



## Applied Faith Men's Bible Study

South Hills Baptist Church

7350 Granbury Rd.

Fort Worth, TX 76123

## Our Christian Faith

### Lesson #1

Overall lesson #49

### **Our Foundation**

Christianity is a religion based upon Jesus of Nazareth's life and his teachings. It is the largest religion in the world today with more than 2.2 billion followers. Jesus was born in approximately 7 BC and it is believed he began teaching in Galilee after his 30th year. Christianity is divided into many denominations or sects, and the major ones include Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestantism. Most who follow Christianity believe that Jesus was crucified on the cross, was buried, was resurrected - granting eternal life to those who believe in him and that he died for forgiveness of their sins.

## **Interesting Christianity Facts:**

- Jesus is also often referred to as the Messiah, or Christ.
- Most Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that his coming was predicted in the Old Testament of the Bible.
- Jesus' teachings and his life are documented in the New Testament of the Bible.
- Christians believe that Jesus will return to earth in the Second Coming of Christ one day to judge humans for their sins and to grant eternal life to those who believe in and follow his teachings.
- In Christianity, the word gospel is used to refer to the written accounts of Jesus' life.
- The Ten Commandments are biblical principles of Christianity. Although different denominations have different interpretations, they have major similarities. Most interpretations prohibit murder, theft, adultery, blasphemy, and worshipping idols other than God. Keeping the Sabbath is also commonly observed.
- The Roman Catholic Church is the largest Christian denomination in the world today. Roman Catholics make up approximately half of the world's Christians.
- There are approximately 800 million Protestant Christians worldwide today.
- Approximately 160 million of the world's Christians are Orthodox.
- Today there are approximately 6 million Christianity books in print.
- Each year approximately 78.5 million Bibles are distributed worldwide.
- The religious professionals of Christianity include priests, bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, pastors, ministers, preachers, and deacons.

- Christian places of worship include churches, chapels, cathedrals, basilicas, and meeting halls.
- Many Christians believe in angels, devils, demons, the Holy Spirit, Salvation, Mary - Mother of Jesus, Purgatory, heaven and hell.
- Christians believe in one God, essentially a trinity of Holy Spirit, Father, and Son.
- Christians believe that the afterlife includes an eternal heaven or hell depending on whether the individual has faith in God, in Christ's resurrection, and how they lived their life and worshipped God.
- Christian holidays include Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Good Friday, Easter, and All Saint's Day.
- Christianity teaches that there are seven deadly sins including pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, and sloth.
- Baptism in the Christian faith can have different meaning. Some believe it makes the person being baptized a member of the church while others believe it is linked to salvation or that it can strengthen a person's faith.
- Although Christianity is the largest religion in the world, and practiced in many countries around the world, it is mainly practiced in North America, South America, and in Europe.
- Aside from Jesus Christ, other prominent figures of Christianity include Jesus' mother Mary, Abraham, the Apostle Paul and John the Baptist.

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is known as the Hall of Faith in the Bible. It lists many men and women who showed faith in God and His promise. This wonderful chapter is an example to us on how we can, and should, have faith in God as well. Beyond reading the accounts of

the people mentioned in Hebrews 11, we should look into the Old Testament stories which are referenced in this great chapter.

A simple definition of faith is given in verse 1, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” While faith is putting our trust in something we cannot see, it does not mean that there is no evidence for that faith. We believe there is a God, not because we can see Him, but because we have plenty of evidence that He exists. We have nature which tells us there is a Creator (Romans 1:19-23; Hebrews 11:2). We have God’s Word, the Bible, which proclaims that God exists. There are plenty of evidences through history and science which proclaim the accuracy of the Bible. While we cannot see God, we can have faith in Him because of the proof that He has given to us through history, science, nature and His Word.

Beyond the simple definition of faith in verse 1 there is a practical application of faith in verse 6. It says, “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” We must have faith to please God. When we try to work out our salvation or our daily Christian walk in our flesh, that is not pleasing to God. Everything we do should be done in faith.

### **Hall of Faith, Hebrews Chapter 11**

In this chapter there are various names of men and women of faith and snippets of their stories. To understand each of these it is necessary to read the account in the Old Testament where these stories originate.

While many of the stories point to specific actions that were done, it is important to see that their faith produced the action and not

the other way around. We don't earn our faith because of good actions; right actions are a result of proper faith. Romans 4 tells us that Abraham was not saved because he obeyed God; rather, his obedience to God was a result of his faith. James 2 teaches that a man (or woman) who has faith in the promises of God will show their faith through their actions.

Here is the list of names mentioned in Hebrews 11 which make up the Hall of Faith: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sara, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthae, David, Samuel and the prophets.

### **The Promise: A Redeemer**

In Hebrews 11 there is a constant reference to the promise that God had given to various people. The initial promise was given in Genesis 3:15. God promised that there would be a Redeemer who would come and save humanity from the punishment of their sin. This promise was originally given to Eve when God said that from her seed the Redeemer, a Savior, would come. Throughout the Bible God gave more and more specifics for who the Redeemer would be and where He would come from.

The promised Redeemer was later defined as coming from the family of Abraham; specifically through the line of Isaac. Later God narrowed the promise through Isaac's son Jacob and then through the house of David. Through Hebrews 11 we can see that God takes a general promise and throughout history narrows down the promise to exactly where the Redeemer would come from.

## **Specific Examples of Faith**

There are many stories mentioned or alluded to in these verses. Let's look at a few and see how their faith was manifested.

**Abel:** The first two children of Adam and Eve were Cain and Abel. They knew that God had promised a Redeemer and that the acceptance of the promised Savior was not through their works, but through faith. Cain brought a sacrifice to God which was based on his own labor: not based on faith. Though God had given a specific example—the slaughtering of a lamb to cover Adam and Eve's sin—Cain came to God with his own work. However, Abel sacrificed to God in faith trusting the promised Messiah.

**Abraham:** Most of the evidences of Abraham's faith that are mentioned in Hebrews 11 show that Abraham was trusting God for a promised inheritance. Abraham left his home to obtain land. He believed God when He said that Abraham's family would be multiplied like the stars of the sky or the sands of the sea. Abraham's faith in the physical promises from God were proof that he trusted in the potential promised Redeemer who would come long after Abraham's own death.

**Moses:** Though raised in the house of the Pharaoh of Egypt, Moses knew that his birth family was the people of God. You can read the Old Testament account of the life of Moses (Exodus-Deuteronomy) and see that Moses was not a perfect man; yet what drove Moses to obey and trust God was that he had faith in the promise of a coming Savior.

**The Prophets:** Though not mentioned individually by name, the prophets were each called to a task which was difficult and against the status quo. They proclaimed God's promises and His righteousness to a

nation which wandered away from their God. Many of the prophets were ridiculed, beaten and killed for their faith in the promises of God.

### The Results of Their Faith

After all these great stories of faith verse 39 tells us that these individuals never received the promise in a physical way. That promise was the future birth of the Redeemer Savior and Messiah Jesus Christ. They did not see the day of His coming. However, their faith in that promised Redeemer was counted for their salvation. Their faith was in something they never saw, but that does not mean that their faith was in vain. They believed God for something He promised.

Though we don't see Jesus Christ walking among us today, we can receive the promise in the same way these Old Testament believers did: through faith. We don't look forward to the future promise of a Redeemer, we look backwards through the written Word of God to see what God has given.

Is your faith in Jesus Christ for your salvation? He is the promised Redeemer that the whole Old Testament points to. These men and women in Hebrews 11 put their faith in the promise of a Savior that had not yet come. How much easier should it be for us who can put our faith in something that has already taken place?

## Application/Activity

Hebrews chapter 11 is known as the faith chapter. There are forty verses in this chapter. Make it a point to read this chapter several times this upcoming week. As always, it is a good idea to start your day in God's Word and this is a great chapter to read this week to begin each day. Ask yourself a question that only you and God know the answer to, do you really believe? When things are going bad in your life, do you believe that this world is temporary as are its problems and hard times? If you find your faith to be lacking, spend time in prayer and ask God to strengthen your faith.

[Whatchristianswanttoknow.com](http://Whatchristianswanttoknow.com)

Property of South Hills Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas