

## "Faith That God Rewards"

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### Intro:

**1 Cor 9:24,26** Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize... 2 Tim 4:7; Heb 12:1-2; Phil 2:12-13; Eph 2:8-10

"One of the most striking evidences of sinful human nature lies in the universal propensity for downward drift." **D. A. Carson**

"Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning. Earning is an attitude. Effort is an action. Grace does not just have to do with forgiveness of sins alone." **Dallas Willard**

### What is Faith that saves?

**Heb 10:39** *But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.*

**Heb 11:1** *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*

**Faith: "A confidence grounded in reality."**

**Heb 11:6** *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

**Main Idea:** Contrary to popular belief, biblical faith is simple and accessible to all believers, regardless of maturity or past failures. Faith that God rewards is simply **trusting Him enough to \_\_\_\_\_ what He \_\_\_\_\_**, no more, no less.

### I. The Faith That God Rewards

Hebrews 11 recounts people like Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses and others who obeyed clear commands from God. Their actions were responses to direct revelation. They trusted and acted—not blindly, but based on God's clear direction.

### II. Two Key Words: DO and SAYS

Every faith hero in Hebrews 11 did something because God said it. Faith is not impulsive risk or mystical intuition. It's simple obedience to clear commands, mostly found in Scripture

## III. Six False Definitions of Faith

1. **Risk-Taking** Risk by itself is not faith. Faith involves risk only when God commands the action. Otherwise, it's foolishness, not spirituality. Pro 19:13; 22:3; Luke 14
2. **Positive Thinking** Optimism isn't biblical faith. Believing something will work out doesn't make it so. Faith is action on God's promises, not emotion or mindset.
3. **Absence of Fear** Courage isn't the absence of fear but obedience despite fear. Even Jesus and Gideon feared but obeyed. Fear is not sin—disobedience is. Most believers struggle with fear.
4. **Absence of Doubt** Doubt doesn't disqualify faith. Obeying while doubting is greater faith than acting when sure of success. The early church doubted yet prayed—and God answered. Act 7
5. **Believing the Right Facts** Intellectual belief is not saving faith. Even demons believe theology correctly. Faith must result in action, not mere agreement.
6. **Irrational Behavior** Obedience may look irrational, but it's not if God commands it. True faith is not blind or reckless; it's the most rational act when God speaks.

### Conclusion: Faith Is Doing What God Says:

Many in Hebrews 11 had moral failures—liars, adulterers, cowards—yet were honored for trusting God. Faith is not about spiritual elite status, but about obeying God even with small faith.

Biblical faith is actionable. It's not hype, emotion, or personality-driven. It's choosing obedience—plain and simple. A spiritual six-year-old can do this. So can you! *"We do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved."*

### **Reflect / Group Discussion Questions**

1. How does the pastor's definition of faith as 'trusting God enough to do what he says' challenge or align with your own understanding of faith?
2. In what ways might our cultural definitions of faith (like risk-taking or positive thinking) be hindering our spiritual growth or obedience to God?
3. Why is it encouraging to know that fear or doubt doesn't disqualify faith?
4. How does the example of biblical figures like Gideon, who acted in faith despite fear and doubt, encourage you in your own spiritual journey?
5. Can you recall a time when you obeyed God even though it didn't make sense? What happened?
6. Which of the six false definitions of faith have you been most influenced by? Why?
7. Why do you think risk-taking is so often confused with faith?
8. How can we distinguish between God's clear direction and our own desires?
9. What Scripture command are you struggling to obey right now? What might obedience look like?
10. What does the sermon reveal about how God views "heroes of faith"?
11. How can we help each other live out this simple definition of faith in our groups or community?
12. In what ways do modern cultural values distort our understanding of biblical faith?
13. What next step is God clearly calling you to take, even if it's scary or unclear?