

## UNDERSTANDING FAITH

Hebrews 11:1-6

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** All through the Bible there is talk about "faith" and there are examples given of many who exercised great "faith." "Faith" is something that brings one ultimately to God and that person finds favor with God. How can a person understand "faith"? There are several aspects to really getting a clear concept of just what "faith" is.

### I. WHAT DOES "FAITH" MEAN?

1. *Hebrews 11:1* is the ONLY place in the Bible that actually defines "faith."
  - *"...Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen..."*
2. "Faith" is an act of the mind and heart.
  - Believing something and having the assurance and conviction that it is true.
  - Faith is trusting and actually having all that God is.
  - Faith is believing and having all that God says.
  - Faith is having confidence in and having all that God is and says.
  - Faith is hoping for something and having it because God has promised it.
  - Faith is knowing what is real.
  - Faith is experiencing what is real.
  - Faith is having what is real.
3. "Faith" is not:
  - "I think so or I hope so..."
  - "It may be so but it also may not be so..."
  - "It might be true, then again it might not be true..."

### II. FAITH HAS REWARDS

1. *Hebrews 11:2*
  - *"...For by it the elders obtained a good report..."*
2. Great men of God of the past believed and followed God for God had so much more to offer than the world for His promises were true.
3. God looks after and cares for those who have faith, giving victory over worldly enemies, even death.
  - God fulfills His promises to the faithful.
  - *John 3:15-16; 5:24*
4. Having faith pleases God and in God's way, He will honor the faithful.

### III. THE FIRST STEP IN FAITH IS TO BELIEVE THAT GOD DID CREATE THE WORLD

1. *Hebrews 11:3*
  - *"...Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear..."*
2. The starting point for a Christian's faith is understanding that God did create the world and then:
  - The Bible, the Word of God, the written revelation of God
  - The Lord Jesus Christ being the living revelation of God.
  - The witness of the Holy Spirit who indwells every believer.
3. How can the Christian be sure about what he/she believes?
  - He/she can look around at the world and see that it is real.
  - He/she can read the teachings and promises of the Bible.

- He/she can know the Lord Jesus Christ by studying what the Bible says about His life.
  - He/she can see the work of the Holy Spirit in his/her own life as well as others.
4. The unbeliever does not understand the same as the believer/Christian:
    - The believer sees and knows God - the unbeliever does not.
    - The believer believes God's Word - the unbeliever does not.
    - The believer believes that God created the world by His word - the unbeliever believes that the world happened from something forced out of nothing.
    - The believer believes that all that is seen is made by God - the unbeliever believes that things just appeared out of nothing, things just happened.
  5. Nobody was present when the world was created but the Christian believes that God did it.
    - The world is proof that SOMEBODY had to make it.
    - The Bible says that God made it.
    - Jesus Christ says that God made it.
    - The Holy Spirit tells the believer that God's Word is true, therefore God made the world.
      - *"...In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth..." Genesis 1:1*
      - *Psalm 24:2; Acts 4:24*

#### IV. FAITH HAS SPIRITUAL POWER

1. *Hebrews 11:4-5*
2. Faith has the power to cause one to be counted as righteous.
  - No one is righteous on his/her own.
  - From the very beginning sin and guilt had to be borne by either the guilty person or by a substitute.
    - *Genesis 4:1-8; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18*
    - *Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3; Galatians 2:16; 3:6; Philippians 3:9*
  - Cain was a religious person but his religion was just a formal approach.
    - A ritual, form, a ceremony.
    - A religion of personal works, doing good, even sacrificing.
    - A religion where a person does his own "thing."
3. Faith has power to enable the believer to walk daily with God and to be delivered from death.
  - Enoch's faith gave him a day by day walk with God and God eventually took him.
  - Enoch's faith gave him his desire to be delivered from death.
    - *Hebrews 2:9*

#### V. BELIEFS NECESSARY FOR FAITH

1. *Hebrews 11:6*
  - *"...But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him..."*
2. It is impossible to please God without faith.
  - A living, active faith, one that knows and follows God, communicating and fellowshiping with God.
  - Without faith a person will never be acceptable to God or by God.
  - Without faith a person will never live with God - ever - anywhere.
  - Without faith a person has to go through life on this earth with all the trials, hardships, sufferings, accidents, diseases and even death all by him/herself.
  - Without faith a person stands alone in this world.
  - Without faith, it is impossible to please God.
    - *John 3:18; 36*

3. A person who comes to God must believe:

- A person must believe in God, that God is and that God exists.
  - Believe that God created the heavens and the earth.
  - Believe that the Word of God, the Bible is of God.
  - Believe in God's Son, Jesus Christ.
- A person must believe that God rewards those who diligently seek Him.
  - Not complacent, half-interested, worldly-minded, pleasure seeker.
  - One who is earnest and endures and perseveres till his/her earthly death.
- As Abel and Enoch were rewarded, so shall ever believer who has faith that pleases God.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. There is but one kind of faith that causes one to be accepted by God.
2. The right kind of faith brings righteousness and rewards from God.
3. The right kind of faith enables one to have God's help in life's troubles and difficulties.
4. The right kind of faith ensures one of having eternal life in Heaven.
5. Do YOU have the right kind of faith?