

Hebrews 11

Jesus

I. Faith Defined

1 **Now faith** is the **substance** [lit. realization] of things hoped for, the **evidence** [lit. confidence] of things not seen.

Faith is believing God at His Word

Faith is waiting/acting in confidence/anticipation of His Word coming to pass

Our Faith is the conduit/access to God's Promises

Faith is reasoning according to God's revealed character

2 For **by [faith] the elders** [we're going to talk about] **obtained a good testimony.**

Good Testimony: Declared righteous by Faith

Saved by Grace alone through Faith alone in Christ alone

3 **By faith** we understand that the **worlds were framed by the word of God...**

If we can believe Genesis 1:1 by faith

We can believe all Scripture...

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning **God created the heavens and the earth**

God spoke the universes into existence...

3b ...so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

What was previously unseen is now visible, thus

God's Word is Validated by God's Work

Faith is not blind but considers the pre-existent works of God

The Works of God reveal God's character/*Faith reasons according to God's character*

Romans 1:9 ...because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world **His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead**

Those who know God believe God/Act accordingly

Receive a Good Testimony: Declared Righteous

II. Faith from Abel to Noah

4 **By faith Abel** offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that **he was righteous**, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

God said bring an acceptable sacrifice
By faith Abel did and was declared righteous

Genesis 4:3b ...Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. 4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And **the Lord respected Abel and his offering**, 5 but **He did not respect** Cain and his offering.

The LORD had *no regard* for Cain or Cain's Offering
The LORD had *great regard* for Abel and Abel's offering. Why?

- **Cain offered** the fruit of his own labor
- **Abel offered** the blood of an innocent creature

Both knew from Adam/Eve that blood was required to atone
They may not have fully known why/Abel believed God and acted accordingly

We don't come to a Holy God any way we please
Fear **of God** leads to Obedience **to God** demonstrating our Love **for God**

God said bring an acceptable sacrifice
By faith Abel did and was declared righteous

2 Corinthians 5:7 For **we walk by faith**, not by sight.

5 [732 years later] **By faith Enoch** was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that **he pleased God**.

By faith Enoch believed that God loved him
Enoch pleased God by seeking that relationship

Genesis 5:23 So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. 24 And Enoch **walked with God**; and **he was not**, for God took him.

Promise: Close relationship with God
Act of Faith? I will walk so close to God I won't even notice when He takes me

Enoch waited 365 years in expectation to be w/his God who wanted to be w/him
Enoch pleased God by **believing God**/Acted accordingly by **walking w/God**

Before God took Enoch, he had this testimony: He pleased God
Want to please God? Believe God

6 But **without faith it is impossible to please Him**, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

What pleases God?

1. **Believe God is.**
2. **Believe God rewards faith:** Act in a way that is in accordance with anticipating the Promise being realized...

Diligently seeking Him by believing Him and acting
Even when you don't fully understand...

7 [69 years later after Enoch was translated] **By faith Noah**, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, **moved with godly fear**, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Noah was warned/Noah believed/Noah moved
Though it never rained...God said it was coming!

Promise to Noah: Saved from God's Judgment if you Believe
Act of Faith: Preparing for rain when the suns still shining

We are saved by Grace alone through Faith alone in Christ Alone
Noah preached Wood/Nails. The world did not believe and was lost...

1 Corinthians 1:18 ...the **message of the cross is foolishness** to those who are perishing, but **to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

Genesis 6:8 But **Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.** **9b...** Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. **Noah walked with God.**

Noah was warned/Noah believed/Noah acted/Noah was saved
Noah walked by faith/Not by sight *as did Abraham 400 year later...*

III. Faith of Abraham and Sarah

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, **not knowing where he was going.**

By faith Abraham obeyed...
God said go and He went...Not knowing where he was going

9 By faith [Abraham] dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, **dwelling in tents** with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise **10 for he waited for the city** which has foundations, **whose builder and maker is God.**

By faith Abraham never got attached to this world
God promised something better/He believed/Lived like it...

Transient Alter Builder with a Vertical Perspective

Genesis 12:8 [Abe] moved from [Shechem] to the mountain east of Bethel, and he **pitched his tent** with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he **built an altar** to the Lord and **called on the name of the Lord**.

Genesis 13:18 Then Abram **moved his tent**, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and **built an altar there to the Lord**.

Abe's only real estate? A family gravesite
By faith he waited for that city which has Foundations/Builder/Maker is God

Hebrews 13:14 For here **we have no continuing city**, but **we seek the one to come**.

Revelation 21:10 [The angel] carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the **great city, the holy Jerusalem**, descending out of heaven from God,

By faith elderly Abraham AND Sarah believed they could/would have a son

11 By faith Sarah herself also **received strength to conceive** seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, **because she judged Him faithful who had promised**.

By faith Sarah believed God: He will be my strength in childbirth
She judged Him faithful who had promised...Not right away

Genesis 17:17 Then Abraham fell on his face and **laughed**, and said in his heart, "Shall a *child* be born to a man who is **one hundred years old**? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a *child*?" ¹⁸ And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"

Genesis 18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had **passed the age of childbearing**. ¹² Therefore Sarah **laughed** within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" ¹³ And the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' ¹⁴ **Is anything too hard for the Lord?** At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." ¹⁵ But Sarah denied *it*, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "**No, but you did laugh!**"

Eventually they reasoned according to God's revealed character
By faith Isaac [Laughter] was born!

Genesis 21:5 Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶ And Sarah said, "**God has made me laugh**, and **all who hear will laugh with me**." ⁷ She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children?..."

God said. Abe and Sarah believed.
We the children of faith are the result...

12 Therefore **from one man**, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

- **Father of our Faith:** Salvation by Faith
- **Ishmael:** Child of the flesh
- **Isaac:** Child of Promise...

Romans 4:13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was **not** to Abraham or to his seed **through the law**, but **through the righteousness of faith**. 14 For if those who are **of the law are heirs, faith is made void** and the promise made of no effect, 15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression. 16 Therefore **it is of faith that it might be according to grace**, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all 17 [as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations"] in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who **gives life to the dead** and **calls those things which do not exist as though they did**; 18 who, **contrary to hope, in hope believed**, so that he [Abe] became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." 19 And **not being weak in faith**, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 **He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief**, but was **strengthened in faith**, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Faith is believing God at His Word

Faith is waiting/acting in confidence/anticipation of His Word coming to pass

James 2:23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And **he was called the friend of God**.

IV. Faith in our Heavenly Hope

13 These all **died in faith, not having received the promises**, but having seen them afar off **were assured of them**, embraced them and **confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth**.

These OT Saints died/Did not go to Heaven

Waited while on earth/Waited in Paradise/Then the Door opened/2 Walked in

Luke 23:42 Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." 43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today **you will be with Me in Paradise**."

Strangers/Pilgrims on Earth not receiving the Promise of Heaven
Received the Promise after the Cross

14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they **seek a homeland**.

Genesis 47:9 [Jacob to Pharaoh] The days of the years of **my pilgrimage** are one hundred and thirty years... and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of **their pilgrimage**."

1 Chronicles 29:15 [David] For **we are aliens and pilgrims before You...**

Psalms 39:12 [David] "Hear my prayer, O Lord, And give ear to my cry; Do not be silent at my tears; For I am a **stranger with You, A sojourner**, as all my fathers were.

1 Peter 1:17b [Peter] ...conduct yourselves throughout the **time of your stay here** in fear...

1 Peter 2:11 [Peter] Beloved, I beg you as **sojourners and pilgrims**, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul...

15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore **God is not ashamed to be called their God**, for He has prepared a city for them.

When God says He has a city waiting for us and we believe it and act accordingly here on earth He is not ashamed of His kids but pleased. Are we acting as if we don't believe Him by rooting ourselves in this world? God is ashamed of those who do that. [NJC]

John 14:2 In **My Father's house are many mansions**; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.**

V. Faith of the Patriarchs

17 **By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac**, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," 19 concluding that **God was able to raise him up**, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

God promised Abraham a son that would provide descendants numerous as the stars
God now tells Abraham to kill that son before even one descendant is born.

Faith reasons according to God's character
If God asked me to kill him, he must be able to raise him from the dead

Genesis 22:4 Then on the **third day** Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." ... 8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together... **11 But the Angel of the Lord called** to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." 12 And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, **from Me.**"

20 **By faith Isaac blessed Jacob** and Esau concerning things to come

By faith Isaac spoke of Jacob whom God loved/Esau whom God hated
Revealing NT Truth: Spiritual man vs Fleshly man

21 By **faith Jacob**, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. 22 **By faith Joseph**, when he was dying, **made mention** of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions **concerning his bones**.

By faith even while in Egypt
Jacob and Joseph believe God for a homeland

Genesis 50:25 Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and **you shall carry up my bones from here**."

Exodus 13:19 And **Moses took the bones of Joseph** with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall **carry up my bones from here with you**."

VI. Faith of Moses

23 [700 years later] **By faith Moses**, when he was born, **was hidden** three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were **not afraid of the king's command**.

Pharaoh commanded all Hebrew boys to be killed at birth
By Faith Moses parents were not afraid of Pharaoh

By faith they believed God had a purpose for their son
By faith they acted by hiding Moses for 3 months

Faith is waiting/acting in anticipation of the promise being realized
Pharaoh daughter finds Moses/Moses Mother raises him/God is glorified

24 **By faith Moses**, when he became of age, **refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter**, 25 **choosing rather to suffer affliction** with the people of God than to enjoy the passing [lit. temporary] pleasures of sin, 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

By Faith Moses refused the temporary pleasures of this life
By faith Mose chose the temporary afflictions of the world to please Jesus
By faith he looked forward to the eternal reward of Jesus

27 **By faith** he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. 28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

▪ **Moses Faith in Action**

1. Not fearing man/Fearing God

2. Enduring by seeing Him who is invisible
3. Forsaking the world
4. Obeying God even when the world is pressing in...

Romans 8:18 ...I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with **the glory which shall be revealed in us.**

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our **light affliction**, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more **exceeding and eternal weight of glory...**

2 Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

29 By faith [Israel] passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

By faith Israel walked on dry land in between two walls of water
Moses now vindicated/validated by God for his faith

VII. Faith of the Overcomers

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. **31 By faith the harlot Rahab** did not perish with those who did not believe [lit. were disobedient], when she had received the spies with peace.

- **By faith** Joshua obeyed God's unusual instructions
- **By faith** Joshua's army obeyed Joshua
- **By faith** Rahab believed God gave Israel the land/Acted on it by protecting spies

Joshua 2:9 [Rahab protects the spies] ...and said to the men: "**I know that the Lord has given you the land...**

Joshua 6:20b ...and the people shouted with a great shout, that the **wall fell down flat.** Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

Rahab was saved by Grace alone through Faith alone in Christ alone
In the genealogy of Jesus

32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: **33 who through faith** subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, **34** quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. **35** Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. **36** Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. **37** They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted,

were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in* dens and caves of the earth.**39 And all these**, having obtained a **good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise**, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect **apart from us.**

Faith of the Overcomers

They looked forward/We look back but...
We are all made complete by the fulfilled promise of Jesus Christ

We please God by believing God
Believing God is called faith

1. Faith is simply believing God at His Word
2. Faith is waiting/acting in confidence/anticipation of His Word coming to pass
3. Faith is access to God's Promises
4. Faith is reasoning according to God's revealed character

1 John 5:4 And this is the victory that has overcome the world—**our faith**. **5 Who is he who overcomes the world**, but **he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God**