



+ **YOU**

Unit: Risk-Takers: The Adventure of Walking by Faith

Sermon Title: Noah: Qualities of Effective Faith

To be used with Session 1: Noah: A Faith That Pleases God

Date of First Use: June 1, 2025

Sermon Text: Hebrews 11:6-7

Connection with the Study: Session 1 of this unit features Noah's faith. A key part of the first section addresses the necessity of faith to please God as noted in Hebrews 11:6-7. This sermon unpacks the Hebrews passage with expansion on effective faith as seen in Noah's life. The individual points of the sermon do not parallel the Bible study session points, but they are designed to support and expand the qualities of an effective faith that pleases God. Pastors could help members connect the sermon and the Bible study by salting the Bible study points throughout the sermon.

Introduction:

Have you checked out your family tree? Many people are fascinated to learn about their ancestors. Most people can't go back more than a few generations. Today we'll look thousands of years into the past to an ancestor every one of us has in common. No, it's not Adam. We all are not only descended from Adam, but from Noah.

What do you know about some of your ancestors? What have you learned that positively affects your life? Their life experiences can help us make good choices, avoid some of their mistakes, and encourage us and our families. The same can be true by considering the life of great-great granddaddy Noah. His story did not start and end with building the ark. His was a history of faith and righteousness.

Genesis 6–8 tell us much of the familiar story of Noah, but today we will focus on references to Noah's faith in Hebrews 11:6-7. Let's journey back in time to discover five aspects of effective faith.

1. Effective faith desires to please God. (Heb. 11:6)

- a. Effective faith wants to please God with love.** Without faith, we not only won't please God, we can't. It's impossible. Noah is a good example of someone whose faith was evident even before God commissioned him to build the ark. Looking on a wicked world, God saw one man who had a heart for the Lord. Only one man would believe a global

flood was coming. Only one man would spend a hundred years building a huge boat in a wilderness. God saw Noah's faith and was pleased.

- b. **Effective faith wants to please God with our daily lives.** If we believe in God and love Him, we desire to please Him. Not with begrudging duty, but with delight we seek to please Him. His joy is our joy. We base daily choices not on what pleases us, but what pleases Him. That requires faith.
- c. **Effective faith desires to please God with worship.** The first thing Noah did after the flood was to worship God. He was grateful to God for saving them and wanted to express thanks through sacrificial worship. God called it a pleasing aroma as He received Noah's faithful worship (Gen. 8:21). We, too, please God when we worship not only by singing, praying, and participating in a worship service, but by our living sacrifices of faith.

2. Effective faith draws near to God. (Heb. 11:6)

- a. **Be a diligent God-seeker.** Noah earnestly sought to know God. "You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13). God doesn't play hide and seek; He wants to be found, but we must earnestly want to draw near to Him. A friend's wife went through a life-threatening illness. He told me, "I've found you never really know God until you really need God." When we seek God diligently, we will find Him.
- b. **Believe God exists.** A Gallup Poll studied American's beliefs about God. Results depended on how the questions were asked. 84% said yes to "Do you believe in God?". That number drops to about 61% when asked, "Are you certain about God's existence?" <https://news.gallup.com/poll/268205/americans-believe-god.aspx> Effective faith that draws near to God believes that "He is."
- c. **Believe God is good.** Effective faith believes He is a good God. God "rewards those who seek him." God is not only omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, but He also is omnibenevolent – He is good, loving, and caring. Noah believed God is good even when He judged. God destroyed the wicked world, but saved Noah's family – and through them, He saved us. God is not only concerned in the great challenges of our lives, but also in the small things. Recognize God in the small things because the big things are coming. He'll be a good God in those times as well.

3. Effective faith does what God says. (Heb. 11:7)

- a. **Accept His warnings.** Noah's bones couldn't tell him rain was coming. He believed God's warnings. His godly faith was moved by godly fear. Because Noah feared God, he didn't care what anyone else thought. Observers mocked Noah. "*Look at that crazy old man!*" But he just did what God told him to do because he believed the Lord.
- b. **Act by faith.** We demonstrate effective faith when we obey God completely. Noah prepared the ark by faith. "And Noah did this. He did everything that God had

commanded him” (Gen. 6:22). A life-sized replica of the ark can be experienced at the Ark Encounter in Kentucky. A video describes how this amazing structure was built. Its builder was not a wealthy man, but he was a man of faith. It ought to have a plaque “Built by faith.” Noah built the original ark by faith. We also have to build our lives by faith as we do what God says.

4. Effective faith rejects what God rejects. (Heb. 11:7)

- a. **Recognize what God sees.** “God saw how corrupt the earth was, for every creature had corrupted its way on the earth” (Gen. 6:12). Noah didn’t have to look far. Wickedness surrounded him. You and I only have to look at daily news to see evil in our world, too. Instead of accepting sin as simply part of the culture, we need to recognize it as contrary to God’s holy nature. Unless we see matters through God’s eyes, we may accept it as normal and yield to it. How many people do you know whose lives were tragically affected by sin because they refused to see from God’s vantage point?
- b. **Refuse to be a part of sin.** Just because evil is all around doesn’t mean we have to take part in it. By faith, Noah “condemned the world.” Noah had heard God say, “I have decided to put an end to every creature, for the earth is filled with wickedness because of them; therefore, I am going to destroy them along with the earth.” Noah believed God was the Righteous Judge, so he refused to join in with the culture.

5. Effective faith receives what God gives. (Heb. 11:7)

- a. **Grace.** Because Noah had effective faith, he was able to receive what God gives. While the world sank beneath the waves around him, Noah “found favor with the Lord.” The word *favor* means grace. Undeserved grace. Unmerited grace. We love the song, “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord,” but we need it to be our song. We can receive what God freely gives through Christ – grace.
- b. **Righteousness.** Because Noah had effective faith, he received the grace gift of righteousness. This righteousness did not result from his works. Noah became an “heir of righteousness.” An heir receives what someone else gives. This is the “righteousness that comes by faith.” The apostle Paul could have bragged about a laundry list of religious accomplishments, but he cast it all aside for the righteousness that comes only through Jesus (Phil. 3:7-9). By God’s grace, through Christ, you and I receive what only God can give – righteousness – a right relationship with God.

Conclusion: It’s all by faith. Believing God. Pleasing God. Obeying God. Worshipping God. Every aspect of our relationship with God proceeds from faith. Just as Noah exhibited effective faith to the saving of his family, even so you and I can touch the lives of our family and friends. As they see how our faith in Christ affects our lives, they can be drawn to Him, too. When they see us refuse to compromise and become part of a sinful culture, they find He can change their lives, too. As they see our love for the Christ Who loved us and gave Himself for us, they can love Him, too. And that pleases God.

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