

**September 5, 2021**  
***Hebrews 11:1-3– Have Faith***  
**JD Farag**

Good morning and welcome to our second service on Sunday mornings. We have two, the first service is the Bible Prophecy Update, and the second service is the sermon, which is a verse-by-verse study through the Bible.

We're currently in the amazing book of Hebrews, and I say amazing because it is amazing. And last week we finished Chapter 10, so we're going to pick it up in Chapter 11 and only three verses today. You'll see why; you know these verses well.

And so I'll ask those of you that are here if you're able to stand. You can follow along as I read. If not, where you're seated is fine.

Just follow along beginning in verse 1 where the writer of Hebrews by the Holy Spirit writes, "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith [verse 3] we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."

All right, let's pray. If you would, please join with me.

Father in heaven, thank You so much. Lord, would You at this time, just as only You can and are always faithful to, settle our hearts and quiet our minds so we can give You our undivided attention in this time that we have together here in Your Word, especially with this passage, these verses here in Chapter 11, Lord.

We need for the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of our understanding because we don't want to miss what it is that You desire to speak into our lives today, especially when it comes to faith, especially in these times in which we are living. Lord, thank You in advance for what You're going to do as we commit this time to You in Jesus' name, amen and amen.

You can be seated. Thank you.

So I want to talk with you today about faith. And in so doing, I want to answer this question of: Do I really have faith? In our text today, the writer of Hebrews is turning a corner of sorts and going from addressing doctrine positionally to applying doctrine practically.

In other words, the text that we have before us today has powerful, profound personal application to our lives. And it's for this reason that the writer will first explain what faith is, what faith does, and then what faith has in terms of its personal application to our lives.

So let's start with verse 1 and what faith is. Now this is a well-known verse, often quoted, even memorized. It is the definition of faith, what faith actually is. What faith actually is is this confident assurance, and I want you to listen to the wording here because depending on your translation different wording from the original language of the Greek New Testament.

It is the confident assurance in the evidence. That's a strong word: Evidence. Proving with certainty, not beyond reasonable doubt, no, no doubt. With absolute certainty. The evidence proves what we hope for. It proves what we know will happen, though we can't see it. Now, I need to address an issue here because it is an issue.

So when we talk about faith being the substance of things hoped for, that derails us right out of the chute and let me explain why. When you say it like that, it almost sounds like this: Faith is the substance of "I sure hope it happens."

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No, that is not what it's saying. And that's not what faith is. I'm sorry. I don't mean to yell. But it's not this, and I think about it in the context of the Apostle Peter when he says that we have this blessed assurance, the blessed hope. It's not this blessed "man, I sure hope the Lord's going to come back." That doesn't sound very - that sounds very tentative.

Sounds to me like the jury is still out. The verdict is not yet in. So we really don't know; we're just kind of hoping. No, that's not what this is. That's not what faith is. Faith is this hope, knowing with certainty, without any doubt that though we don't see it, it will happen, and we have evidence. Can I say it like this: forensic evidence?

Oh, there's a big deal now with forensics, ooh. I'm sorry. I just think about the television shows, which none of us should be watching anymore. But, you know, CSI became real popular. You know, the crime scene investigators, they come in, and they're looking at the forensics. And they're gathering the evidence.

Well, that's what faith is. We have forensic evidence. And it's not in a courtroom setting, you just have to prove beyond reasonable doubt. No, faith says I'm going to prove it with no doubt. And the reason there's no doubt is because we have evidence.

Well, I don't see it.

Well, that's called sight.

I know that's deeply profound. But faith is the antithesis of sight. Do you know that there's a time coming soon and very soon, I believe, and so do you, that we will no longer need to have faith because we're going to see Him face to face.

I don't have faith in something that I'm seeing because it doesn't require faith because I see it. I've realized it, and it's no longer faith but sight.

But here again, we have another issue. Oh, you've got a lot of issues today, Pastor. You have no idea how many issues I have. But here's the - I know: Issues - I know. I heard a sermon about that one time. These are real issues actually. The issue is that I want to walk by sight. And so do you, too so don't look at me spiritual and everything.

Everything in our human nature, our sin nature, that Adamic nature chafes at this notion of walking by faith. I want to see it. I want to walk by sight. Because after all, seeing is believing, right?

That's not faith then. What faith says - see, our flesh says with our eyes seeing is believing the seen, whereas with the eyes of faith, we say instead believing is seeing the unseen.

Let me say the same thing in a different way. Just as our eyesight confidently assures us of evidence proving with certainty what we see, faith is the evidence of what we can't see. It's the same assurance. That's faith, that's what faith is. That's even how faith works. And we're going to talk about that next in verse 2, what faith does.

Now, this is interesting. Faith does for us and others, by the way, that which proves our witness and testimony such that we see what faith does when it's in action. Example: You all exercised tremendous faith coming to church today.

You know how? Well, when you got in your car, you had faith that when you oh, we don't start cars like that anymore, we push the button, I guess, depending on how old your car is. We had faith that

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car would start. We put our faith in that car. That's what faith does. And then we had faith that the car was going to get us here to church, right? Wow, you guys are men and women of faith, I tell you.

And then when you pulled into the parking lot, you had faith that you were going to find a parking spot. Takes a lot of faith, especially Costco Iwilei, finding a parking spot, by faith, just by faith, man. I don't see a parking spot; I'm just believing God for a parking spot.

Then you walked in the doors, and I know you were loved on because this is a loving and amazing church. But then you walked into the sanctuary, and you put your faith in that chair that you're sitting in that it wouldn't - at least I don't think it will. I know, right? You have faith in that chair.

I'm going somewhere with this. Just bear with me.

Now, let me ask you a question. Did you see with your own eyes the manufacturer who manufactured that chair? So what are you basing your evidence on that that chair is going to hold you up? That's faith. Do you see where I'm going with this?

That's what faith does. And as such, when you exercise that faith, you become a good testimony of faith. And that's what the writer of Hebrews is saying. And oh, by the way, and we'll talk about this more in a moment, but Lord willing, next week, if we're still here; I say that actually seriously I say that.

We're going to start verse 4, Hebrews 11, the Hall of Faith, and we're going to go through a list of all of these men and women of God, mightily used of God because of their faith. So they become the testimony.

When we get to Chapter 12, which maybe we won't before the rapture, but let's just say we do, the writer of Hebrews is going to talk about this great cloud of witness. That's what he's talking about here, sort of introducing us to that great cloud of witness who bear witness to faith in that by faith, they - and then you can fill in the blanks. I mean, it is a chicken skin chapter, Chapter 11.

But it's a testimony of faith in the sense that you're an eyewitness to what exercising one's faith has done. That's what faith does. By faith, faith did it.

Now we have another issue. I think we're almost done with the issues. But this is a big issue, by the way, and sadly, it has to do with what's known as the Word Faith teaching, a.k.a. name it/claim it, blab it/grab it.

Oh, you know what I'm talking about. If you just have enough faith because God wants you to have that new Mercedes Benz, if we just have enough faith. You can be healed if you just have enough faith. Well, then you don't get healed.

Well, you didn't have enough faith.

I got to tell you, of all of the false teachings in Christendom over the years, those winds of doctrines, this Word Faith false teaching has probably done more damage single handedly than any of them because here's what it does.

That faith; here's what that faith does. It says, God will do whatever you want Him to do because it's on you to have enough faith so He can do it.

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Well, wait a minute, that's sounds to me like the onus is on me and not God. That's not faith; that's not what faith does. Faith does not say, "I demand it." Faith, rather says, "I believe it."

And there's a big difference; that's not a play on words. See, when you adopt, embrace, and envelop this false teaching of just "if you have enough faith," then what you're doing is you're taking faith out of the arena of its biblical context to an unbiblical extreme.

And it couldn't make Satan happier. He loves that. He loves that.

No, faith doesn't do that. Faith says, Lord, I just don't see it. But You told me that if I would believe You, that You will do this in your way, in Your time and for Your glory.

And as Jesus would say, and I got to tell you these words make the hair on the back of my neck, whatever's there, stand on end. Because Jesus said, "Let it be done unto you according to your faith."

And this is why the Word Faith false teaching has done so much damage because Christians have now thrown the baby of faith out with the bathwater of that faith, Word Faith movement. And let me kind of explain and illustrate what that looks like.

So now I need faith and that faith needs to be put into action, which we're going to talk about in a moment. But I've seen how they've abused it, and marred it, and tarnished it. And so now I superimpose that back into my own faith. And I want to stay away from that.

So what happens is I don't trust God to do anything. Now I don't have any faith. And if it's according to my faith that it's done unto me, then maybe that explains why nothing's happened in my life.

If I'm not mistaken, Jesus said, if I have even faith the size of a microscopic mustard seed, I could say to that mountain of cancer, that mountain of a prodigal son or a wayward daughter or whatever it is, you fill in the blank, I can say to that mountain, you uproot yourself and you cast yourself into the bay, those Ko'olau mountain ranges.

I can say that with mustard seed sized faith, trusting God for that. Well, now you're starting to talk a little bit like they're talking. If you just have enough faith.

Don't you find it interesting that in the Gospels Jesus would stop everything and take notice of faith? And He would say, "I've never seen faith like this in all of Israel." Go, you're healed. Go, they're healed. According to your faith, rise up and walk.

Well, wait a minute, I want that. Yeah, so do I. Faith does that? Yeah. There's something about faith that God says if you'll have this thing called faith, I can do anything for you. Just have faith. That's what faith does; that's what having faith does.

So when I have faith, and I say, okay, Lord, I mean, it might even be smaller than that mustard seed You were talking about, but I still got a little bit of faith. And the Lord says that's all I need. Watch Me now. Watch what I'm going to do with that faith. Just have faith.

Okay, let's back up just one moment here. Have faith.

What is faith? It is the substance of things hoped for, the assurance of it because we have evidence proving it beyond any doubt, even though we can't see it. That's what faith is.

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Okay, so the Lord's saying, if you'll have that kind of faith, I know you don't see it, but believing is seeing because through the eyes of faith, we believe, we put our trust in Him. Lord, I know You can do anything. I believe. And the Lord takes notice of that.

And the writer of Hebrews, inspired by the Holy Spirit, makes it very clear in no uncertain terms that without faith, it's impossible to please Him. What is it about our faith in Him that is so pleasing to Him?

May I humbly suggest that it blesses the heart of God when we come to Him and put our faith in Him. You know, in the Gospels - again, Jesus would make it a point. You know, He went to His hometown of Nazareth. He said a prophet is without honor in his own hometown. He could do very little miracles there. Why? They had no faith.

Why didn't they have any faith? Oh, that's Joseph and Mary's kid. I remember Him when he was just a little wee boy in diapers running around Nazareth. That's not the Savior of the world. And they didn't believe, and He could do hardly anything there because they had no faith.

I think about how many times - and I - we need to be careful that we don't come down too hard on the disciples, but how many times were they in this perilous situation, this life and death storm, and Jesus says - I mean, one time - there's this one account.

You know what I'm talking about? They're in the boat, they're in the storm, and I mean, Jesus is sleeping through the storm in the boat with them. So what do they do?

They do the same thing we would do. Wake up! Don't you care? We're going to die! And so Jesus is like, man, I was trying to catch a few Z's here. You know, I'm kind of tired. I thought, you know...

And never imagine that His tone was with disdain or disgust when He says it to them, but it's just a loving - almost a - I want to say He pitied them. Like, why is your faith so little when your God is so big? Oh, ye of little faith.

Never imagine the Savior saying, "Oh, ye of little faith! I taught you better than that; what's the matter with you? Let me go back to sleep!"

No, it's, "Oh, you of little faith, little faith. Why is your faith so little when your God is so big? Oh. Have faith. Have faith." Well, as we're going to see again, the writer of Hebrews is going to make it very clear about how faith comes.

You know how it comes, right? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. That's how faith comes. This is what faith does, but that's how faith comes so that faith can do what faith does. I need the Word of God. I need to hear and heed the Word of God.

See, what happens is when I get into the Word, the Word gets into me, and then it builds my faith. And you read the Word, and oh, by the way, the Word reads you too. When we search the scriptures, the scriptures are searching you.

And very gently, the Holy Spirit just puts His finger - that's why it is that - and God's word is alive - and that's why it is that you can read a passage of scripture that you've read a jillion times before, and you're reading it again, and I mean, it's like God while you were sleeping put your name in that verse overnight.

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You wake up in the morning and you read that scripture, and it says, JD, humble yourself in the sight of the Lord. (Crying out)

That's the Word. It's sharp; it's a surgical instrument, a double-edged sword that cuts and surgically removes that which has taken up residence in our hearts and in our lives. And there are so many hindrances to our faith, things that hinder our faith.

So that's what faith does. What does faith have? Verse 3. Simply put, faith has the understanding of that which we did not see, namely that of the creation and formation of the universe. By having faith and I'll add faith having us, we're able to understand at God's command what is seen was made out of what was not seen.

And that's not blind faith. And by the way, how do I say this? I'll just say it; I've got to be careful because it's not my notes. Whenever I go off script, sometimes it doesn't end well. So I'll do my best here; help me out, Holy Spirit.

You know, Christians are mocked and ridiculed. Your blind faith. No, this is not a blind faith. It's an intelligent faith. God's given me an intellect. And faith comes by the Word of God. It's not a blind faith. In fact, it could be argued that you're the one that's blind.

I mean, let's talk about your faith. I mean, it could also be argued that you've got more faith than I do. I mean, at the end of the day, you've got to have more faith than I do because you are putting your faith in science.

And you, by faith, believe that you came from the zoo to the zoo to you. That's faith. I don't have that kind of faith, man.

So let's be honest. I love the illustration, and you probably heard it in a variety of forms, but to believe in this Big Bang Theory, it would be likened to - in fact, it would not even really come close, but it's as close as you're going to get by way of an illustration. It would be like into a tornado going through a junkyard and forming a functioning Boeing 777.

That is faith, I'll tell you right now. You - you - you - oh, I'm not worthy. See, my faith is in an intelligent designer who created the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that in them is. That's an intelligent faith, not a blind faith. And it's in an All-Intelligent Designer.

And here's the thing, by the way. I'm not mad at you; I'm just talking hypothetically. It is upsetting, though, isn't it, when you get into these conversations, and you believe in creation? Why do you have to see it like that? You believe in creation.

You believe in evolution? I mean, just flip it back on them, and don't beat them over the head with the Bible, though. That's... But it's an intelligent faith in the All-Intelligent Designer who goes beyond reason while not contradicting reason.

Who was I talking with this? Oh, it's my wife and my daughter. We're having this conversation about science, and my son was there too. And it's kind of like because right now, it's: Trust the science. Have faith in the science, right.? I mean, just...

No, I'm sorry, I'm not going to have - I'll put my faith in the God of science. Because see, here's the thing. They say - not you. They say that God and science are not compatible.

So I mean, you can't mix the two.

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You know what? Get some air because God is the God of science. And you've made science a God. And science is not a God. My God is the God of science. My God invented science; how about that? So buzz off in Jesus' name.

But see, they always get us, and if we're not grounded, they'll get us every single time. That's why we got to study to show ourselves approved of, a workman, rightly dividing the word of truth so we're not embarrassed or ashamed when we can't give to every man an answer of that hope that lies within us.

So when they are in our face with oh, that's just... you know, that's not reasonable and that's not science, and that's not compatible and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And then you can say, well, wait a minute, this is an Intelligent Designer that I'm putting my faith in.

We are fearfully and wonderfully made. You know, to this day I still - I know that in some ways, maybe it's the grace of God blinding people because if they saw it and still rejected Jesus, it would increase their judgment.

But I still to this day cannot grasp how it is that a physician is not a born-again Christian. I mean, especially these surgeons. How about these neurosurgeons on the brain? And they're looking at the - that came from a - this thing is so complex, our internal organs, everything is precision. That that didn't evolve over 100 trillion, billion, jillion years. How is that even possible? That's not intelligent.

This is intelligent. God in His Word said that He created the heavens and the earth. And so what faith has is eyes of understanding because faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

So I have faith in this God who has designed and created me, knew me even before I was formed in my mother's womb. Wow, how's that one? Just that alone just too high for my understanding. It doesn't contradict reason. It's beyond reason; it's too high for our understanding.

And if you really think about it, it makes sense if you want to talk about being logical and reasonable, how is it possible for infinite to impart to finite? It's impossible. That's why it is, by the way, that all of your "why" questions, it's not like God's like, I'm not telling you.

Why, God, why?

It's like God saying, oh, I wish I could tell you. But like our kids when they're little; they ask us the "why" questions. So we try to answer it, and what happens? They got 58 more "why" questions because they can't comprehend.

And how much more with us?

Why, God?

Oh, I want to tell you. But I know what's going to happen. If I try to tell you, you're going to go "why?" And then it's I cannot impart to finite that which is infinite.

Oh, but there is coming a day when I will no longer need faith, and I will know why, all of my "why" questions will be answered. And by the way, you're not going to have to ask them even.

You know how we almost flippantly - I'll take responsibility, I've done this. When I get to heaven, I'm going to ask God a couple of questions. No, you're not.

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When you get to heaven, you're going to be like... worshiping before the throne. Wait, I thought you had a couple of questions. No, not anymore. They got answered. Thank you very much.

Okay, let's try to bring this in for a landing. This question of: Do I really have faith? It's actually answered this way. It's answered these vis-à-vis what or who I have put my faith in. So in other words, the question isn't really: Do I have faith?

The question becomes, in whom have I put my faith? And again, actually, this is where the writer of Hebrews is going.

And Lord willing, we'll see this next week in the Hall of Faith. But these men and women of God in this Hall of Faith, people like you and I, by the way, I think we do err greatly when we start talking about Abraham, who by faith left Ur of the Chaldees, not knowing where he was going. Well, that's Abraham, of course.

Abraham was a man just like you and me. These women that are going to be in this Hall of Faith, they're just like you and me. Don't dismiss what God did in their lives by faith. They trusted God by faith.

And I mean, God's like you have faith?

Yeah.

You believe that I'm going to do it?

Yeah.

Well, I'm going to open up that womb that's been barren for many years at 90 years of age, way past childbearing. And I'm going to give you a son - that's called a miracle by faith. By faith.

Noah, did you know - we'll talk - I'm getting ahead of myself, but that's all right. When we talk about Noah - here's a guy - I can't wait to meet Noah.

Here's a guy - you have to understand they had never seen rain. And then God says, I want you to build a boat. What's a boat? It's the ark. Could you imagine 100 years - all the Noah jokes going around town?

How many Noahs does it take to change a light bulb?

He was the laughing stock of the town, right? This guy's building - he calls it a boat, an ark. He said it's going to rain. What's rain? Well, it's when water comes down from the sky, and then it's going to flood the earth. (Laughing) That's the silliest thing I've ever heard.

By faith, that's faith. That's faith and by faith, by faith, by faith, by faith.

These men and these women, mightily used of God, by faith, put their trust in God, and God did the impossible. I mean the impossible. There's no explanation for it, getting back to the whole science thing. They write it off under the banner of: Well, there is no really scientific explanation for this. That's because God did it. It's not in the realm of the natural. It's in the realm of the supernatural. They call that a miracle, by the way. By faith. By faith.

One last thing. You're like right, 20 more minutes.



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No, I'm not going to go that long. But I do want to say this one last thing, very important. Please don't miss it.

Don't let the enemy who comes to steal, kill, and destroy rob you of your faith. Let me say the same thing in a different way. The enemy hates it because he knows what faith does. He knows what faith is. He knows what faith has. He knows that faith pleases God. And that when you have faith, God's like all right! He doesn't want that for you.

So what's he going to do? He's going to try to take that faith away because he doesn't want you to have it. He's a thief. He comes to steal your faith. He's not going to steal your car. He has no use for a car, but he wants to steal your faith because he knows what faith can do. Don't let him do that. Don't let him get away with that.

Let me just take it a step further. Here's what that looks like and sounds like, and even smells like, the stench of it; I can still smell it right now in my own life.

Let's talk about this property. I mean, please, and I know I share this often, maybe not often enough. But never see me as this great man of faith. I just believed God for 3.1 acres at 47-525 Kamehameha Highway and a building. No, it wasn't like that at all. In fact, just ask my wife. Actually, don't ask my wife. But it was more like this. I'm in the fetal position. God, God! I mean, mustard-seed size? If only I could have that much. It was more like God; I know You can. It's not can You? It's will You?

And it's not my will, but Your will be done. God, if you get this property for us, there's no way that anybody could ever say, well, of course! In fact, it's going to be the opposite.

If You get this property for us and we buy this property and renovate that building, people are going to go, huh?

What, you?

Yeah. No, not really. Actually, it was God.

Well, how? By faith, by faith.

And by the way, it's not a singular event. You know, it's not like, well, I had faith on January the 12th of 1997. Well, how far did that get you? Did it get you to the afternoon on that day? It's a daily fight of faith.

Don't you find it interesting the Apostle Paul would say, I've fought the good fight of faith. It's a fight. It's not a dance. It's a fight. You have to fight, man, daily, every day. You know the thing about daily?

It's every day. I mean, every single day it's this fight because our flesh again chafes at this notion of faith because the flesh is over here going sights, sight, sight! And the Spirit's going, nah, faith, faith, faith. By faith, by faith, by faith.

Let's have the worship team come up. I'll have you stand; we'll close in song and prayer.

(Sighing)

I know I'm keenly aware this is my privilege to stand behind this pulpit that I speak to brothers and sisters in Christ who have tasted from this cup, and you've seen that the Lord is good, and you've seen what God has done by faith in your life. And I mean miraculous.

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He did it in such a way that only He could take the credit for it. And even if you tried, you wouldn't get away with it. You would not get away with it if you tried to take the credit for what God did by faith. Have faith. Have faith.

Let's pray; Father in heaven, I feel so inadequate when it comes to faith. It's a big word. But Lord, I trust that I did my best. And now the Holy Spirit will do the rest and take this that we've seen here today concerning faith, and by the Holy Spirit, as only You can, bless it to our hearts the application of it to our lives.

We want this to be real in our lives, not just something we talk about or preach about or hear about.

Lord, we want this in our lives. We want a Hebrews Chapter 11 in our lives, so it could be said of us by faith, by faith. Lord, thank You, in Jesus' name, amen.