

Meaning of Faith

August 8, 2021

Opening Question(s)

In what part of your life do you need to have more faith in God's power to do His will? How do we live a life with complete faith in God?

HEBREWS 11:1-4 (NLT)

1 Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.

2 Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation.

3 By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.

4 It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith.

HEBREWS 11:5-8 (NLT)

5 It was by faith that Enoch was taken up to heaven without dying—“he disappeared, because God took him.” For before he was taken up, he was known as a person who pleased God.

6 And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.

7 It was by faith that Noah built a large boat to save his family from the flood. He obeyed God, who warned him about things that had never happened before. By his faith Noah condemned the rest of the world, and he received the righteousness that comes by faith.

8 It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going.

HEBREWS 13-16 (NLT)

▪13 All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it. They agreed that they were foreigners and nomads here on earth.

▪14 Obviously people who say such things are looking forward to a country they can call their own.

▪15 If they had longed for the country they came from, they could have gone back.

▪16 But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Does true faith mean that God will give us whatever we ask for if we truly believe in Him? Explain your answer.
- 2. Tragedies and crises happen to everyone. How does faith help heal lives that have been broken by tragedy?

APPLICATION FOR ACTIVATION

Although Abraham, Sarah, and the other heroes of faith were the true heirs of God's justice and promises, they lived as foreigners and strangers in the earth seeking a homeland. The Greek word for "strangers" is xenoí (ZEE-noy) and it is a part of the composite term "xenophobia" that describes a fear of strangers or people who are different.

Having hope in a hopeless world and seeing opportunities where others see only defeat can make one feel like a stranger. This takes on even more materiality as we consider immigrants and refugees who attempt to live by faith and pursue a hope for a better life, but they instead are often met by lies and prejudices that attempt to limit their lives and portray them as delinquents. What can your Bible study group or church do to help immigrants and refugees in your area?