

Hebrews 6.11-12

Diligent in Faith

The Christians in Palestine have been diligent in love. However the author wants them to mature in their faith and patience so that they might be fully assured (have total knowledge) of the hope and promise of God that is before them. As we consider this idea for the next few weeks we are going to be examining in detail each of these key components. Faith, patience, knowledge and hope. We are going to begin at the beginning, faith. It is the one thing that sets true Christianity apart from all man-made religions. Man-made religion is ALWAYS going to be works based as the key component. It is always going to focus on what we can DO to make God notice us, to make God love us, to make God reward us. Man is always looking for something that he can do to set himself apart, to make sure that he is in control of his destiny, his soul's destination, his life, his ... but faith? Faith is the simple truth that we cannot, that we will not, that we do not and that any hope we have is totally found in the mercy and truthfulness of God. Faith is the knowledge

that if God is false, we have no hope at all; and if God is true, then we need no other!

I. FAITH TRUSTS GOD

a. Faith is not about sight or work, but about belief in the absolute authority, power and goodness of God.

Hebrews 11.1-4

1. Evidence of things not seen
2. Substance of things hoped for.
3. Certainty in the face of visible absence
4. Confidence that God can be trusted to honor His own word. Abel believed what God had told them, and offered his sacrifice according to the faith that was given him. He thus obtained the testimony that he was righteous in the sight of God

Abel was First generation after the fall

1. Parents had walked with God
2. They knew that the world was now broken because of human sin. There was no hope that they could restore it, only that God would honor what He said and cover their sin if they trusted Him and walked in His ways.

Matthew 8.5-13

- i. Faith implies simple belief.
- ii. Knowledge that what is believed is true.
- iii. There is no need of extravagant proofs or evidences,
- iv. faith is its own evidence.

Hebrews 11.5-6

- i. Enoch walked with God and God took him without him tasting death
- ii. He pleased God
- iii. He pleased God by having faith
 1. That God is

2. That God rewards those who diligently seek Him.

II. FAITH LOOKS LIKE WORKS - BUT ISN'T

a. No one does what pleases God

Romans 3.9-23

b. We do not seek Him, ever.

- i. The only ones who seek Him are the ones that He draws to Himself.

John 6.26-66

c. Faith is the missing alien component which must come from outside us

Ephesians 2.8-10

d. Faith comes by the Word of God being faithfully preached

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- i. The preaching of the word is the vessel of faith, it is the medium through which God imparts faith in the elect.

Acts 16:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Now a certain woman named Lydia heard *us*. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

- ii. Faith is not guaranteed for everyone that hears the bare words of the truth. Many will hear and not believe.

Hebrews 4.1-2

III. KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT FAITH KILLS

- a. The absence of faith in the presence of knowledge will ALWAYS lead to works based false righteousness.

Matthew 23.23-24

Faith is key for the act of obedience. Any attempt to obey God apart from faith becomes legalism, binding its practitioner to the law irrevocably.

b. Much knowledge apart from sanctifying faith is always destructive

c. Works are always going to tie back to the law

- Either

i. the law that man creates and tries to bind God to honor, which will always fail. - for today we will dismiss this option out of hand.

ii. Or the law that God created that man can never keep which will also always fail. Here we must understand that I am not making this up...

Galatians 2.15-16

- iii. The truth of faith is that it is the substance of true life itself

Galatians 2.20-21

- iv. It is the very promise of God that HE will deliver us from the power of the law...

Galatians 3.21-25

- v. This is the reason that any attempt to return to the law as a means of righteousness means that our faith is empty, of no truth and thus false and ultimately damning.
- d. Faith and works are not friends, they are opposites. Works HATES faith, and faith is the absolute master over works.

Romans 4.4-5

Romans 16.25-27

IV. FAITH PRODUCING KNOWLEDGE AND WORKS IS LIFE.

- a. consider again Galatians 2.20 for example.
There is faith IN something. It implies knowledge, it implies absolute fact, it implies truth that exists apart from our control or influence.
- b. This is the role of the law in our salvation
 - i. It shows us the knowledge of sin and convicts us of our need for a savior.
 - ii. It shows us our need, AND it shows us the provision of God for that need.

Romans 1.16-17.

This quote is from Habakkuk, and is one of only 2 places in the OT which mentions faith.

Habakkuk 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

1. Notice the conformity here, pride says I can do it. Faith says that we can NEVER please God with anything that we do! While the arrogance of man says “we can do it just fine thank you very much!”

- iii. The provision of God is the whole of our hope, and this must be the anchor to which we cling!

Romans 3.21-31

- c. This also leads us to obedience as the knowledge of what God loves and what God hates is unveiled before us.

Colossians 1.21-23

- d. And as faith matures it produces many blessings

Colossians 2.4-10