



Why Faith Is Important

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Introduction:

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

We read in Romans 12:3, that God has given each one of us a measure of faith.

We are called to be people of faith. In the book of Hebrews, the 11th chapter is often referred to as the faith chapter. In this chapter we find many examples of the way people acted that demonstrated their faith.

If we are people of faith then our actions will demonstrate the faith we have.

The people mentioned here moved at God's direction by faith and God led them. They offered sacrificial offerings that they believed God would accept and approve of, by faith. What happened because they listened and obeyed is phenomenal and astounding; those things happened because God was at work. When we hear from God and obey what He says, we move into a higher dimension that what we can accomplish in our human ability and strength.

If I were to ask for a show of hands this morning, I would venture to guess that all of us in this church would indicate by raising our hand that one of the things we really wanted to do in our life was to please God. God will do all we trust Him to do, nothing more and nothing less. Without active faith in our lives, it is not even *possible* to please God.

We speak in terms of walking by faith, not by sight, and in our reference to that journey of faith, there is the hint of movement. When we walk, we defy the law of gravity that holds us in place. When we walk we have to have balance. When we walk we have to have direction and purpose. When we walk we move on from where we have been. The same principles are true with our walk of faith.

I. Principles of Faith

- **We have to find balance.** We need the balance of God's word, the balance of trust and the balance of commitment. When we lose our balance, we fall.
- **We have to have direction.** If I were to walk home from the office, there are several ways I could get there from here, but usually I would walk in the direction my home is located. To have direction, I have to have knowledge of where I am headed. The same is true with a walk of faith. There has to be direction and knowledge of where we are headed in God.

- **A little bit goes a long way.** If you have faith the size of a mustard seed you can say to this mountain, be removed and be cast into the sea and it will obey you.

II. Defying the Laws

There are certain laws that will have to be defied if we are going to walk by faith.

- **The law of sin** that wants to hold us back and keep us trapped from moving into all God has for us. That law will bring us death if we don't defy it and exercise faith to get past it.
- There is the **law of my own limitation.** I am limited by time, space, money, energy, creativity, etc. As a human being there are certain things that limit me. Even my thoughts are limited, but with God all things are possible in the faith realm.
- There is the **law of sight.** Because I see, I believe. If I see it I know it is true, but if I can't see it, I doubt it is real. This is a law that has to be defied. There are times we can't see ahead of the next bend in the road, but the road goes on. By faith when we get to the bend, we will see the direction of the road and keep going.
- There is the **law of comfort** for where I am. At times we are tempted to want to stay right where we are. We do not want to move because of the level of comfort there is in where we are. We see this even on the mount of transfiguration, when Jesus had Peter James and John with Him. After he was transfigured before them, they said, "Let's stay here, build three huts and just hang out here with you Jesus." We must defy the law of comfort and contentment and move beyond that into what God is saying.

When it comes to faith, we don't act because we see; we act because we hear from God. We read the word that tells us faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

All too often when we think about faith, we think of someone blindly following some whim. I knew a per-

son once who honestly thought that every time they thought of something, God was speaking to them. I would caution us that not every thought that enters our mind is from God.

Faith is not doing something blindly. Obedience is the action of faith that has heard God speaking. We trust His voice, we trust His direction, and we trust His foresight. To be a person of faith and walk by faith requires that I learn to listen and cultivate the knowledge of His voice. Jesus said, "My sheep know my voice and they follow me."

I am amazed when I look at the litany of individuals who are mentioned and the tremendous things that happened to them as a result of their hearing from God and acting in faith on what He spoke to them.

Noah acted on what God spoke and built an ark out of obedience and he and his family were saved (Hebrews 11:7).

Abraham acted on what God spoke when he called, and went to a place that he would later receive as an inheritance by faith (Hebrews 11:8).

Abraham acted on what God spoke when he offered Isaac to God as a sacrifice in faith, even though Isaac was a promised son (Hebrews 11:17-19).

Moses and the Israeli people acted on what God spoke and passed through the Red Sea on dry ground (Hebrews 11:29),

Joshua and the people of God acted on what God spoke and they marched around Jericho as God instructed them to do and the walls of the city fell down.

Because they were people of faith, they were persecuted, tortured, ridiculed, imprisoned, jeered at, flogged, stoned, put to death by sword, sawed in two, mistreated and destitute. The world was not worthy of them.

The lies of your flesh and mind would say, because you are struggling or because things go wrong and are not always smooth, there is something wrong with your faith. Don't listen to the lies of the enemy. Just because you walk this faith journey, doesn't mean that everything will be coming up roses. Look at what happened to these brothers and sisters in Christ who have walked before us. They were not

failures. They are heroes. In fact toward the end of the 11th chapter of Hebrews, it indicates that the world was not worthy of them. Their faith was seen and they suffered for their obedience to what God had said to them.

Some people have the mistaken thought that if we are people of faith, then those awful things won't happen to us. There is a thought even among some Christians that there should be no poverty, no ridicule, and no hardship to the people of God. Let me tell you friends, those people are reading from another bible.

III. Faith Blockers

I want to talk to you about some blockers and some faith builders this morning. Lets first look at what blocks our faith.

- **Fear can be a real blockage to faith.** Instead of moving obediently with confidence on what God has spoken, we listen to the lies of our adversary who tells us this won't work, or aren't you foolish, or who do you think you are? Did God really say that to you?
- **Pride can be a real blockage to faith.** The ego can get in the way and become a stumbling block to our obedience. We worry and get concerned about the perception people have of us as a follower of Jesus Christ.
- **Our flesh can be a real blockage to faith.** The flesh is weak. The flesh is limited. The flesh doesn't take into consideration the power and might and limitless ability of the Spirit of God who was present at creation. The flesh says if it is going to get done, I've got to do it. But the word of God says "not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord of Hosts."

IV. Faith Builders

- **Knowledge** – Paul writes and tells Timothy that he knows in whom he has believed. He is convinced that God will guard what He trusted to Him until that day he saw the Lord face to face.

2 Tim. 1:12

That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed,

and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

If we know God's word then God will speak to us from that word that we know. The word is nourishment for our faith.

- **Examples from the past** - God's faithfulness and His consistency is recorded in the scriptures. Clearly God's word gives example after example of how individuals responded to what God said, and what God did that was beyond what was humanly possible.
- **Prayer** is the avenue of communication with God. Prayer is both our talking to God and His talking to us. When we pray, we demonstrate our trust and faith in God to direct us, to answer us, to use us, and to respond to us.

1 John 5:14 -15

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us--whatever we ask--we know that we have what we asked of him.

Our mission here are CLF is to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ within the context of the family of God. For that to happen it involves faith.

I have heard it from those who profess to be followers of Christ from a youngster on up. I want to please God. Pleasing God takes faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith causes us to act in obedience. Faith is the factor that brings us the victory of overcoming the world.

We are instructed in the word to not let the world overtake us. We are not to love it, we are not to live by its standards, and we are not to think like the world. We are in the world but not of it.

1 John 5:4

For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

The world the flesh and the devil are all things that work to destroy our faith and faith walk. Each of these destructive forces against our faith can be overcome and put in their proper place. Faith is the vic-

tory that helps us live in the world, but not be of it.
Faith is referred to as a shield that is used to quench

all the fiery darts of the wicked one. The flesh can
also be overcome by faith.

Conclusion:

So you see why faith is important to the believer. Without faith we can not please God. Without faith we cannot hear from God. Without faith we cannot overcome the world. Without faith we can not be cleansed from our sin. With faith all things become possible.