

**"The Walk of Faith"**

**Part 6**

**Hebrews 11:1-40**

**Introduction:** Tonight in our Bible study of Hebrews we are going to look at a verse that is full of spiritual Truth which we need to understand and apply to our personal lives. It is Hebrews 11:6.

**Notice Hebrews 11:6**

Now in order to understand this verse in context we must stop and refresh our minds as to who this letter is written to and what the readers were facing when this letter was written.

This letter was written to Hebrew believers who were under persecution because they had stepped away from Judaism and decided to follow Jesus Christ. It was their fellow Jews who were bringing the pressure and because of the pressure they were thinking of going back to the ceremonies and the rituals of Judaism. The temple was still standing and so the Jews who were caught up in Judaism were still going to the temple with their sacrifices. God however was not in the temple nor did He even acknowledge the existing sacrificial system. All of the ceremonies and the sacrifices were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The Old Covenant had served its purpose and now there was a New Covenant.

In the time which these Hebrews had been saved they should have been further along in their growth but their growth had been stunted. They had a divided allegiance and for that reason they were still only able to drink in the milk of the Word and not the meat.

**Hebrews 5:12-6:2**

*<sup>12</sup> For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

*<sup>13</sup> For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

*<sup>14</sup> But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

*Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,*

<sup>2</sup> *Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

Now the need in the lives of these Hebrews was for LIVING FAITH. They needed to rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ and they needed to surrender their lives over to Him completely.

That is what chapter 11 of Hebrews is all about. The writer is reaching back to the Old Testament and he is lifting up Bible characters who exercised great faith in God.

## I. The Examples of Faith Part 4

We have so far looked at Abel and Enoch in this chapter.

### **Notice Hebrews 11:4**

Abel is a picture of how we must worship God in faith. Abel brought his sacrifice of a lamb which was a demonstration of his faith in Substitute who would die in his place. In contrast to Abel we also looked at Cain who trusted in his own works to please God.

### **Notice Hebrews 11:5**

Here we looked at the faith of Enoch and how he had pleased God with his faith. The reward for Enoch was that he was translated from the face of the earth to Paradise.

Now we come to where we are tonight. The writer is going to work his way through many of the Old Testament saints but before he does he presents a verse that is in contrast with what he has said concerning Enoch.

### **Notice Hebrews 11:6**

The writer had said concerning Enoch, that "his" faith pleased God. That thought causes the writer to stop before he gets into the life of Noah to explain the importance of faith.

I want to divide this verse into several sections and then examine each thought which the writer has.

#### **1. Without faith it is impossible to please God.**

Let us keep this in the context before we make an application to our lives. These Hebrew believers were thinking about going back to the temple to the sacrificial/ceremonial

system. They had grown up with the teaching of the Law and the need to bring a sacrifice to God for the atonement for their sins along with the importance of the ceremonies connected with the Old Covenant. I am sure when they stepped away from these Old Covenant practices there was a hole left in their lives. To go back to the animal sacrifices and the ceremonies would make them feel as though they were doing something that "pleased" God. But that thought was far from the Truth.

God wanted them to walk by faith for He did not desire ceremonies and sacrifices because THE sacrifice had already been offered and the ceremonies were all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. God only wanted them to walk by faith in Him. To walk by faith in God was to completely trust in God for every situation which they faced. It was to trust God for grace, strength, discernment, provisions and the list goes on and on. For them to doubt God and to return to the Old Covenant practices would be displeasing to God.

Enoch pleased God with his faith and if the Hebrew believers did not walk by faith it would be impossible for them to please God.

**Notice Hebrews 11:5 again.**

I want you to notice that Enoch's faith was evident before his translation. The translation was the result of his faith. When God's people walk by faith God's hand moves in supernatural ways. This is the message which the writer is impressing upon the Hebrew believers. Sure they faced difficult times but if they would walk by faith they would see the power of God within their lives.

**Application:**

We need to take the time for a personal application here. We too need to understand that without faith it is impossible for us to please God. God desires for us to fully trust in Him as we also face the trials and the challenges of this life. For us who are believers to get involved in serving God while at the same time doubting Him in the face of the trials which we face is displeasing to God.

The writer of Hebrews does not say "IT is DIFFICULT to please God without faith. He tells us it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God without faith."

God often allows us to face the trials and the storms of life so that we will learn to have faith in Him for every situation that we face. Let me show you an example of faith being tested.

**John 6:1-6**

*After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.*

<sup>2</sup> *And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.*

<sup>3</sup> *And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.*

<sup>4</sup> *And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.*

<sup>5</sup> *When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?*

<sup>6</sup> *And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.*

Jesus and His disciples had just climbed a mountain and when they came to the summit they sat down. As they turned around there was a large multitude of hungry people and Jesus asked Philip where they would get the food to feed them. This was a test.

This is equivalent to you and me facing a major challenge in our lives and then just as we get to the top of the challenge/mountain we turn around to find something else which demands more than we have. It is a test of our faith. Let me show you the rest of the passage.

**John 6:7-13**

<sup>7</sup> *Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.*

<sup>8</sup> *One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,*

<sup>9</sup> *There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?*

<sup>10</sup> *And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.*

<sup>11</sup> *And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.*

<sup>12</sup> *When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.*

<sup>13</sup> *Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.*

Jesus took 5 barley loaves and 2 small fish and He fed over 5000 people. Here is the point we need to see:

**“When we place (by faith) what we have into God's hands (no matter how little it may be) God can do miraculous things.”**

Before we leave this thought and go to the second part of the verse there is something else that we need to point out.

The writer tells us, “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” This can also be applied to the beginning of our relationship with God. There are many who believe that their works are pleasing to God and that through their works He will accept them. Cain is solid evidence that works will not save one person.

#### **Romans 8:8**

<sup>8</sup> *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Here we see that those who are in the flesh cannot please God and when we look at the next verse we see that those who are in the flesh are the unsaved.

#### **Romans 8:9**

<sup>9</sup> *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

The point I want you to see is that it is IMPOSSIBLE for the unsaved to come to God by anything other than FAITH.

#### **Romans 4:5**

<sup>5</sup> *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*

Now let us get back to Hebrews 11:6 again.

Notice Hebrews 11:6

2. He that cometh to God must believe that He is...

Now the writer is going to give us the details as to how we are to walk by faith. He starts by telling us that he that comes to God must believe that He is. My question is, "What does it mean to believe that God is?"

The idea is that when we face the trials and the challenges of life and we come to God we must believe that He is God. Now someone would say, "That is obvious for every believer believes He is God!" My response to that is, "How many times have we cried out to God doubting that He was even aware of our situation?"

Let me stretch this part of the verse out ever further. The Holy Spirit could have inspired the writer to place anything after the word IS in this verse but instead He chose to stop after the word IS. Why? Because it allows us to place the word that fits our situation on the end. Here are some examples:

We must believe that His is:

- ✓ The God of strength - when we feel as though we cannot go on.
- ✓ The God of grace and forgiveness - when we have stumbled and fallen in times of weakness.
- ✓ The God of peace - when we are in the midst of turmoil.
- ✓ The God of wisdom - when we face the decisions of life.
- ✓ The God of power - when we are weak.
- ✓ The God of patience - when we struggle to learn the lessons of life.
- ✓ The God of comfort - when we are going through a season of pain.
- ✓ The God of love - when we have stepped outside of His will.

The list could go on and on but the point is when we come to Him we must believe that He is the God who can meet our need. To have a need and come with hearts full of doubt will accomplish absolutely nothing.

**James 1:5-7**

<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.

Let us now look at the last statement.

**Notice Hebrews 11:6c**

3. and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

When we come to God we must also believe that God will give to us what it is that we need.

**Mark 11:22-24**

<sup>22</sup> And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

<sup>23</sup> For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

**Conclusion:**

This is a short description of what it is to walk by faith. It is trusting that God is able to meet our needs and that He will meet the needs which we have. This life of faith will grow as we learn more and more about God through the study of His Word.

**Romans 14:23b**

*"for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."*