud of witnesses" ([Heb 12:1](#)) to give testimony to God's faithfulness.

Hebrews 11:1-2 (CSB) Now **faith** is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen. For **by this our ancestors were approved**.

The NET makes the author's intention super clear.

Hebrews 11:1 (NET) Now **faith** is being sure of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see.

The author uses a writing technique of Hebrew poetry called "parallelism" - saying the same thing in 2 parallel lines: "faith is being sure of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see".

✓ *Trusting something yet UNSEEN doesn't mean it doesn't exist*. We put faith/trust in the unseen ALL THE TIME!

TAKE SOME NOTES HERE!

¹ Peter T. O'Brien, The Letter to the Hebrews, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 398.

It was **by faith** that the Hebrew **ancestors** (grandpa and grandma...and beyond) **were approved** by God. Good works have never made people right with God. Real deal **faith** in God is what makes a person **approved** by God.

Hebrews 11:3 **By faith we understand** that the **universe** was **created by** the word of **God**, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

Even with all the technology we have today, no one fully understands the process by which God created everything. The people 2000 years ago didn't either, but they did understand that God created the universe - matter, space, and energy - **from things that are not visible**.

By faith we understand that the **universe** was **created by** the word of **God**

Cain & Abel

Hebrews 11:4 **By faith** Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain did. **By faith he was approved** as a righteous man, because God approved his gifts, and even though he is dead, he still speaks through his faith.

The life of ancient Abel speaks a relevant message loud and clear for modern mankind. *What was his message?* Abel trusted that God worthy of his sincere sacrifice. **By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain.**

❓ Why was Abel's **sacrifice better**?

Genesis 4:4-5 (NET) But Abel brought some of the **firstborn** of his flock—even **the fattest of them**. And the **LORD** was pleased with Abel and his offering, but **with Cain and his offering he was not pleased**. So Cain became very angry, and his expression was downcast.

- Abel gave God his best - **the firstborn & fattest** - because he trusted God to continue to provide for him.
- Cain didn't trust God the same way, and didn't bring his best.

Enoch

Hebrews 11:5 **By faith** Enoch was taken away, and so he did not experience death. *He was not to be found because God took him away*. For before he was taken away, **he was approved as one who pleased God**.

* Read about it here: Gen 5:21-24

- **Enoch** and Elijah (2 Kings 2:1) are 2 mentioned in the Scriptures that NEVER died, but were taken by God to heaven! Followers of Jesus who still living on earth when He returns will experience the same thing (1 Thes. 4:17)!
- The New Testament (Jude 14-15) notes that Enoch was known for prophesying - speaking on behalf of God in warning false teachers and their audience.

Why did God take Enoch early? He pleased God with his faith. He TRUSTED God and it showed! "Enoch walked with God 300 years..." (Gen 5:22)

❓ Wouldn't that be wonderful to be known as someone who "walked with God" - to be known for loving God, obeying God, and being in fellowship with God!

☀️ **John MacArthur:** "One thing is certain: because of his faithful preaching and faithful living, no one who heard Enoch or lived around him had any excuse for not believing in God."²

TAKE SOME NOTES HERE!

² John F. MacArthur Jr., Hebrews, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 313-314.

We please God by Trusting God

Hebrews 11:6 Now without **faith** it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to Him must **believe** that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.

We please God when we LIVE BY FAITH.

BIG TRUTH: Genuine faith is living like God exists and God rewards.

Based on THAT definition - *do YOU have genuine faith* - a faith that pleases God?

- ① **What difference does *God's existence* make in your daily life?** How does God's Presence impact your actions, words, thoughts, attitudes, & relationships?
- ② **What difference do *God's rewards* make in your daily life?** What rewards are you experiencing NOW? (e.g. Love, Joy, Peace, Faith Family) And what about *FUTURE REWARDS*? THE DAY is coming that Jesus promised - The DAY He returns and the faith we have put in the God we have never seen...WILL BE SEEN!

But until that day, we will trust Him and LIVING BY FAITH.

Genuine faith is living like God exists and God rewards.

- ③ **What are you doing to *SEEK God*?** Opening the Scriptures daily? Talking to God throughout the day? Hanging out with others who are encouraging you to SEEK God or those who encourage you to STIFF-ARM God?

TAKE SOME NOTES HERE!

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- * Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), **Christy** (673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- * Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (673-7952), Tim & Joni Hughey (464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (464-6717), Jim & Derita Pinkard (464-6188), Fain & Linda Poppell (464-1282), or Tom & Martha Waddail (973-0011).