

WHAT IS FAITH?

In Hebrews 11:3 we read that *“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”* The first instance that the Bible points to when speaking about faith is creation.

But before that, when we talk about faith, Hebrews 11:1 is the most common text usually quoted - *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* But how few of us actually understand what that means. How is faith a substance and also evidence?

1. In order to understand that, we must first define what faith is more clearly. Firstly, where does faith begin?

- *Rom 10:17*

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- Faith comes from hearing the word of God, which is what we call the Bible today. When we hear the spoken word, we can conclude one thing - faith is growing in our hearts.

2. Let's look at an illustration before understanding its definition.

- *Matt 8:5-10*

5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, 6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. 7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. 8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. 9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. 10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

- The centurion's servant was sick and requested for Jesus to heal him.
- Jesus was more than willing.
- But the centurion asked Jesus to speak the word ONLY. He then gives an illustration of how he understands the power of the word since he commands his soldiers to do something and they will do it at his bidding.
- Jesus is marveled and amazed at this man's faith and states - I have no found so great faith in Israel! (verse 10).
- What is faith?

- Faith is depending on the word of God alone to do what it says it will do.
- The word of God is so powerful that it doesn't need any help for it to accomplish what it wants. The power is found in the word of God.

3. How powerful is the word of God?

- *Isa 55:11*

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

- It will accomplish that which God pleases, meaning it will do whatever God says for it to do.

- *Luke 4:36*

And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

- With just the word, evil spirits (demons) were cast out of a person.

- *1 Thes 2:13*

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

- The word of God will effectually work in us if we believe.

- *Rom 1:16*

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

- In the gospel is the power of God to salvation. The word is powerful enough to save each of us!

- Now we begin to understand *Hebrews 11:1* - *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

- If faith comes from the word of God (Bible), then the Bible is that substance that gives us hope.
- And not only that, the Bible is the very evidence of things that we do not see.
- Example - the Bible tells us about a heaven where there are mansions for us and streets of gold! But how do we know? None of us have ever seen heaven. But because the Bible tells us, then it must be true! IT is the EVIDENCE!
- God cannot lie (Heb 6:18) and His word is powerful enough to create things that were not there before, but because He said it, then it appears now.
- We have to come to this point of our belief and trust in God's word - to believe the unseen and then act upon this promise by believing in a God that cannot lie.

4. Let's look at one last example of faith and the word.

- *Matt 14:25-29*

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. 27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

- Jesus came to the disciples walking on water while they were battling a terrible storm. When the disciples saw Him, they thought He was a ghost but He said it was just him.
- Ever ready Peter spoke out and said that if it was really Him (Jesus), that He should bid Peter to come out on the water to meet Him.
- What did Jesus say? COME.
- Because of that one word, Peter was enabled to walk on water. Just that single word COME, gave Peter enough power to walk on water.
- Of course Peter had to believe. He didn't have any history to back on. No person had ever walked on water up to that point.
- His faith took hold of Jesus' single word to him, and that enabled him to do something no man had ever done before.

5. **But what does this have to do with creation?**

- *Ps 33:6, 9*

6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. 9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

- Everything in the world was created by the word of God. Just by simply speaking, everything we see in the natural world today was made.
- God didn't need our help or assistance in any way. In fact, man was the very last thing that was created - so definitely we gave no hand of help to God in the creation of this world.
- The fact that man was the very last thing to be created means that even Adam had to live by faith. When Adam first woke up and asked God who made all this beautiful things, God simply said "I did!" And guess what? Adam had to believe in the word of God! Adam didn't ask God to prove it. Even when Eve was created, what was Adam doing? He was sleeping. So even before sin came into the world, we had to live by faith.
- But let's remember, the very same word that created the world and everything in it is the same powerful words that we are reading today in the Bible.

Note: Let us go back to Hebrews 11:3 - "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Faith helps us to believe in creation. It takes a trust in the word of God to have that belief.

6. So then why is it so important to believe in creation today and the word of God?

- *Ps 51:10*
Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.
 - God wants to give each of us a clean heart.
- But how do we get that clean heart according to that bible text?
- It must be created. And how did God create? He did it by His word.
- So the same word that we are reading right now, is the very word that can create new thoughts, new purposes, new motives, love, and joy, and peace into our lives.

Let's make the effort to spend time in the word of God today and in this week. Let's allow God to give us power to live for Him each day. And surely He can give us victory over our sinful habits and practices if we allow Him to speak His word into our hearts.

John 6:29 - Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Let's make believing our work! Believing in the Word of God. Believing in Jesus Christ which the Bible speak about.