

“Defined God Faith”

“Factual - Actual – Obtainable – Touchable – For-real Faith”

Hebrews 11:1-3 (KJV)

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

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”

Hebrews 11:6 (KJV)

“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”

Introduction

*** I have through out the years preached many sermons from the 11th Chapter of Hebrews**

*** Yet I have been instructed early in the week by the Holy Spirit to speak once again on one of my favorite passages in the New Testament**

*** One reason is that Gods Word brings clarity to something that without I can not please the Lord – Now I don’t know about you but if the Word of God tells me that I must have something in order to please God – Well I can tell you I want it – I want to have all I can get! Cause the Lord has done so much for me –I said the Lord has done so much for me – so much I can’t tell it all – I want to please my Heavenly Father!**

I want a “Defined God Faith” operating in my life!

I want a “Factual - Actual – Obtainable – Touchable – For-real Faith”

Today we are going to eat at the Table of God Understanding

Today we are going to receive God Clarity on God Faith

Today we are going to let Hell know we are God Pleasers!

Hebrews 11 is one of the great chapters in the Bible

* It is known as God's Great Hall of Fame

* Men and women who have believed God down through the centuries are listed as being great men and women of God

The key to greatness with God is faith

The person who truly believes God is great in the eyes of God

The first part of this great chapter gives us an overall study of faith

It is the description of faith

1. The meaning of faith (Hebrews 11:1)
2. The reward of faith: God's approval (Hebrews 11:2)
3. The basic understanding of faith: God made the world (Hebrews 11:3)
4. The spiritual power of faith (Hebrews 11:4-5)
5. The necessary beliefs of faith (Hebrews 11:6)

Hebrews 11:1 (KJV)

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”

Faith: The meaning of faith

What does faith mean?

* This is the only time the Bible ever defines faith

* Time and time again, the Bible discusses faith and the great importance of faith

The Bible also gives example after example of men and women who have and have not believed God and shows in clear terms what happened to each

But nowhere does the Bible define faith except here

So it is important that we clearly see just what faith means

The Biblical definition is this

(Following author's commentaries)

Hebrews 11:1

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"

Hebrews 11:1 [Amplified New Testament]

"Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title-deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality—faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses"

Hebrews 11:1 [Kenneth Wuest]

"Now faith is the title deed of things hoped for, the conviction of things which are not being seen"

Hebrews 11:1 [Marvin Vincent]

"Faith apprehends as a real fact what is not revealed to the senses. It rests on the fact, acts upon it, and is upheld by it in the face of all that seems to contradict it. Faith is a real seeing"

Hebrews 11:1 (Oliver Greene)

"Faith is the substance, the foundation, the title deed, the assurance of things hoped for"

Hebrews 11:1

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"

The word "substance"

Means the foundation, assurance, title-deed, and guarantee of things hoped for

The word "*evidence*" means conviction

According to most commentators, this is what is meant by these two words:

Therefore, faith would be defined as:

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"

Look closely at what is being said and note that faith is being described as an act, an act of the mind and heart and then action

* That is, our heart and mind believe something and we have assurance and conviction that it is true thus we then move upon it

Faith is an act of the mind and heart that leads to action

"Substance"

Means real being, substantial nature, the real nature of a thing

One commentary says

Faith is what it calls "moral intelligence directed at an object"

(Word Studies In The New Testament, Vol. 4, p.510)

* Scripture seems to be saying that faith is the actual possession of reality

* Is this not what the definition "title-deed" is saying?

* The person who holds the title-deed to property actually possesses the property

It is his already

* Certainly from God's perspective, we already possess His promises

* He has already paid the price and thus has given us Heavenly Authority, and we already possess eternal life.

It is not that we are going to possess it; we already possess it

The point is this:

Holding the title-deed to property and possessing something is more than assurance and conviction

** It is possessing reality, actually holding something that is substantial and real [Substance]*

* It is possessing the land, the promises of God

Faith: Is possessing the substance of the promises of God, the evidence of things not seen

* If I possess them, the substance is there; the evidence is there

* The substance and evidence, the fact that I already possess them, are my assurance and conviction

This is important to note and bears repeating:

The substance and evidence, the fact that I already possess eternal life, is the basis of my assurance and conviction.

Now, what does all this mean?

It means this:

Faith is the substance, the actual possession, of things hoped for, the evidence and reality of things not seen.

* It is both an act and a possession of the thing believed

* It is believing and trusting in that which actually exists—in that which we can possess.

* We may not be able to see it, but it is real and existing, and we can possess it by believing and having faith in it

* We can possess it now—we cannot see it, but we can actually possess the very substance of it by believing and entrusting our lives to it

- * Faith is trusting and possessing all that God is and says
- * Faith is believing and possessing all that God is and says
- * Faith is having confidence in and possessing all that God is and says
- * Faith is hoping for something and possessing it because God is (exists) and has promised it

Note what Biblical faith is not

It is not...

- "I think so, I hope so."
- "It may be so; it may not be so."
- "It might be true; it might not be true."

Biblical faith does not deal with what is unreal, imaginary, fanciful, superficial, or deceptive

Biblical faith is the knowledge, experience, and possession of things hoped for – God things – IN MY LIFE

True Biblical faith deals only with truth and reality

It is...

- * Knowing what is real
- * Experiencing what is real
- * Possessing what is real

Matthew Henry, makes some excellent statements

* *"Faith and hope go together; and the same things that are the object of our hope are the object of our faith.*

* *"It [faith] is a firm persuasion and expectation that God will perform all that He has promised to us in Christ; and this persuasion is so strong that it gives the soul...possession...of those things*

* *"Believers in the exercise of faith are filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Christ dwells in the soul by faith; and the soul is filled with the fullness of God."*

Hebrews 11:1

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"

Faith Three Deep

Faith is certainly an essential element in the Christian life - without faith, it is impossible to please God

The Christian is saved by faith

Ephesians 2:8 (KJV)

"8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God"

The Christian is to walk (live) by faith

2 Corinthians 5:7 (KJV)

"7 For we walk by faith, not by sight"

It is important to realize, however, that there are different kinds of faith, but only one that is truly "saving faith"

That statement bears repeating and is the very thing the Lord impressed me to emphasize this morning:

It is important to realize, however, that there are different kinds of faith, but only one that is truly "saving faith"

“Faith in Action”

In *James 2:14-26*, we find James discussing the different kinds of faith, with *an emphasis upon that faith which works to the saving of the soul*

James 2:14-17 (KJV)

“ 14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

We might call this kind of faith *“Dead Faith”*

*** This kind of Faith - *Substitutes words for deeds***

People with this kind of faith:

*** Know the correct vocabulary [They talk Christian-ees language] – they sometimes pray and have knowledge of doctrine**

*** They can even quote the right verses from the Bible**

But their "walk" does not measure up to their "talk"!

*** Is only an *INTELLECTUAL faith – [a dead faith]***

*** In one's mind, he or she knows the doctrine of salvation**

* But they *have never really submitted themselves to God* and trusted in Jesus for salvation

* They know the right "words", but they do not back up their words with their "works"

CAN THIS KIND OF FAITH SAVE?

* NO! *Three times* in this passage, James emphasizes that - "*faith without works is dead*"

* *Any declaration of faith* that does not result in a *changed life* and good works is a false declaration: **A DEAD FAITH!**

* *Dead faith is counterfeit faith* and lulls the person into *a false confidence of eternal life*

DO WE HAVE THIS KIND OF FAITH?

* *We do, if* our WALK does not measure up to our TALK!

* *We do, if* our WORKS do not measure up to our WORDS!

We need to beware of mere intellectual faith

"No man can come to Christ by faith and remain the same, anymore than he came into contact with a 220-volt wire and remain the same."

1 John 5:12 (KJV)

"12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life"

Any declaration of faith that does not result in a *changed life* and good works is a false declaration

A DEAD FAITH! – AN INTELLECTUAL FAITH ONLY

Now lets look at not only *Dead Faith* but also a *Demonic Faith*

James 2:18-19 (KJV)

**“18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.
19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble”**

This kind of faith is a Demonic Faith

* This may be a shock to you today but James reminds us that even the Demons of Hell have a kind of Faith

* The Demons believe in God (no atheists or agnostics here!)

* They even believe in the deity of Christ

Mark 3:11 (KJV)

“11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God”

* The impact of Jesus upon evil spirits was dramatic. His presence struck a terrible fear within them

What kind of faith do “demons” have?

* We saw in James 2: 14-17 that the man with ***“dead faith”*** was *“touched only in his intellect”*

* But now in James 2: 18-19 we see that the ***demons*** are *“touched also in their emotions”* (Note: The Word of God says they: *“believe and tremble”*)

Demonic Faith

Is one step above a *“dead faith”*

Demonic Faith involves both *INTELLECT and EMOTIONS*

Can this kind of Faith Save Souls?

* NO! A person can be enlightened in his mind and even stirred in his heart and still be lost forever!

* Many who have this type of faith have a knowledge of Christ and Bible Truths and have an emotional touch [usually because they got caught or they feel sorry but never repent – simply they keep doing the same ole – same ole because they have Intellect mixed with Emotions.

True saving faith involves something more, something that can be seen and recognized: a changed life!

James 2:18 (KJV)

“18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works”

* Here is the example of two men of arrogance

James is painting the picture of two men, but only one man speaks and what he says is only one sentence

The man says to another imaginary man: "You have faith and I have works." **The picture is that of two arrogant men**

The imaginary man has faith

* He believes that he is saved by faith—that God accepts him because he believes in Jesus Christ *even if he fails to live for Christ*

* Once he has believed in Christ—professed and been baptized and joined the church—God has accepted him and will take him to heaven when he dies

Matthew 7:21

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven"

Mark 7:6

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me"

The imaginary *speaker* claims to have works—that God accepts him because he does good works and lives as good a life as he can

* He believes that the important thing to God is to be religious and do all the good that a person can

* If a person does this, God will never reject him; God will accept him no matter who he is and no matter what religion he follows

* They believe that if they put on the stuff – simply more concerned how they appear to others - do good things – speak good things – even live a good life as they can – they claim that God will accept them.

Matthew 7:22

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast our devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"

James pulls no punches: it is not a matter of faith or works

* To say and profess faith alone will not save a person, and to follow works to become acceptable to God will not save a person

James handles both men of arrogance with one clear statement:

"Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works"

A person who truly believes in Christ works for Christ

* He follows and lives for Christ

* A person who only professes Christ lives for himself, going about doing what he wants when he wants

You profess to have faith, but where is the proof?

- * True faith must have proof; it must be backed up; you must show and demonstrate that you believe
- * I have works to back up what I profess
- * Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works
- * Your faith is not seen; all I have is your word

There is no change in your life

Luke 10:37

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"

Matthew 5:16

"And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise"

Matthew 7:21-23

“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast our devils: and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity"

Here is an example of a religious person who believes in one God: he is not an atheist nor an agnostic

- * He is a believer, and note: his belief in God is said to be a good thing
The man does well to believe in God
But believing in God is not enough.

There is a dead belief and a living belief, a belief that does not lead to salvation and a belief that does lead to salvation

Consider the demons or evil spirits

- * They believe in God; they even know that God exists
- * They even believe in the deity of Christ

Matthew 8:29

On one occasion they cried out to Jesus, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?"

But the demons are not saved

- * Their belief has not affected their lives and behavior at all

Therefore, know this, know exactly what James 2:20 says:

"Know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead"

Matthew 5:16

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven

*You first RECEIVE the life...
Then you REVEAL the life!*

James has introduced us to two kinds of faith that can NEVER save:

1. **DEAD faith**
(involving the intellect alone)

2. **DEMONIC faith**
(involving the intellect and the emotions, but stopping there)

He closes this section by describing in verses 20-26 the only kind of faith that can save...]

DYNAMIC FAITH**James 2: 20-26**

“20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

What Kind of Faith is This?**Romans 10:17 (KJV)**

“17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

* God Faith is built on the Word of God

Dynamic faith involves the WHOLE MAN

* DEAD faith touches only the intellect

* DEMONIC faith involves both the mind and the emotions

* DYNAMIC faith involves the intellect, the emotions, AND the WILL!

- 1) The MIND understands the truth
- 2) The HEART desires and rejoices in the truth
- 3) The WILL acts upon the truth

A True, saving faith, then, LEADS TO ACTION

- * It is not intellectual contemplation
- * It is not emotionalism
- * It is that which leads to obedience in doing good works
- * Simply not just a changed life – but a changed God Life

Two Examples for the Bible

ABRAHAM & RAHAB

You could not find two more different persons!

- * Abraham was the father of the Jews; Rahab was a Gentile!
- * Abraham was a godly man; Rahab had been a sinful woman, a harlot!
- * Abraham was the friend of God; Rahab had belonged to the enemies of God!

**What did they have in common?
Both exercised saving faith in God!**

Abraham demonstrated his saving faith by his works – [James 2:20-24]

Rahab demonstrated her saving faith by her works – [James 2:25-26]

We learn in *James 2* that:

- * Faith without works is a **DEAD faith**
- * That "**faith only**" - cannot justify one
- * That PERFECT faith necessitates works

Simply a Changed Life that is Active in Gods Work

CONCLUSION

It is important that each professing Christian examine his or her own heart and life, and make sure that they possess true saving faith, which is a dynamic faith

Satan is the great deceiver; one of his devices is imitation

**If he can convince a person that counterfeit faith is true faith...
...then he has that person in his power!**

Here are some questions we can ask ourselves as we examine our faith:

Was there a time when I honestly realized I was a sinner and admitted this to myself and to God?

Was there a time when my heart stirred me to flee from the wrath to come?

Have I ever been seriously worked up over my sins?

Do I truly understand the gospel, that Christ died for MY sins and then rose again?

Do I understand and confess that I cannot save myself?