

Hebrews 11:1-16

Week Seventeen

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3. In verse one, the word “assurance” in Greek is *hypostasis*, which has a number of different shades of meaning. Go to Biblegateway.com and look up Hebrews 11:1. Below the verse you can click on *See in all translations*. Write the different words for assurance that are used in different translations.

Digging Deeper: Read the following verse and answer the question”

-How does this verse confirm what our Hebrews author says about faith?

-What are the implications of this truth?

2 Corinthians 5:7 “for we walk by faith, not by sight.”

Picture and Ponder: “This, then, is how faith functions: it makes real to us and gives us possession of things that are hoped for but are not yet part of our experience...Faith makes present and real things that are future and unseen...By faith we live as if things were other than they appear, because of what God has said.”²



Father, forgive me for so often trying to walk by sight when you have called me to walk by faith. Help me to remember, this is the normal life for those who follow you—I won't see, and I won't understand, but help me to trust you anyway!

4. Look up the definition of *commend* and write it here.

5. What brings commendation from God according to verse 2?

For Discussion: What things bring the world's commendation?

6. Our author begins at the beginning in verse 3. What is our foundation for believing the word of God?

-How can this strengthen our faith when we can't see?

For Discussion: How is the faith that the Hebrew's author is describing different than the popular notion of faith as a leap in the dark or blind faith?



We get so disturbed, discouraged, and disheartened when we don't see and understand what God is doing in the world, in our church, in the lives of our loved ones and in our own lives. We forget that this is normal operating procedure in the Christian life. God's whole program is based on faith. Faith lived out in the lives of his children is what pleases him and it is so precious to him that it is the channel for all the blessings he wants to give us. Faith is the beginning, the end and everything in between of the Christian life.

- ❖ J.C. Ryle states, “Faith is the root of a real Christian’s character.” Then he asks, “What is prayer, but faith speaking to God?
What is Christian diligence, but faith at work?
What is Christian boldness, but faith honestly doing its duty?”

Why is this true? How do you see this truth at work in your life?

Day 3- Hebrews 11:4-7

7. How did Abel offer his sacrifice according to verse 4?

-How did God respond to Abel’s offering?

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the questions:

-What did God do in response to the first sin?

-From the example of Abel’s offering and all we’ve learned in Hebrews, what is the only way to approach God?

Genesis 3:6-7,21⁶ “The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. ⁷At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at

their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves...²¹ And the LORD God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife". (NLT)

Genesis 4:1-5 "Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." ² And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. ³ In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴ and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵ but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell".

Picture and Ponder: "If one comes first through faith in Christ and his shed blood, then he can present all the beautiful things he is capable of finding or creating. And God will be pleased by this, because the person does not trust these things for salvation but rather is offering them to God just because he loves him and wants to show affection. It is only on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ that one can come."³

8. What was Enoch commended for in verse 5?

-What about Enoch's life pleased God that verse 6 implies?

9. Underneath each underlined phrase from verse 6 are three explanations of the phrase two true and one false. Put a T by the true statements and an F by the false statements.

For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists

___ Anyone who draws near to God needs to know who God is

___ True worshippers must believe God is who he says he is

___ People of faith must believe in a higher power

He rewards those who seek him

___ God is the Judge to whom we will all answer

___ If you do enough good God will reward you

___ The reward of those who seek God is God himself

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the question:

-What characterized Enoch's life according to these verses?

Genesis 5:21-24 "When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him."

10. According to verse 7, what did Noah do by faith?

-What did he believe that made him obey God and build the ark?

-What was Noah's attitude as he obeyed and built the ark? (ESV)

-What was the final result of Noah's faith?

Picture and Ponder: "[God's] commands are only as hard to obey as his promises are hard to believe."⁴

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses and answer the question:

-How was Noah's life an example of this truth in James?

-If Noah said he believed God, but did not build the ark, what would that show?

James 2:17-18b "So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead... Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

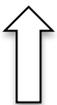


The heroes of faith are recorded for us in the Bible in order to show us, through their lives, how faith works and what faith does and to give us encouragement in our own lives to walk in faith. Abel's faith was demonstrated in his worship or sacrifice. He approached God on God's terms. Enoch's faith was demonstrated in his walk with God. And Noah's faith was demonstrated in his obedience. Their lives paint a picture of the different facets of faith.

- ❖ Are there ways you want to approach God on your own terms? How does this show a lack of faith?

- ❖ Believing God when we cannot see, or believing him when what we can see seems to contradict what God has said, is what pleases God. How does this truth help you as you walk with God?

- ❖ The obedience that pleases God is the obedience that flows from faith. How does obedience spring from faith in your life?



Heavenly Father, living each day by faith is what pleases you. Help me to obey you by faith, help me to serve you by faith, help me to love others by faith.

Day 4- Hebrews 11:8-12

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the question:

-What was Abraham's life like before God called him?

Joshua 24:2b-3 "Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. "

11. What did Abraham do by faith according to verse 8?

-What was hard about what God asked him to do?

For Discussion: Why do you think God did not tell Abraham where he was going?

12. Why did Abraham have to live by faith once he had gotten to the land God had promised to give him according to verse 9?

13. What did living by faith look like in Abraham's life according to verse 10?

14. Why did Abraham's wife, Sarah, believe something so impossible according to verse 11?



The lives of Abraham and Sarah show us what it looks like to live by faith – to be convinced about what they couldn't see, to be sure of things that were promised, even when everything they saw with human eyes spoke to the contrary. We pretty much want to live lives that don't have to trust in God. We want to know the plan. We want the destination plotted on the map. We want to see the logic. We want the exact timeline. And then we will have "faith". But this is not faith. Life with God is life lived by true faith that believes when it doesn't see. This is what pleases God and brings him glory.

- ❖ Abraham obeyed and followed God even though he didn't know where God was leading him. This is courageous obedience. How does courageous obedience make God look good to the world?

- ❖ If you are following God on an unknown path that is hard there is only one thing to do:

*¹⁰ Who among you fears the LORD
and obeys his servant [Jesus]?
If you are walking in darkness,
without a ray of light,
trust in the LORD and rely on your God.
Isaiah 50:10 (NLT)*

- ❖ Verse 11 tells us that Sarah received power because she trusted in God's promise. What do you need God's power for in your life right now? How will you depend on God for this?

For Discussion: Share an example of someone (a Biblical character, missionary, or someone you know) who inspires you to live a life of courageous faith.

Day 5- Hebrews 11:13-16

15. How did all the Old Testament believers who we just read about finish their lives according to verse 13?

-What kind of seeing do you think verse 13 is talking about?

-What helped them persevere in faith according to verse 13?

For Discussion: If we consider ourselves strangers and aliens on this earth how does that help us to seek the things of God? Or to ask the opposite way if we seek the things of God how does that help us consider ourselves strangers and aliens on earth?

16. What would have made Abraham go back to his own land according to verse 15 (See ESV)?



Verse 16 tells us these faithful believers desired something better than this world had to offer. How often do we settle for less than what God has for us because we don't want to do the hard stuff? We settle for the good things this

world gives because we want instant gratification. These faithful saints wanted something better; they wanted what God had prepared for them. So they persevered in faith and the faithfulness of his children made God a proud (in the best sense of the word) Father.

Reflect on the following thoughts:

- ❖ Does impatience prod you to be satisfied with something less if you can have it now? Does laziness prod you to give up if you don't see results right away? How do you see this at work in your life with God?

- ❖ Are your desires more attuned to what this world promises or what God has promised? How does faith play into this?

- ❖ How does what you think about affect the focus of your heart?

- ❖ How does having something to look forward to help you in your everyday life? Does the same hold true if you think about eternity? How does looking forward to the good things God has prepared for you help you to be faithful?

- ❖ Meditate on 1 Corinthians 2:9 *“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”*



Heavenly Father, help me to be preoccupied with eternal things more than the things of this world and to desire you and all that you have for me more than anything else on this earth.

One Thing: Look back over this week's study. Pick one thing that God was stirring in your heart, convicting you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?

¹ Piper, John. Article, Jan. 1, 2007 <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-use-of-hope-in->

² Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Location 4958). Kindle Edition.

³ James Montgomery Boice, Genesis, vol. 1, Creation and Fall (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 201.as quoted in Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Location 8412). Kindle Edition.

⁴ Piper, John The Pleasures of God p.231 Multnomah Books, 1991

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