

## “Commendable Faith (Part 3)”

Hebrews 11 points out that when we believe God and act in ways that are consistent with what we believe, then we please God and we are commended for our faith, and we will end up in God’s “Hall of Fame” in heaven! Faith is all-important, and when you have genuine faith it will show up in your actions. Let’s look at Hebrews 11:13-21 and see how these men and women of old believed God and put their faith into action. *“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. <sup>14</sup> For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. <sup>15</sup> And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, <sup>18</sup> of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called,’ <sup>19</sup> concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. <sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. <sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.”*

From these examples of commendable faith let’s consider three truths. **First** of all, having commendable faith means ***you seek an eternal homeland***. It’s the ultimate act of faith to see our real home (our permanent dwelling place) as in the eternal hereafter. It’s true what they say, *this world is not my home I’m just passing through*. During our temporary and brief stay here our deepest longings must always be for our forever homeland in heaven. **Secondly**, having commendable faith means ***you pass the tests of faith***. Just as Abraham passed the test of faith God presented to him in Genesis 22, so we also need to do anything God asks us to do. Our faith will be tested. Life really is one test after another. Will you waver when you’re tested? Will you back down from your beliefs or change your beliefs when the pressure’s on? Or will you stand strong in faith? While we value and use the intellect God gave us, it must bow in submission to faith. To a person with commendable faith things don’t have to make “human sense” or “add up.” To such a person faith comes down to trusting God, believing God, and obeying God. **Third**, having commendable faith means ***you plant seeds of promise (that you believe will one day sprout into reality) by pronouncing blessings over every area of your life***. A blessing is a prayerful wish or desire. When you pronounce a blessing, as of yet the things that you are wishing for are probably still an unfulfilled desire. But you pronounce these blessings by faith, believing that one day these prayerful desires will come to fruition. Just like Isaac and Jacob blessed their descendants in regard to their futures, we can do the same. One of the most powerful ways to see desires fulfilled is to pronounce blessings, by faith.

### Discussion Guide/Action Steps

1. Look up and listen to Petra’s song entitled, “Not of This World.”
2. I invite you to make this declaration: *I may not understand, but I believe.*

3. What areas are you having trouble trusting God in? In what areas of your life are you allowing “human understanding” to take precedence over the ways of the Lord?
4. Using the Bible as your guide, why don't you come up with some blessings that you can pronounce over the different areas of your life?