

Lesson 5

Defining Your Faith

Have we made our faith personal?

Introduction

NOW FAITH IS THE ASSURANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE CONVICTION OF THINGS NOT SEEN.

I believe I have made the definition of Hebrews 11:1 too easy for most of my life. What was the writer saying? Was he giving us a simple definition, or was he saying this is what it should be for you and what it has been for all the faithful from the beginning?

Hebrews 11, a masterpiece of biblical text, tells us how true faith impacted the actions of the people of old. *What did faith lead them to do?* What was it that they had inside of them that compelled their actions of faith? Maybe our problem with faith is that we see it as knowledge. *What we know is our faith.*

However, the real question is: have we made our faith personal? “By faith” is a statement that explains the reason why Abraham was compelled to leave his homeland. It drove Abel to offer an acceptable sacrifice and Samson to destroy the enemies of God. What is in us that compels us to act in certain ways?

The definition of faith states that faith is based on what one hopes for and feels in one's heart.

Below are 41 verses from the Old and New Testaments that discuss what people think in their hearts.

Read them and consider the power and plans in your heart.

- Genesis 8:21 - When the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, he said to himself, “I will never again curse the ground because of human beings, even though the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth onward. And I will never again strike down every living thing as I have done.
- Genesis 17:17 - Abraham fell facedown. Then he laughed and said to himself, “Can a child be born to a hundred-year-old man? Can Sarah, a ninety-year-old woman, give birth?”
- Exodus 4:14 - Then the LORD’s anger burned against Moses, and he said, “Isn’t Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, he is on his way now to meet you. He will rejoice when he sees you.
- Exodus 35:34 - He has also given both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach others.
- Deuteronomy 29:19 - When someone hears the words of this oath, he may consider himself exempt, thinking, ‘I will have peace even though I follow my own stubborn heart.’ This will lead to the destruction of the well-watered land as well as the dry land.
- 1 Samuel 21:12 - David took this to heart and became very afraid of King Achish of Gath,
- 1 Samuel 27:1 - David said to himself, “One of these days I’ll be swept away by Saul. There is nothing better for me than to escape immediately to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me everywhere in Israel, and I’ll escape from him.”

- 2 Samuel 27:7 - since you, LORD of Armies, God of Israel, have revealed this to your servant when you said, “I will build a house for you.” Therefore, your servant has found the courage to pray this prayer to you.
- 1 Kings 10:24 - The whole world wanted an audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom that God had put in his heart.
- 1 Kings 12:26 - Jeroboam said to himself, “The kingdom might now return to the house of David.
- 1 Chronicles 17:25 - Since you, my God, have revealed to your servant that you will build him a house, your servant has found courage to pray in your presence.
- 2 Chronicles 9:23 - All the kings of the world wanted an audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.
- 2 Chronicles 32:31 - When the ambassadors of Babylon’s rulers were sent to him to inquire about the miraculous sign that happened in the land, God left him to test him and discover what was in his heart.
- Esther 6:6 - When the ambassadors of Babylon’s rulers were sent to him to inquire about the miraculous sign that happened in the land, God left him to test him and discover what was in his heart.
- Esther 7:5 - King Ahasuerus spoke up and asked Queen Esther, “Who is this, and where is the one who would devise such a scheme?”
- Psalm 10:6 - He says to himself, “I will never be moved— from generation to generation I will be without calamity.”
- Psalm 10:11 - He says to himself, “God has forgotten; he hides his face and will never see.”
- Psalm 14:1 - The fool says in his heart, “There’s no God.” They are corrupt; they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good.
- Psalm 15:2 - The one who lives blamelessly, practices righteousness, and acknowledges the truth in his heart—
- Psalm 37:31 - The one who lives blamelessly, practices righteousness, and acknowledges the truth in his heart—
- Psalm 53:1 - The fool says in his heart, “There’s no God.” They are corrupt, and they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good.
- Psalm 55:21 - His buttery words are smooth, but war is in his heart. His words are softer than oil, but they are drawn swords.
- Proverbs 6:14 - He always plots evil with perversity in his heart; he stirs up trouble.
- Proverbs 23:7 - For as he thinketh within himself, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; But his heart is not with thee.
- Proverbs 26:25 - When he speaks graciously, don’t believe him, for there are seven detestable things in his heart.
- Isaiah 10:7 - But this is not what he intends; this is not what he plans. It is his intent to destroy and to cut off many nations.

- Isaiah 44:19 - No one comes to his senses; no one has the perception or insight to say, “I burned half of it in the fire, I also baked bread on its coals, I roasted meat and ate. Should I make something detestable with the rest of it? Should I bow down to a block of wood?”
- Ezekiel 14:4 - “Therefore, speak to them and tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD says: When anyone from the house of Israel sets up idols in his heart and puts his sinful stumbling block in front of himself, and then comes to the prophet, I, the LORD, will answer him appropriately. I will answer him according to his many idols,
- Ezekiel 14:7 - For when anyone from the house of Israel or from the aliens who reside in Israel separates himself from me, setting up idols in his heart and putting his sinful stumbling block in front of himself, and then comes to the prophet to inquire of me, I, the LORD, will answer him myself.
- Daniel 1:8 - Daniel determined that he would not defile himself with the king’s food or with the wine he drank. So he asked permission from the chief eunuch not to defile himself.
- Daniel 8:25 - He will cause deceit to prosper through his cunning and by his influence, and in his own mind he will exalt himself. He will destroy many in a time of peace; he will even stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be broken—not by human hands.
- Obadiah 1:3 - Your arrogant heart has deceived you, you who live in clefts of the rock in your home on the heights, who say to yourself, “Who can bring me down to the ground?”
- Matthew 5:28 - But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
- Matthew 13:19 - When anyone hears the word about the kingdom and doesn’t understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the one sown along the path.
- Matthew 24:48 - But if that wicked servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delayed,’
- Mark 11:23 - Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.
- Luke 12:45 - But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and starts to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk,
- 1 Corinthians 7:37 - But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and starts to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk,
- 2 Corinthians 9:7 - Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver.

Make a list of what you have placed in your heart. Be aware if your heart is not where it should be, it is impossible to please God.

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.

– Hebrews 11:6

1. What are some good things that are placed in your heart?

2. What are some bad things you have placed in your heart? Please do not write them down, but be honest about things in your heart that make you struggle spiritually.

3. What is the solution for a strong faith?

4. Let me warn you: “This discussion may be emotional.”