

Hebrews Pt 17 “Faith That Pleases God”

CENTRAL QUESTION:

What does true biblical faith look like, and how can we imitate those who pleased God through their faith?

I. THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH (Hebrews 11:1-3)

Key Scripture: Hebrews 11:1 - "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Understanding Faith:

- Faith is more than just believing something exists
- Faith requires assurance (substance) of things hoped for
- Faith demands evidence (conviction) of things not seen
- True faith is radically free from the love of this world

The Purpose of Hebrews 11:

- God gave us examples to imitate (Hebrews 6:11-12)
- We are called to be followers (imitators) of those who through faith and patience inherit promises
- Remember and follow the faith of those who spoke God's Word over you (Hebrews 13:7)

II. EXAMPLES OF FAITH TO IMITATE

A. ABEL - Faith That Pleases Through Right Motives (v. 4)

- Offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain
- Did it with the right heart, not just right actions
- Obtained witness that he was righteous
- Lesson: It's not just about doing something, but HOW we do it

B. ENOCH - Faith That Walks With God (v. 5-6)

- Walked with the Lord continuously
- Was translated without seeing death
- Had testimony that he pleased God
- Key Truth: "Without faith it is impossible to please Him"

Requirements for Pleasing God:

1. Come to God believing that He IS (not was, but IS)
2. Believe He rewards those who diligently seek Him
3. Walk in daily relationship with Him

C. NOAH - Faith That Obeys In Hard Times (v. 7)

- Warned of things not yet seen
- Built an ark in obedience despite mockery
- Saved his household through faith
- Became heir of righteousness

Lessons from Noah:

- Faith acts even when it doesn't make sense
- Faith perseveres through opposition and ridicule
- Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord through trust

D. ABRAHAM AND SARAH - Faith That Trusts God's Promises (v. 8-12)

- Left everything not knowing where he was going
- Lived as stranger and pilgrim on earth
- Received strength to conceive beyond natural ability
- Looked for a city whose builder and maker is God

E. MOSES - Faith That Chooses God Over Worldly Pleasure (v. 23-28)

- Parents had faith to hide him despite king's command
- Refused to be called son of Pharaoh's daughter
- Chose to suffer with God's people rather than enjoy sin's pleasures

- Esteemed reproach of Christ greater than Egypt's treasures
- Kept the Passover by faith

F. RAHAB - Faith That Saves (v. 31)

- A harlot who believed and was saved
- Hung onto the scarlet thread of hope
- Received the spies in peace
- Mentioned in the Hall of Faith despite her past

Other Heroes Mentioned (v. 32-38):

- Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets
- They subdued kingdoms, obtained promises, stopped lions' mouths
- Some experienced victory, others faced torture and death
- All pleased God through faith

III. WHAT TRUE FAITH DOES

Faith Believes God Can Do Anything:

- Believes He can move in any situation
- Trusts He can heal any sickness
- Knows He can save any family member
- Understands nothing is too far gone for God

Faith Follows God's Voice:

- Those who are His know His voice
- Faith listens and obeys even when it's difficult
- Faith says "Here I am, Lord, use me"

Faith Is Exercised:

- Like muscles, faith must be used or it diminishes
- Coming to church exercises faith

- Raising hands in worship strengthens faith
- Prayer builds faith stronger and stronger

IV. THE BETTER PROMISE (Hebrews 11:39-40)

The Old Testament Saints:

- Obtained good testimony through faith
- Did not receive the promise in their lifetime
- Looked forward to it from afar

God's Better Thing For Us:

- The New Covenant through Jesus Christ
- Salvation by grace through faith
- Not of ourselves, it is the gift of God
- They without us should not be made perfect

V. LIVING BY FAITH TODAY (Practical Application)

Daily Faith Walk:

- Find someone whose faith you can imitate
- Exercise your faith through worship, prayer, and obedience
- Come to God when times are hard, not just when things are good
- Trust God is working even when you can't see it

When Facing Trials:

- Trials won't seem as bad when viewed through faith
- Burdens become lighter with faith
- Lift your hands and say "I can see it now, Lord"
- Remember: God turns what was meant for evil into good

Responding to God's Call:

- Answer when He knocks on your heart
- Don't worry about what others think
- Follow God's voice, not people's opinions
- Trust that God wants to do something good in your life

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Faith is not just an emotion - it's proof, truth, and evidence of God's work in our lives. We must believe that God IS, trust His promises, and follow the examples of those who pleased Him through radical faith, knowing that He has provided something better for us through Jesus Christ.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- Who in your life demonstrates faith you can imitate?
- What situation are you facing that requires you to trust God without seeing the outcome?
- How can you exercise your faith this week?
- Are you listening to and obeying God's voice in your life?

Scripture References for Further Study: Hebrews 11:1-40 | Hebrews 6:11-12 | Hebrews 13:7 | Hebrews 10:34 | Genesis 5:24 | Genesis 6-9 | Psalm 139:7-10