

## The Gift of Faith

### Hebrews 11:1-6

#### **Introduction:**

- A. Welcome and Scripture reader
- B. Review Alan's kick off:
- C. Today: The Gift of Faith
- D. Faith is literally everywhere in the Bible.
- E. Whatever faith is I need it and want as much of it as possible.

#### **I Defined by Faith/Defining Faith - 11:1-2 *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.***

- A. These verses are less about providing a definition of faith and lean more toward how faith defines one's life.

#### **B. *"Faith is"*–**

- 1. The word for faith means more than just mental assent but of something that defines who you are as walk in this world.
- 2. Carries the idea of implanted conviction that even though challenged does not waiver.

#### **C. *"Sure of what we hope for" (NIV84) – assurance (NIV) confidence (ESV)"***

- 1. Comes from a compound word for substructure or what would we would call a foundation.
- 2. In other words our implanted conviction is based on a solid foundation.

#### **D. *"Certain of what we do not see"***

- 1. This word is an interesting word. It is only used twice in the noun form and more frequently in the verb form.
- 2. The verb form is translated reproofing or rebuking. Which eans to correct ot he point that I give up one belief and accept the truth being presented.
- 3. The noun form means there is a body of overwhelmingly convincing truth that dispels all arguments against it.

4. *“Certain of what we do not see”* in other words can be said “There is a body of evidence so convincing that I am compelled to believe in something I cannot see”.

E. *“This is what the ancients were commended for”* –

1. The word for commended is where we get our word martyr which has become synonymous with persecution because of their testimony.
2. At its most basic it means one who gives testimony or witness to something.
3. The ancient people gained God’s approval by giving testimony to their faith in an invisible God to a world consumed with visible, human defined realities.

F. A few premises or starting points.

1. Faith is best defined when we are defined by faith. It’s easier to point to a person’s faithful life and behavior than it is to quote a dictionary definitions.
  - a. While essential to have for salvation and holy in this world, it’s not essential (or even possible) to have a black and white definition. Sometimes the answer is “because I have faith in God”.
  - b. A life lived defined by faith is the faith defined for all to see
2. Faith is multilayered journey – the more it grows the deeper our roots in Christ get.
3. Faith has a bit of irony about it - The more I grow in faith, the more I realize how far I have to go.
4. The more mature our faith become, the more like children we become. It’s what Jesus said we need to become like.

## II Life Defined Faith...11:3-6

A. **A life defined by faith understand our place in this world. 11:3 - *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.***

1. Starts at the beginning with creation
2. In other words “There is a God and I am not him”
3. Certain that something is more and behind than what we can see. I am not the biggest things in the universe

4. This is foundational. The focus of our approach unfortunately has been to make humanity the center of it all. In reality it starts and ends with God.
  5. What we don't know or understand bolsters our faith in that there is something behind what I can't explain.
  6. On a day to day basis, we say we believe but often act like we don't. That's why we keep growing in this gift of faith. Faith exposes my hypocrisy.
- B. A life defined by faith is sacrificial - 11:4 – *By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.***
1. Abel brought his sacrifice to God from a right heart. We still speak of it today.
  2. Hebrews 13:15 - *Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name.*
- C. A life defined by faith changes the direction of our journey - 11:5 – *By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: "He could not be found, because God had taken him away." For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. 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.***
1. Faith changes the direction of our journey - we walk in such a way as to seek God and please God, not ourselves.
  2. Proverbs 3:5-8 - *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.*
  3. Our journey is in this world and, like Enoch, beyond this world.
- D. A life defined by faith is obedient 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. 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 is in keeping with faith.*

1. Faith leads to obedience not necessarily understanding.
2. Faith isn't what is seen or even realized in the present tense.
3. Faith is fully defined and realized in our life when it is upon and experienced.
4. Often times fully realized in retrospect. Those moments when we look back and see what God was doing.
5. Sometimes that obedience leads us to doing crazy things. Such as building boat nowhere near an ocean and when rain was unknown.
6. James 2 says a faith that does follow through with action or obedience is a dead faith.

### **Conclusion:**

A. No King but King Jesus.

B. By faith:

1. We believe an eternal, all powerful, all knowing, non-material, being created something from nothing.
2. We believe that we are dependent on this unseen, though not unknown, being to sustain our existence.
3. We believe that in Jesus (who is God is flesh) this unseen God made dwelling with us and in us so our dwelling is and will be with him.
4. We believe He was born King Jesus,
5. We believe when he gave his life for our redemption, he was mocked as King Jesus.
6. We believe he rose from the dead he was vindicated as King Jesus.
7. We believe he is over sin, grave and life.
8. We believe and we bow a knee to that King now but one day all will bow a knee and every tongue confess he is King Jesus. The key is to do it now.
9. We believe that changes how we think and live in this world.
10. King Jesus is who we place our faith in. He is the only one worthy of our faith.

C. Where is your faith?

D. Offer invite...