

A DEEPER LOOK AT FAITH

Our lives defined –

2 Cor 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.

Heb 10:37-38 -37 For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. 38 But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him."

He even shows us where we get this essential element for life - Rom 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

There are different responses that are mistaken for Faith, but are not Faith at all as far as a Christian is concerned

- **Faith based on me** - God does what I think he should do Faith
- **Faith based on desire** - God does what I hope he'll do Faith
- **Faith based on incomplete doctrine** – Reading just part or more into what the Bible is saying faith (i.e. abundant life)

Jesus shows faith by showing God CAN, BUT preferring & accepting His Will- Mark 14:35-36 - 35 Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. 36 "Abba, Father," he said, "**everything is possible for you**. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego put their faith in God even if He doesn't do as they wish - Dan 3:17-18 - 17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. 18 But **EVEN IF HE DOES NOT**, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

What is faith? – Heb 11:1-2-1Now faith is being **SURE** of what we hope for and **CERTAIN** of what we do not see. 2 This is what the ancients were commended for.

Most importantly...what that faith is in

Mark 11:22 "Have **faith in God**," Jesus answered.

Gal 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, **I live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved me and gave himself for me.

The world needs substance as proof to believe in something faith must be a Christian's proof - Heb 11:3 **By faith WE UNDERSTAND** that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

Our true faith will make what we do, acceptable to God - Heb 11:4 - **By faith** Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. **By faith** he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And **by faith** he still speaks, even though he is dead.

Gen 4:2-7 - Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. 3 In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. 4 But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. 6 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 **If you do what is right**, will you not be accepted? But **if you do not do what is right**, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

Rom 14:23 - 23 But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and **EVERYTHING** that does not come from faith is sin.

It took Faith for Enoch to please God - Heb 11:5-6-5 **By faith** Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. 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**.

- **Believe He exists** - John 20:29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."
- **Earnestly seek him** - Matt 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Doing things that may not make physical and mental sense, but doing it because God said so - Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, when warned about things NOT YET SEEN, in **HOLY FEAR** built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

Taking a step into the unknown, because God said so- Heb 11:8 **By faith** Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. 9 **By faith** he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Leaning on things that may seem impossible because God said so - Heb 11:11 By faith Abraham, even though he was past age — and Sarah herself was barren — was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. 12 And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

The overall focus of faith is fully on what God has in store - Heb 11:13-15 -13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. **They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance.** And **they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.** 14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. 15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 Instead, they were longing for a better country — a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Faith is putting nobody, and I mean nobody, before God - Heb 11:17-19-17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, 18 **even though** God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." 19 **Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead,** and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

Acting on what God says even before there is proof it will happen

Heb 11:20 **By faith** Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future.

Heb 11:21 **By faith** Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

Heb 11:22 **By faith** Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.

Faith is relying on the protection of God over the threats of man - Heb 11:23 **By faith** Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, **because THEY SAW HE WAS NO ORDINARY CHILD,** and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

Faith is denying the luxuries of now and focus on the later with God - Heb 11:24-28 - 24By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God **rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.** 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. 28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

A person goes against everything they see for the unseen God - Heb 11:31 By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. (Like Grace giving)

The supernatural happens by faith

Heb 11:29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

Heb 11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days.

Miracles and wonders happen through faith - Heb 11:32-35- 32 And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. 35 Women received back their dead, raised to life again...

People accepted torture and even death because of faith - Heb 11:35-39 – 35 ...Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. 36 Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. 37 They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— 38 **the world was not worthy of them.** They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. 39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. 40 **GOD HAD PLANNED SOMETHING BETTER FOR US SO THAT ONLY TOGETHER WITH US WOULD THEY BE MADE PERFECT.**

That something better is salvation of souls -1 Peter 1:8-9 - 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for **you are receiving the goal of your faith, the SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS.**

We must recognize the VERY IMPORTANT relationship between Faith and Works

***Difference between "Works" and "Works of Faith" is Works of Faith is totally based on God while works are not**

Salvation is a product of Faith in Action - James 2:14 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? (Jn 3:16)

Faith not displayed is worthless - James 2:17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, IS DEAD.

Belief is faith shown by works - James 2:21-24 - 21 Was not our ancestor **Abraham considered righteous for WHAT HE DID** when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and **his faith was made COMPLETE BY WHAT HE DID.** 23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "**Abraham BELIEVED God,** and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend.

All True Christians' Faith will be displayed - James 2:24 You see that **a person is justified by what he does** and **NOT BY FAITH ALONE.**