

## **“What is Faith”** Hebrews 11:1-2

Introduction: What is faith? Many people have ideas as to what faith is. Note:

1. Noah Webster – “In theology, the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed. Simple belief of the scriptures, of the being and perfections of God, and of the existence, character and doctrines of Christ, founded on the testimony of the sacred writers.”
2. A.W. Tozer – “At the root of the Christian life lies belief in the invisible. The object of the Christian’s faith is unseen reality.”
3. A.W. Tozer – “Faith in faith is faith astray.”
4. Adrian Rogers – “A faith that hasn’t been tested can’t be trusted.”
5. Corrie Ten Boom – “Faith does not struggle; faith lets God do it all.”
6. Lyell Rader – “Faith grows only in the dark. You’ve got to trust him when you can’t trace him. That’s faith.”
7. Billy Graham – “I do not understand the digestive system, but I eat. I don’t understand all about our respiratory system, but I continue to breathe. So it is with faith.”
8. Nathaniel Hawthorne – “Christian faith is a grand cathedral, with divinely pictured windows. Standing without, you see no glory, nor can imagine any. But standing within, every ray of light reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendors.”

➤ The Holy Spirit of God will give us a definition on what faith is.

1. Our First Look at Hebrews 11:1
  - a. Hebrews 11:1- “*Now faith is the **substance** of things hoped for...*”
    - (1) Webster defines “*substance*” as, “...something existing by itself; the essential part; something real, not imaginary; something solid, not empty.”
    - (2) The word “*substance*” was used to depict title deeds. A title deed gives substance to a person’s claim to property.
    - (3) Faith is the title deed to things hoped for.
  - b. Hebrews 11:1- “*...the **evidence** of things not seen.*”
    - (1) Webster defines “*evidence*” as, “That which enables the mind to see truth; any instrument or writing which contains proof; a witness; one who testifies to a fact.”
    - (2) The word “*evidence*” means proof.
2. Our Second Look at Hebrews 11:1
  - a. Hebrews 11:1- “*...the **substance** of things hoped for...*”
    - (1) Faith gives us the title deed to things hoped for.
    - (2) Faith has to do with things we Long For—Things still unsatisfied as yet.
  - b. Hebrews 11:1- “*...the **evidence** of things not seen.*”
    - (1) Faith gives us all the evidence we need that certain things we have not yet seen are all true and factual.
    - (2) Faith has to do with things we Look For—Things still unseen as yet.

Body: In other words, faith has to do with things we long for, things still unsatisfied as yet; and it has to do with things we look for, things still unseen as yet. Faith is not wishful thinking. Notice Romans 10:17- *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* Notice in verse two the elders obtained a good report through faith. Therefore, we will let them interpret this word called faith.

- I. Faith—Things We Long For Hebrews 11:1- *“...the substance of **things hoped for**...”*
  - A. The Example of Abraham
  - B. Genesis 12:2- *“And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:”*
  - C. Abraham longed for a son. The years passed, and the son did not come. He grew older. He passed the age when he could still hope.
  - D. Genesis 17:17- *“Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?”*
  - E. Genesis 18:12- *“Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?”*
  - F. Genesis 18:15- *“Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.”*
  - G. Hebrews 11:8, 11-12
  - H. Romans 4:18-21
  - I. Abraham’s faith in God was so strong that the thing he longed for was a real possession of his before ever the promised son was born. That is to say, he already had the boy’s birth certificate in his hand, before he had the child in his arms.
  - J. God’s Word was the ground of his faith and assurance.
  - K. Hebrews 11:1- *“...the substance of **things hoped for**...”*
  
- II. Faith—Things We Look For Hebrews 11:1- *“...the evidence of **things not seen**.”*
  - A. The Example of Noah
  - B. Noah shows us how faith is the evidence, the proof of things unseen. God told Noah He was sending a flood. Noah had never seen a flood. He had never saw the windows of heaven opened or the fountains of the great deep erupt.
  - C. Genesis 2:6- *“But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.”*
  - D. God spoke, and Noah believed God even though there were no signs of a flood.
  - E. Hebrews 11:1- *“...the evidence of **things not seen**.”*
  - F. In anticipation of things not seen as yet, Noah built the ark.
  - G. Hebrews 11:7- *“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”*
  - H. 1 Peter 3:20- *“...while the ark was a preparing...”* (This took 120 years)
  - I. When Noah entered the ark, they waited for a week, and still nothing happened. Genesis 7:1, 4-5
  - J. A week later the proof based on faith became proof based on fact.

Conclusion: The principle of faith, whether relating to things longed for or things looked for, applies to us as well. Abraham believed God's Word. Noah believed God's Word. Will you believe God's Word? How much faith do you have?

1. No Faith Mark 4:40- *"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have **no faith?**"*
2. Little Faith Matthew 6:30- *"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of **little faith?**"*
3. Great Faith Luke 7:9- *"When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so **great faith**, no, not in Israel."*
4. Full of Faith Acts 6:8- *"And Stephen, **full of faith** and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."*