

FAITH AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

HEBREWS 11:1-2

Text:

Introduction:

Faith is the common denominator of life. Everyone has faith and exercises faith almost every moment. You walk into a building you exercise faith.

No one can live a single day without faith.

In this chapter the writer of Hebrews turns his attention to the question of faith.

Notice:

1. THE FALLACY SURROUNDING FAITH

A. Faith is not a Blind Leap

There are those who feel that a life lived by faith is the life of a fool.

They assume that faith is nothing more than a leap into the dark.

Faith is much more than just walking around blindly waiting for providence to bump into you.

Faith is your response to the promises of God for your life.

God says, "I will lead you." Faith responds, "I will follow." God says, "I will feed you." Faith says, "I will eat." God says, "I will meet your need." Faith says, "It is done."

Faith is never a leap into the dark; it is always based upon the firmest of foundations, The Word Of God. The person who really walks in faith never walks through life blind.

B. Faith is not a Blank Check

There is a philosophy that has permeated many churches today, it known as the "Name it and claim it" philosophy.

People have been taught that if they want something from God, then they are to pray about it and believe it than look for it to happen.

There are many who have become discouraged in their faith and disappointed with God because He didn't do it like they were told He would.

Faith is not a blank check! God is not our little genie just waiting for us to place our orders or our wish.

C. Faith is not a Bad Choice

There are those who would say that it is foolish to walk in total and utter dependence upon the Lord.

They call the Christian who lives by faith a fool! However, the Christian who determines to truly live his life by total faith in his Heavenly Father will never be disappointed with God, nor will he struggle through life blindly.

As believers, we can either choose to please the Lord, or we can choose to please ourselves. If we are determined that we are going to please the Lord, then we are going to have to walk by faith in Him and in His Word and will.

Now these are a few fallacies surrounding faith, now let's consider the Facts surrounding faith.

2. THE FACTS SURROUNDING FAITH

Faith is defined and described by verse 1. Notice that faith makes "things that are hoped for" as real as the things that are and it provides the unshakable "evidence" of those things that are ours as a result of our relationship to Jesus Christ.

Faith is the assurance that God will do exactly what He has promised to do!

We must remember that faith is not a lasso which we throw around God's neck to make Him do our will. It is not some button we push to force God into doing what we want. Many have prayed for things they wanted or thought they needed and their requests were denied.

Many of these people become bitter against God and cease to follow Him. Sometimes, the things they prayed for were legitimate, like the healing of a relative, a new job, some problem, etc. However, when they forget that they haven't been given a clear promise from God concerning that situation, they are in for disappointment.

We can pray about anything we want to, and then we can hope that it will come to pass, but we can only have faith in those things which God has already promised to bring to pass. When I expect God to do as He has promised, that is faith. When I expect Him to do as I wish, then that is presumption!

Prayers of Hope are different from Prayers of Faith.

Illustration:

When I pray that my neighbor will be saved, I can have faith that God will save him, if he will turn to Jesus.

However, I can only hope that he will be saved, because he may decide not to receive Christ.

When I pray that my need might be met, I can believe that it will be met because God has promised to meet it
- Phil. 4:19.

When I pray that a person will be healed, I can hope that it will happen. I know God has the power to heal, but I do not know that it is His will. I do not have His promise in the matter.

When I pray for the safety of my children, I can hope they will be safe, but I cannot have the absolute assurance that they will be safe, because I do not have the Lord's Word on it!

However, when God says it will be a certain way in His Word, and then you can count on it being just as He has said. Therefore, anything that is promised in the Book can serve as the basis for genuine faith.

3. THE FUNCTION OF FAITH

What exactly will faith do for you? After we are saved, there are certain functions which faith performs in our lives.

A. Faith Calms Our Fears

I am not sheltered from bad things, but in the midst of them I have His promise

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

1 Corinthians 15:57

⁵⁷ But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:17

¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

B. Faith Cushions Our Falls

I am not immune from sin and temptations, but when and if I fall, I have His promise! It is possible for the Child of God to fall down, but we can never fall out

John 10:28

²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

If we do fall, we have His Word that we will be forgiven. This is not an excuse to fall, but it is an encouragement to those who have and those who will!

C. Faith Confirms Our Future

I do not know what I will face tomorrow, but I know that when all my tomorrows are finished, I have a future secured in the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 14:1-3

¹ Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

Close:

God's will is that we live by faith! Not the blind leap of the foolish, not the blank check of misinformed, but the deep settled assurance that what God has said He would do, He is more than able and willing to do.