

Hebrews 11:1-16 By Faith...

We've all probably heard or read this chapter at least once, if not a thousands times.

What it says is straightforward, and simple...but what it speaks is eternal.

It is deep. It is profound. **It is the substance of real belief.**

It is also [the most] excellent commentary on what we've been studying together this past year through Genesis.

Col 2:16-17 NKJV - So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Although the "Old" Testament, the Old Covenant (sacrifice of animals and rituals) was a **shadow** of the new covenant (Jesus sacrificed for us and us sanctified for him)

we do find new covenant faith throughout the entire volume

What is faith?

- complete trust or confidence in someone or something.
- strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual apprehension (understanding, grasp) rather than proof.

But is that really it? Believing is believing without proof?
Sometimes in a relationship...because it's based on trust

But is that really what our faith is? Something we have no proof of?

What do you take on faith?

What is belief?

- an acceptance that a statement is true or that something exists.
- trust, faith, or confidence in someone or something.

Why do we believe? Is it faith? Or is it proof?

Jhn 20:24-31 NKJV - Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand [here], and put [it] into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed [are] those who have not seen and [yet] have believed." And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Can we prove something we believe?

Just because it's fact, doesn't mean we can't still have faith in it

(we have faith our brakes will work every time, because it has happened before, but they could still fail)

Just because some believes in something doesn't make it true

Santa, easter bunny, the promises of a politician, that they look good in that outfit...

Just because some believe it to be fact, doesn't make it fact

"Theory" of evolution, "climate change science," the infomercial promises

When we do believe something it is usually because we trust the person telling us

- A friend or family member who's shown themselves faithful to us
- Out of naivete
- A child with their parents
- An honest mechanic

Or because we've seen it with our own eyes.

With our own eyes, especially our spiritual eyes this morning, let us look to the faith of those who have gone before us, that our faith might be focused

Hebrews 11:1-3

Now faith is...

The substance...

The evidence...

We have physical evidence...it is the faith itself in God's promises

Num 23:19-20 NKJV - "God [is] not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? Behold, I have received [a command] to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.

Having faith in God always leads to a good testimony

A good character

A blessed life

Not name it claim it

A word of faith

So how do we even get faith?

Rom 10:17 NKJV - So then faith [comes] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

But instead, receive the promise's of God BY faith BY the Word of God

The word of God shows us faith that was proven to be in fact and not fiction

Prophets stoned in the OT if they preached a word that didnt' come to pass

Because they caused people to put their faith in things that have no substance

What do the prophets of our day and age tell us to put our faith in?

What sort of substance is there?

A social gospel?

A healthy, wealthy, wise, best life now?

A life without shame of wrong?

Where anything you want to believe is true is true?

Your truth is truth, brother.

WRONG

Truth is not relative. Even if you say truth is relative that proves you don't believe it is, because you're saying there is an absolute truth that truth is not absolute...

God made everything out of nothing. By simply His word.

Don't believe it?

Job 38:1-11 NKJV - Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: "Who [is] this who darkens counsel By words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell [Me], if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy? "Or [who] shut in the sea with doors, When it burst forth [and] issued from the womb; When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; When I fixed My limit for it, And set bars and doors; When I said, 'This far you may come, but no farther, And here your proud waves must stop!'

The truth is, you don't have to believe it.

- But just because you don't believe it doesn't mean it isn't true.
- And just because you believe something doesn't make it true

But when you don't believe something or someone it's because you believe someone else.

Your whole worldview is dictated by what you believe and conversely don't believe.

I love that particles we cannot see, and are so tiny and far apart, like the planets, somehow, from our perspective become something solid, and visible.

And I think that's a lot like god's perspective vs. our perspective.

We're so tiny, so small, so close to a situation in our lives, that we can't even see the electrons orbiting (or waving) around us. We can't even see the substance that we're in or made of or next to in the molecule...but from God's perspective, the situation is solid, it's firm, it's coming together.

And that's what faith is. Seeing things the way God sees them. From His perspective.

2Ki 6:14-17 NKJV - Therefore he [King of Syria] sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who [are] with us [are] more than those who [are] with them." And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain [was] full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Do you want to see as God sees? Pray

Pray that he would open your eyes.

Your friend's eyes.

Your family's eyes.

[pray]

:4

By faith...Abel offered

I think we can even jump back here to Adam and Eve, that even after Abel was killed, they still had faith that God's promise would come still, through another son yet to be born and had Seth.

The sacrifice itself didn't make Abel righteous, but instead it showed that Abel was righteous!
The fact that you come to God shows that God is working in you!

God doesn't delight in burn offering, but obedience!

Obedience is the evidence of relationship.

It was God testifying of his gifts...Abel had faith in God's sacrifice and through his own sacrifice, God testified that Abel was righteous

Act 7:55-56 NKJV - But he [Stephen], being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

God was standing, testifying...

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego...

:5-6

By faith...Enoch taken

Enoch taken because he pleased God...by faith!

Enoch's faith drew him closer to the Lord

Jas 4:8 NKJV - Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse [your] hands, [you] sinners; and purify [your] hearts, [you] double-minded.

The church that pleases God (that has faith in him) will be raptured.
This will be a testimony to the dying world that they were right and God is right.

But the world will not believe. They will put their faith in what they can see... a man who stands up and promises peace.

1Co 2:14 NKJV - But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned.

Does your faith or belief testify that you are natural or spiritual?

From where have you been born? Your faith will be the evidence.

How can we believe God if we haven't come to Him?

:7

By faith...Noah...divinely warned...moved with fear...prepared

For the saving of his household
It was his faith that saved his family

Jas 2:14-18 NKJV - What [does it] profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what [does it] profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

It also condemned the world...because it revealed that they didn't have faith!

2Co 2:15-16 NKJV - For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one [we are] the aroma of death [leading] to death, and to the other the aroma of life [leading] to life. And who [is] sufficient for these things?

:8-10

By faith...Abraham obeyed, went out

Receive the inheritance

ONLY BY FAITH

Not knowing exactly where he was going on the map...but he knew exactly where he was going.. Where God had promised him there would be an eternal life for him

By faith...lived in a foreign country...it wasn't his yet! But by faith he knew it would be one day

His faith pointed him to a heavenly city that hadn't yet been built on earth...but that he was a founding father of, a piece of the foundation.

1Pe 2:4-8 NKJV - Coming to Him [as to] a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God [and] precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, [He is] precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

The tower of babel was an affront to true faith!

:11-12

By faith...Sarah received strength to conceive

Why? Because SHE JUDGED HIM **FAITHFUL**

Her faith in the seemingly, naturally impossible...was because she looked at God and realized that he is faithful. If he says it, he will do it.

Deu 7:9 NKJV - "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He [is] God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

Do we judge God to be faithful? Why do we even need to *judge God*?

She laughed, he saw, she believed

:13-16

These all died in faith, not having received the promises

They didn't receive the final promise of their faith...until they died!

True faith will go beyond death.

The eternal inheritance of faith is on the other side of death.

Will your faith carry you over to the other side?

Jos 1:1-9 NKJV - After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them--the children of Israel. "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. "From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. "No man shall [be able to] stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, [so] I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. "Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. "Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God [is] with you wherever you go."

What is God leading you to do...by faith? Look toward that heavenly city. Be strengthened by God's faithfulness in the faith of others. Take courage. Don't look back. Don't go back.

2Co 5:7-9 NKJV - For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.