

**"The Walk of Faith"****Part 1****Hebrews 11:1-40**

**Introduction:** Tonight in our study of Hebrews we have come to one of the most fascinating chapters in the entire Bible. We are stepping into Hebrews 11 tonight and the subject of this chapter is "FAITH". The word "FAITH" is used 31 times in the book of Hebrews. Galatians is the next closest book and the word "FAITH" is found in Galatians 20 times. Now in Hebrews the word is used 31 times and in chapter 11 we shall see the word is used 23 times. This helps us to therefore understand the subject and the focus of this chapter.

Now the chapter break which has been placed here can confuse us and cause us to look at this chapter as set apart on its own but that is not the true context. The chapter break has been placed here by the translators and does not really fit and we shall see why here in a moment. The first word of chapter 11:1 is a connective and therefore it tells us that the writer is continuing with the same thought. Let us walk through a few of the previous verses in order to get a firm grasp upon the context of Hebrews 11.

**Hebrews 10:19-24**

<sup>19</sup> *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,*

<sup>20</sup> *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;*

<sup>21</sup> *And having an high priest over the house of God;*

<sup>22</sup> *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

<sup>23</sup> *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*

<sup>24</sup> *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*

<sup>25</sup> *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

The writer of Hebrews had brought his readers to the pinnacle of his point in Hebrews 10:19-21. The point was that there was a Better Way provided through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ through which every believer was given access to God. Therefore the writer exhorted the Hebrews to exercise their RESPONSIBILITY. They were to:

1. Draw near.
2. Hold fast.
3. Be an encouragement to one another to stir up the spiritual fires within each other.

This was to be done in the light of the approaching day. This DAY most likely was referring to the Rapture. This would have called for the Hebrew believers to draw near, hold fast, and encourage one another. As they would wait for the Rapture to happen there would be a great need of patience in their lives also.

#### Hebrews 10:35-37

<sup>35</sup> *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.*

<sup>36</sup> *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*

<sup>37</sup> *For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

Here the writer pointed to their need of PATIENCE as they waited for the return of Jesus Christ.

#### Hebrews 10:38

<sup>38</sup> Now *the just shall live by faith*: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

This is the verse quoted from Habakkuk and it is this verse which led the writer into chapter 11 and the subject of "FAITH". As they needed to live with patience as they waited for the return of the Lord they also needed to LIVE BY FAITH. This now brings us to where we are tonight.

### I. The Definition of Faith

#### A. The Foundation of Faith

Notice Hebrews 11:1a

Let me start by showing you how Vine's defines the word "substance". It refers to the; ***thing put under, substructure, foundation.***

There is another definition which we need to see here. The phrase "things **hoped** for" carries the idea "of living in expectation of receiving that which was promised or living in confidence of receiving that which was promised". So when the Bible talks about "hoping for something" it does NOT mean we believe it **might** happen but it is a reference to **living in great expectation and confidence of receiving that which is promised.**

**Notice Hebrews 11:1a again.**

Faith is the "substructure or the foundation" of our hope in the promises of God. Let me put this in words that we can better understand. Faith is the foundation which we stand on while we wait for the promises of God to be given to us.

Without a foundation there is no building that will stand for a long period of time. It may look great after the construction is finished but after a period of time it will be evident the foundation was not constructed in the proper way. The walls will begin to crack, the floor will begin to crack, and the roof will begin to leak. The storms will beat against the house and it will eventually deteriorate.

This is what happens when someone PROFESSES to know Jesus Christ as Savior but their faith is not real. They look like a believer for a while but over time as the storms of life begin to beat against them it is revealed that they were never saved to begin with because there was NO foundation of faith.

Let me take some time and explain something that we really need to understand in all of this.

The Christian life begins with FAITH.

### **Ephesians 2:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> *For by grace are ye saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

<sup>9</sup> *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

We are saved by grace/unmerited favor through faith. When we are willing to repent of our sins and by faith believe that Jesus Christ took our place on the cross and that He died and was buried and then rose again from the dead, we are then forgiven for every sin which we ever committed or ever will commit in our lives.

Saving faith is the foundation we rest on as we cling to the promise of God that tells us He has forgiven and forgotten our sins.

Now after we are saved there is LIVING FAITH. This is the foundation upon which we stand as we cling to the promises of God as we go through this life. This is the faith which the writer has in mind in this text. In Hebrews 10:38 the verse reads "the just shall LIVE by faith". The writer desires for the Hebrews to trust God in the midst of the persecution which they are facing and in order to do this they need patience and LIVING FAITH. So here in this verse the writer is explaining that as they continue to patiently wait for the return of the Lord they must have FAITH in God's promises in order to have a foundation upon which they can rest.

**Illustration:**

Have you ever watched someone who is saved but they are consumed with worry about a situation which has come into their life? They are like a ship tossed about with the wind in the midst of the storm. They have no stability because they have no FAITH in God as they face the storm. They have rested in their saving FAITH for salvation but they cannot trust God with their everyday cares and needs and for that reason they are extremely unstable. They need to learn to rest in God's promises for our everyday lives and when they would put their FAITH in His promises they would then have a foundation.

Let me show you an example.

**James 1:5-8**

<sup>5</sup> *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

<sup>6</sup> *But let him ask in **faith**, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.*

<sup>7</sup> *For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

<sup>8</sup> *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

Now I want to raise a question that is very important: **"How can we increase our faith so as to have the foundation which we need in this world that is ever changing?"**

Let me show you some verses that will help answer this question.

**2 Peter 1:2-9**

<sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

<sup>3</sup> According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

<sup>4</sup> Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

<sup>5</sup> And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue/moral excellence; and to virtue/moral excellence knowledge;

<sup>6</sup> And to knowledge temperance/self-control; and to temperance/self-control patience; and to patience godliness;

<sup>7</sup> And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

<sup>8</sup> For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>9</sup> But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

We are given by God all things that pertain unto life and Godliness and this is understood as we grow in our knowledge of HIM. His power has given unto us exceeding great and precious promises. Now in order to have the foundation of faith pertaining to these promises we must KNOW the promises. That means we need to be plugged into the solid teaching of the Word of God. The more KNOWLEDGE we have of God the greater our faith will become and therefore the more solid the foundation which we can stand on as we go through this world.

Now I want you to notice very closely 2 Peter 1:9. The person who lacks the knowledge of God and His promises though he is saved he is blind and CANNOT SEE AFAR OFF. What does this mean?

In order to have a foundation of faith upon which to stand we MUST be able to see afar off. Let me show you what the writer of Hebrews says about being far sighted. In the

chapter we are in the writer will take us on a journey through the Old Testament to show us those who LIVED BY FAITH. I want to step ahead and show you what the writer says about those who LIVED BY FAITH as he pulls some thoughts together in verse 13.

**Hebrews 11:13**

<sup>13</sup> *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, **but having seen them afar off**, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

These people who LIVED BY FAITH were able to SEE AFAR OFF. They looked down the corridor of time and with their mind's eye they were able to see the promises of God which were coming at the appointed time. So in order to have a strong foundation of faith upon which to stand we must be able to look ahead to the eternal life which God has promised.

Now back to Peter. Peter tells us that those who do not grow in knowledge are blind and cannot see afar off.

**2 Peter 1:9**

<sup>9</sup> *But he that lacketh these things is blind, and **cannot see afar off**, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

**Conclusion:**

We exercise faith in our lives every day. When you drive your car you exercise faith in the brakes and that gives you the feeling of security while you are driving in traffic. You exercise faith in the medications you take and you rest in what the Doctor told you concerning those medications. If you go in for surgery you exercise faith in the surgeon that he can do what he has said he would. You exercise faith in the money you have and you rest in the fact that when you go to the store you can buy what you need with a piece of paper. Faith is part of our lives every single day. But many times we as believers neglect to stand on the foundation of faith when it comes to God's promises.

**Romans 8:32**

<sup>32</sup> *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, **how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?***