

Theme: The church is built on the faith of the saints who have gone before us, and is built up by the living faith of his saints today. It is by faith that we can trust God for His promises of the future and find rest in what he is doing through his church today.

Background & Introduction: Writing to those who are under trial. The righteous live by faith! But what is faith?

## I. Examining Faith

### A. An aspect of faith

1. More can be said
2. A faith that will endure

### B. Accepting the Word of God (1)

1. Looking ahead in faith
  - Assurance is the essence of faith, a state of certainty
  - To what God has promised, to what awaits the faithful
2. Living in the present by faith
  - Conviction is the action of faith
  - a. Without faith we live for the moment
  - b. In faith we seek to discern God's purposes, plans
3. Receiving Divine approval (2)
  - Luke 19:17; Galatians 1:10
4. Assessing God's Power (3)
  - Faith allows us to see and acknowledge God's power
  - We understand the world by faith

## II. Examples of Faith

### A. Three men of faith (4-7)

1. Acceptable sacrifices - Abel (Genesis 4:3-7)
  - We cannot truly honor God apart from faith
2. Pleasing God - Enoch (Genesis 5:21-24)
  - a. A life pleasing to God - which is impossible without faith
  - b. Believing that
    - He exists
    - He rewards his faithful one
3. Heir of righteousness - Noah (Genesis 6:9-22)
  - He believed and obeyed
  - And his faith, a sign of judgment
  - By faith, Noah inherited righteousness (cf. Romans 4:1; 10:6; Philippians 3:9)

### B. Abraham and the promise of God (8-12)

1. The action of faith
2. The boldness of faith
  - Walking by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)
3. The persistence of faith

NOTE: The place of the inheritance came after the obedience! (Genesis 15)

  - Looking toward the "city... whose designer and builder is God"
4. The reward of faith
  - a. A promised heir - and Sarah's faith
  - b. In inheritance beyond measure! (cf. Romans 5:12ff)

### C. Faith's power revealed (13-16)

1. In confidence and hope - "died in faith"
  - "Seen and greeted from afar" (Deuteronomy 3:25-27)
2. In witness
  - Of their true homeland (Genesis 23:4; 1 Peter 2:11; Hebrews 3)
3. In discernment
  - Acting on things "unseen"
4. In favor (16b)
  - God is identified with us by faith

### III. Exercising Faith

- A. In our own lives
  1. Know that God is faithful
  2. Evaluate the present with an eye on God's purposes
  3. The promise is still before us!
- B. In Christ's Church
  1. They didn't see what we do
  2. What we have "together" is better than what they had
  3. We will "be made perfect" together

Conclusion: What does full assurance of faith look like in the Lord's church? (Hebrews 10:19-25)