



11/20/25

I was talking with a friend who reminded me of a quote by a missionary named Amy Carmichael who lived in the late 1800's through the mid 1900's... Ministry is "a chance to die." Everything we face, especially the hard stuff, is a chance to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus... because we trust Him completely. So I looked up some other quotes by Amy Carmichael. Another one is... "'We are not asked to SEE,' said Amy. 'Why need we when we KNOW?' We know--not the answer to the inevitable WHY, but the incontestable fact that it is for the best. 'It is an irreparable loss, but is it faith at all if it is hard to trust when things are entirely bewildering?'" Wow. She understood faith. I pray that you and I will be able to embrace faith as she did.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Hebrews 11:1-7

The lineage of Cain vs. the lineage of Seth is a great example of the blessing of true faith. Both Cain and Seth would have acknowledged that they "believed" in God. Cain literally talked to Him before AND after he killed Abel. BUT who really put their FAITH in the Lord? Faith is not just words... Faith comes from the heart, and it is the motivation for obedience and relationship. Clearly, Cain's faith was like that of the demons... "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!" (James 2:19).

So... what is true faith, the kind that speaks of the person as having "walked with God"? Hebrews 11 tells me.

Vs. 1 ~ "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Faith... trust, belief... is confidence that the object of my hope is genuine. Biblical hope is NOT wishful thinking. It is confident expectation. When my faith is in Jesus, I can be absolutely confident that He is who He says He is.

Faith is... the conviction, the evidence, the proof... that what I DON'T see is more real than

what I do see. It is being convinced that the gospel is true even when what I see in my circumstances would otherwise cause doubt.

Vs. 2 ~ "For by it the people of old received their commendation."

The Greek word for commendation means "to bear witness, to testify." God Himself bore witness and testified about people like Abel, Enoch, and Abraham that it was their FAITH that pleased Him. It wasn't their bloodline or their adherence to the law. It was their faith. God said in the Old Testament book, Habakkuk 2:4, "The righteous shall live by his FAITH." God commends our faith.

Vs. 3 ~ "By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible."

The first SPECIFIC acknowledgment of our faith is confidence and conviction that God created the universe by His spoken word. By faith we understand... we perceive... that something was created out of nothing when God started with the words, "Let there be light." And there was light.

To truly grasp that God is able to make something out of nothing by His spoken word is to put all my confidence in His power and His wisdom!!! There is no human comprehension of how much power and wisdom it takes to speak the world into existence and bring all the molecules and atoms to life and divide them into all kinds of different plants and animals and species and so much more! Science has the ability to observe SOME of His invisible power being evidenced in His visible creation... but science cannot fully explain it OR duplicate it. Do I believe this? This is not something to hand swag away. It is the beginning of the gospel... the beginning of faith.

Vs. 4 ~ "By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks."

True faith will always be followed by worship. Fake faith gives the appearance of worship, but it is NOT real. Fake faith is just like the demons who would possess a person in the gospels and follow Jesus around saying, "Ha! What have You to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God" (Luke 4:24). They acknowledged God, but they did not worship Him in any way.

Abel's worship of God was real because his faith was real. And God Himself testified that He was pleased with Abel's righteous offering... the righteous will live by his faith. Even Abel's death was not enough to stop God from celebrating his faith. His blood still speaks of his genuine worship. And truly, he IS alive right now, in the presence of God. That is the most incredible reward of faith. Someday, I will be in the presence of God forever, not because of my works, but because I have believed in my heart that God raised my Savior from the dead and I have confessed Him as Lord.

Vs. 5 ~ "By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God."

Enoch, a descendant of Seth, "walked with God" (Genesis 5:24). True faith is not just about words. It is about relationship... abiding. God loves being in relationship with His people! God delights in spending time with those who trust Him.

God took Enoch home to heaven without him experiencing death. He only did that with one other person... the prophet Elijah. Both Enoch and Elijah were prophets, and I believe they didn't see death because they will be the two witnesses spoken of in Revelation... where they will experience physical death, and then God will take them home to heaven while everyone watches. Whoa!!!

Now, I don't believe God plans to take me home without seeing physical death, but I do believe that He takes pleasure in spending time with me as I walk with Him. What does His word say? "Walk by the Spirit... Keep in step with the Spirit... Draw near to God and He will draw near to you... Abide in Him and in His love and let His word abide in you." God sent His Son so that He could reconcile ALL who would receive His free gift through FAITH.

So far, I see that genuine faith...

- *Is confident in the Lord*
- *Is convinced of who He is*
- *Walks with Him in relationship*

And now I will see that genuine faith is COMMITTED to Him...

Vs. 6 ~ "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him."

It is IMPOSSIBLE to please God without FAITH. It doesn't say it's impossible to please Him without perfect obedience. If that were the case, none of us could please Him. "For ALL have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). In fact, obedience to His rules without faith in Him has no value. When I'm trying to obey the rules without faith, I'm doing it for my own selfish gain... I'm living for my flesh... and my flesh is hostile to God (Romans 8:8).

To have true faith, I will draw near to Him. Relationship.

I will believe that He exists... AS WHO HE SAYS HE IS... With ALL His attributes... Almighty, Beloved, Caring, Deliverer, Everlasting, Faithful, Good, Holy, Insightful, Justifier, Kind, Loving, Most High, Name above ALL names, Omnipresent, Protector, Quieter of my soul, Righteous,

Salvation, True, Understanding, Victorious, Wise, Xristos (Christ) and eXcellent, Yahweh, Zealous. To believe in Him is to believe ALL of Him.

I will believe that He REWARDS me for seeking Him. True faith doesn't just acknowledge His existence but is so confident and convinced and committed to who He is that the one with true faith believes that He who has all power, authority, wisdom, knowledge, and love actually rewards me for my faith.

O Lord, how do I respond to this? I "lay aside EVERY weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us RUN with endurance the race that is set before us, LOOKING (keeping my eyes fixed on) to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before HIM endured the cross, despising (disregarding) the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1-2). To truly walk with God by faith, I will keep my eyes focused on Him and ask Him to help me let go of all the things that distract me from running to His finish line with all I've got!

O Lord... I DO believe. Please help my unbelief.

Let my faith be...

- *Confident in You*
- *So convinced of who You are that I walk with You... and run to You.*
- *Committed to draw near to You and seek You.*

Let the evidence of my faith be a life of worship... and please help me to let go of everything that hinders my worship. I will sing the song... "You are worthy of it all. For from You are all things and to You are all things. You deserve the glory." Amen!