

FOUNDATION
Faith Toward God – Part Two
Hebrews 11:1-4, 11-13, 32-38

Hebrews 11:1-4, 11-13, 32-38~ ¹Now faith is the ^(a) assurance of things hoped for, the ^(b) conviction of things not seen. ²For by it the ^(c) people of old received their commendation. ³By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. ⁴By faith **Abel** offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than **Cain**, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks ... ¹¹By faith **Sarah** herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. ¹²Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore. ¹³These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth ... ³²And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of **Gideon**, **Barak**, **Samson**, **Jephthah**, of **David** and **Samuel** and the prophets— ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— ³⁸of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

I. Introduction

Good morning, Brothers and Sisters. Please turn with me to Hebrews 6, and we will be reading verses 1 to 3.

Hebrews 6:1-3~

¹Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation
of ^[1]repentance from dead works and
of ^[2]faith toward God, ² and
of instruction about
^[3]washings, the
^[4]laying on of hands, the
^[5]resurrection of the dead, and
^[6]eternal judgment.
³ And this we will do if God permits.

We are continuing our series on FOUNDATION. And of course one of the foundations of the Christian faith is just that ... Faith. Faith is pretty much everything in the Christian Life. Faith is central, and without faith, we do not possess this new life.

1. We cannot be saved without faith.

For one thing, we cannot be saved without faith. That is, we cannot have eternal life if we do not possess a measure of faith. The Bible says that ...

Ephesians 2:8~⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith ...

It is through faith that we have been saved from our sinful state. Faith is the vehicle by which we are redeemed.

2. We cannot continue our Forgiven Life without faith.

We who seeks to live this Christian life must live by faith and not “shrink back”

Hebrews 10:38~³⁸ BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.

If we “shrink back”, that is, if we lose our faith, the Bible tells us that God has no pleasure in us. If we lose our faith, we forfeit our life with the Father.

3. We are unable to please God without faith.

We cannot please God nor bring Him pleasure if we do not have faith. God takes no delight in a person who has no faith.

Hebrews 11:6~⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe [that is, must have faith ... faith in what?] that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

4. We cannot receive blessings and rewards without faith.

And there in that Sacred Text of Hebrews, we see that we cannot even be blessed without faith. God does not reward those who are faithless. To receive from God we must have faith in God.

5. We are unable to pray effectively without faith.

On that thought, we cannot even pray effectively if we do not have faith. Do not expect to receive anything from God nor have God answers our prayer if we do not pray in faith.

James 1:6-7~ ⁶ But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,

6. We are unable to live a life of confidence without faith.

Most of the woes and weariness of life, if not all, is the result of our faithlessness. Jesus rebukes his disciples and says that we are anxious and we worry because we are those who are “of little faith”.

Matthew 6:30-31~ ³⁰ ... You of little faith! ³¹ Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’

Faith is everything. All relationship, whether it be our relationship with God or our relationship with each other, is rooted and grounded in faith. There has to be some measure of trust in one another if we are to have a strong and vibrant relationship.

A marriage relationship will start to fall apart when there is no trust ... no faith. Suspicions begin to rule and replace our loving support without a measure of faith. We start to question everything the other person does if there is no faith in the other person ... no trust.

In our relationship at work or our relationship at Church, confidence in the boss or in a leader and shepherd will fade if there is no faith. When we stop believing in one another is when the relationship starts spiraling downward.

For those who know what is going on in my life, I am having a difficult time with one of my clinics. Almost everyone quit and I am left with a skeleton crew. They have lost confidence in the manager, and quite frankly, so have I. Now I have to step back into the clinic and take a more active role to rebuild ... what? Faith ... Trust ... Confidence.

II. False Faith and True Faith

With faith being one of the foundations, it is important to understand faith and what faith is so that we may have eternal life. We need to understand faith so that we can continue with that eternal life and please God.

It is also important to understand what faith is not. There is big movement in the Church that focuses on faith, but this “faith” is NOT the faith of the Bible. The movement is known as the Faith Movement, or better yet, they are also known as The Word of Faith Movement. And basically, the teachers and pundits of this movement teach that we can create things by our words of faith.

Whatever we speak, if we have faith and confidence in the words that we speak, we can manifest our words and make them a reality. So if we speak words of healing to ourselves or on others, and if we have faith in these words, we will bring about healing. And the converse, if we speak

curses on ourselves, we will bring about that curse. So if I got in trouble with my wife and I say, “I am so dead,” I may bring that about because of the power of faith in my words.

This is NOT the faith of the Bible. It is not having faith in faith nor is it having faith in my words. The biblical faith is faith in God. It is “faith toward God.” Our hope is in God, not in us nor in our words.

Psalm 42:11~¹¹ Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God ...

When our heart is in despair; it is downcast ... when our soul is disturbed ... what do we do? We hope in God.

1 Peter 3:15~¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect

Colossians 1:27~²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Jesus is our hope. He is where we place our trust. So the biblical definition of faith is that:

1. Faith is a Certainty.

That is, we are certain of God and about God. We are assured of Him. It is about God and not about our faith in faith.

2. Faith is a Conviction.

We are convicted and convince of God and who He says He is. Faith is a confidence in God and that He is faithful to His words. It is His words and promises that we are confident in. It is not our words but His.

3. Faith is a Commendation.

It is this type of faith ... a certainty and conviction in God ... that will commend us to Him.

We talked about this last week. So if you missed it, you can go to our YouTube Channel at “Forgiven Life Community Church” to listen to last week’s message or go to our website at ForgivenLifeChurch.org.

III. The Presence of Faith

How do you and I know that we have faith? How do we know that we have true biblical faith? If faith is everything in our Forgiven Life, we want to make sure that our faith is genuine. How can we tell?

Biblical faith will do four positive things in our life. Now, faith is not work. We cannot earn it. However, biblical faith is a faith that works. It does something to us. And in Hebrews 11, the author tells us at least four things that faith does in us.

1. First, faith inspires me to Hope. (Hebrews 11:1)

The Bible says that ...

Hebrews 11:1~ ¹ Now faith is the assurance of *things hoped* for, the conviction of things not seen.

Faith inspires me to hope because faith operates in the things not seen. We know we have faith because that faith anchors us to God's words and promises, even though we do not see them through our natural eyes. We do see, but we see with our faith.

Hebrews 11:13~ ¹³ All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

These heroes of the faith died in faith. They died without seeing the fulfillment of God's promises in their life time. But they see with the eyes of faith something from a distant that God is faithful to what He says. So they are willing to be stranger in this kingdom for a better Kingdom that is to come.

Faith allows us to see something that others without faith do not see. And because we see something that others do not see, we act differently than those without faith. This is what happened to Moses.

Hebrews 11:27~ ²⁷ By faith he [Moses] left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

For those like the king of Egypt, they could not see anything, namely, they could not see God. But Moses saw something. He saw God. He hoped in God. And therefore, he faced the king's wrath to follow after God.

Faith inspires us to hope in God and allows us to see things that are unseen. It is real and not imaginary.

Most people do not know this, but for the past few months, I have been faced with a serve test of faith. Things were falling apart in my life. All my clinics were not doing well. My wife's career took a different turn. I really do not know if I was going to solve these problems. They just seemed to be getting worst. It got so bad that I was feeling a

tremendous about of stress. My head was always hurting. There was something ... a lump ... in my throat that made it hard for me to breathe and swallow. My chest felt like someone had strapped a belt around it and pulled tightly. It was just stressed. I snapped at people around me. I was being taken advantage of.

Then I recalled this passage in the Psalm that changed my outlook.

Psalm 42:5~ ⁵ Why are you in despair, O my soul? And *why* have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him *for* the help of His presence.

And I am reminded to put my hope in God. And then I will praise Him because of the help of His presence. Now I did not see God's help physically. I did not even see the way out naturally. But I started to put my hope in God. I picked up my guitar and praised God. I sang:

“Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise. The city of our God, the holy place ...”.

And the pain in my head and chest began to disappear. The lump in my throat was gone. Faith inspires me to hope in God.

Now I got to confess, the lump in my throat and the pain in my head came back when Monday rolled around. So I again, praise God. Faith is not a onetime deal. It is not, “I have faith in God and all my problems are solved instantaneously.” Faith must be continuous. I had to continue to hope in God and continue to praise Him even though I did not see the end. Even now, I still do not know how to dig myself out of these holes. By I am still going to trust God. I am still going to follow Him and do things that would honor Him. That is faith.

2. Second, faith inspires me to Obey.

Faith motives us to obey God's word.

Hebrews 11:4~ ⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Hebrews 11:4~ ⁷ By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Hebrews 11:4~ ⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Hebrews 11:23-24~ ²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. ²⁴ By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

These men of faith are certain of God and are convicted that God is faithful to His promises and will reward those who seek Him. So they act upon that conviction. They act upon God's word.

Many people think that faith and obedience are contrary to each other. Many people think that if I have faith I do not need to do anything. "All I need to do is just believe that things will work out and do not have to do anything," some people believe.

This is not the entire truth. Yes, faith is believing, and that believing inspires us to obey. Faith is obedience.

Romans 1:5~ ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations,

What we believe will dictate what we will do. Oswald Chamber wrote:

"But if you are living the life of faith you will exercise your right to waive your rights and let God choose for you."¹

We waive our rights to do what is our right. Instead we obey God and do what He chooses for us. Faith inspires us to obey.

3. Third, faith inspires God to Intervene.

Faith not only inspires us. Our faith also inspires God to act and intervene on our behalf.

Hebrews 11:32-35a~ ³² And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed *acts of righteousness*, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received *back* their dead by resurrection; ...

God intervenes for those who have faith. God helps those who put their hope in Him. Some of these interventions are miraculous.

- Shut the mouth of lions

¹ Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest Journal* (Uhrichsville, OH; Barbour and Company, Inc, 1963), May 25.

- Women received back their dead by resurrection
- The weak were made strong

Some of God's interventions are natural.

- People conquered kingdoms
- They performed acts of righteousness
- They escape the edge of the sword

We want all of God's intervening to be miraculous, but that is not how it works. Sometimes God intervenes supernaturally. Most of the time, God uses every day and natural things to intervene.

4. Four, faith inspire me to Endure.

Look with me at verses 35 and following:

Hebrews 11:35b-40~³⁵ ... and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; ³⁶ and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated ³⁸ (*men* of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. ³⁹ And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

I like what one teacher said.

One group of people who have faith escapes the sword and another group of people with the same faith died by the sword. One escapes the fire; others are burned at the stake. Men of faith do not mean they live a life of unbroken tranquility.²

Faith does not mean that we will have everything our way. We give up our right to our rights. It is to trust in God that in the end, the outcome is for our best.

Hebrews 11:39-40~³⁹ And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

Oswald Chamber wrote:

² I forgot who said this. I have this quotation written down in my personal notes but did not notated who said it.

“The great enemy of the life of faith in God is not sin, but the good which is not good enough. The good is always the enemy of the best.”³

Faith, if it is true, biblical faith, will change our life. Faith will affect us in one way or another. Faith, if it is true faith, will work in our life.

IV. The Increase of Faith

With that inspiration in mind, how can I increase my faith? How can I increase my faith so that I may:

- Hope
- Obey
- Endure
- And have God intervene in my life?

Let me give you just two quick ways that we can start doing today.

1. First, Read God’s word. (Romans 10:17)

Romans 10:17~¹⁷ So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

There are many promises in the Bible. But if we do not know them, we would not believe in them. We cannot rest on God’s promises if we do not know what His promises are.

Also remember that faith inspires obedience. The more we obey, the stronger our faith. We cannot obey God if we do not know what to obey. The Bible has a way of speaking to us and inspiring us.

So, here is what we can start doing:

- a. One: purposely set out a consistent time in the day to read our Bible.

My time is in the morning when I wake up. I make a cup of coffee, go to my home office, lock my door, and read and pray. It is the time where I have peace and quiet before my household wakes up. It is the time that I can start my day correctly. It is the time where my mind is focused.

It requires me to set my alarm clock and get up earlier. But increasing our faith by reading God’s word is important enough for me to rise up early.

But for some of you, it might be late at night when the kiddos are asleep. Or maybe you are a night person and that is when you function the best.

³ Ibid.

For others, it may mean taking some time out during your lunch time to read.

b. Two: read the Bible consistently and through

I have a friend who tells me that he only reads those things that he likes. He only reads certain section in the Bible that he enjoys. Well, that is better than nothing. But if you and I want the whole counsel of God, we might want to have a plan whereby we read through the whole Bible.

2. Second, Remember God's faithfulness. (Hebrews 11:11)

Remember Sarah? She is able to live by faith and is counted among the righteous because she considers God faithful to what He has promised.

Hebrews 11:11~ ¹¹By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.

She remembers God. She remembers God's promises. And then there is Mary, the mother of Jesus. She ponders the things that God is doing in her heart.

Luke 2:19~ ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

Luke 2:50-51~ ⁵⁰And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. ⁵¹And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

One of the best ways to remember God's faithfulness is to keep a journal. I have been writing a journal since I was in college. I write everything down. And it is nice to sometimes go back and read what I wrote. It brings back memories of things I have forgotten. It reminds me of the many blessing that I have received and somehow have escaped my mind.

Keep a journal. Start documenting your journal with God.

V. The Blessing

Presider: May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. May the love of our Lord Jesus Christ be unto you.

Congregation: And also to you.