

June 9, 2019 -

Hebrews 11: 1-3 -

“Faith That Pleases God”

Introduction:

On the evening of July 16, 1999, John F. Kennedy Jr., son of US president John F. Kennedy, died when the light aircraft he was flying crashed into the Atlantic Ocean off Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. The two Bessette' sisters with him perished in the crash. The official investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) concluded that Kennedy felled victim to spatial disorientation while he was descending over water at night and consequently lost control of his Piper PA-32R airplane. Kennedy did not hold an instrument rating and therefore he was only certified to fly under visual flight rules.

A devotional I read told the story of a man flying a similar plane in the midst of a horrible storm. He could barely see 20 feet in front of the plane. He was forced to rely solely on the navigational instruments. These instruments guided him through the storm to the runway. There were moments when the confusion in the clouds could have been fatal, times when all his senses seemed to indicate that the instruments were wrong, making panic and pilot error inevitable. But he had been trained to trust the instruments. He trusted the instruments and landed safely. God endows each believer with the faith to see him through the storms of life. **Heb.11:6** says, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." We might also add that nothing pleases Him like genuine faith. Someone once said it this way, "Faith is daring the soul to go farther than it can see." This is exactly what the writer of Hebrews desire for this community of Jewish believers.

This chapter of Hebrews is called "Faith's Hall of Fame," it presents a long list of Biblical characters that pleased God. They all have one thing in common with you and me; problems, and at times big problems. Life is a series of problems; that's why we need this chapter. From studying these great heroes of the faith, we discover that everything God wants to do in our lives He wants to do through faith (Mt 9:29b). Last week in cp. 11:38 we learn a great biblical truth that no matter the test in life the just shall live by faith.

The most important aspect of our Christian life is **not** how often we pray, how much Bible we know or can quote, or how often we go to church. It is our faith-without which it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6a). Faith that pleases God must have three components. It must have the Right Substance, the Right Source and the Right Science.

I. The Right Substance (11:1a)

1. There is no definition of faith in the Bible; however, Strong's gives the definition of the Greek word "pistos" meaning - **a)** the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestowal of eternal salvation through Christ.

A general definition is conviction of the truth of anything, belief. Webster defines faith as a firm belief in something for which there is no proof and belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God, someone or something.

2. Hebrews 11:1 gives us a description of faith that pleases God saying, “*That this faith* is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”. The word translated substance means "that which stands under" or "foundation." Faith is the firm ground on which we stand as we wait for God to fulfill His promises. It is a firm foundation is Jesus Christ.

3. Faith kind of gives us a sixth sense. Non-believers have only five physical senses, which can deceive. However, God can't deceive; therefore, we can be certain of the hope of eternal life (Tit. 1:2a). Why? Because according to Titus 1:2 God cannot lie...

4. Faith gives substance to invisible and intangible realities that cannot be sensed with our five physical senses. As someone has said, "Faith sees the invisible, hears the inaudible, and touches the intangible." Faith is the eyes, ears, and hands of our souls. It's not the amount of faith but the **object of our faith** that makes the difference.

I remember trying to explain this to a man who had great faith in sitting on a ledge but not enough faith to trust in God... It is not the **amount** of my faith but the **object** of my faith that makes the difference!

5. One day a man asks Jesus to heal his son who had lost his ability to speak and had terrible convulsions. Jesus tells the man all things are possible to him that believeth; look with me at **Mk 9:17- 27---** In other words, he said, "I believe, but not enough." Do you know what Jesus immediately does? He heals the man's son. You see, it is not the **amount** of faith that matters; it is the **object** of your faith. It is like the lyrics of that old song: "Little is much when God is in it." That's certainly true of faith. A little faith in a great God can do great things.

6. Jesus Christ must be the object of our faith because He is the substance of things hoped for. Our faith doesn't save us; the object of our faith saves us. It is not faith in faith or faith in works. Galatians 2:16 expresses this truth: **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

Remember, the word substance means "that which stands under." What is it that "stands under" you and holds you up? Jesus is the Rock! If your substance-what holds you up is Jesus Christ, you have a faith that pleases God. Faith that pleases God requires the right substance,

II. The Right Source (11:1b-2)

1. Faith is also the evidence of things not seen (11:1b). This means we have confidence God will fulfill His promises, even though as yet we don't see any physical evidence. Faith causes us to believe God will do what He says even when it seems impossible. We don't need faith until we have problems we can't handle on our own. God allow us to have big problems so that our faith will grow.

Peter writes to believers who are having very serious trials and problems, telling them to rejoice because for a season they will have to be in heaviness through manifold temptations, or trials. He explains the trials will show the genuineness of their faith, which is more precious

than of gold. The end result of genuine faith tested, or refined, by trials is recorded in 1 Peter 1:6-**That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.**

2. Trials reveal the true quality of our faith. Tried in the furnace of adversity, the people listed in Hebrews eleven revealed their faith and grew in faith; therefore, they pleased God. That's why the elders obtained a good report (11:2). They received God's approval because problems didn't cause them to lose faith in God's promises. Faith believes God's promises in the Bible. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen [are] temporal; but the things which are not seen [are] eternal. --- II CO 4 18

The prime target of today's culture is the Bible. **So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:17** The more people want to sin, the more they attack and pervert God's Word. Satan used this same tactic to bring sin into the world. The Word of God will always be powerful and relevant. The Bible has the same character as its Source-the eternal, never-changing God (Mal. 3:6a). The components of faith that pleases God are the right substance, Jesus Christ; the right source which is God Word; and...

III. The Right Science / World View (11:3)

1. Faith that pleases God has the right world view that of a Creator. Faith not only lets us know where we are going in the future, but also where we came from in the past.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God (11:3a). Please note what the rest of this verse declares. This was written thousands of years before anyone knew about atoms and molecules. God created the heaven and the earth, the universe (Gen. 1:1). What is the basic of the critic attack "Genesis".

2. The Hebrew word translated created (ba-raw') means "to create out of nothing." Therefore, when something is created, it is spoken into being. God is the only Creator because only He can speak into being something that did not exist before. The first law of the 4 laws of **thermodynamics** is also known as the Law of Conservation of Energy, states that energy cannot be created or destroyed it must convert from one form to another. The original energy such as the Sun came from somewhere. Only God can create something from nothing.

---**Note Colossians 1:16 & 17.**

3. Whatever a person believes about the origin of the universe, they believe by faith. Some believe we are all here as a result of an accidental "Big Bang." Ken Ham liken this to an explosion in a print shop produces an unabridged dictionary or an explosion in a junk yard produces a Boeing 747. Until then, I choose to believe the inspired, infallible Word of God.

Conclusion:

It takes much less faith to believe in a Creator than in chance. We choose what we want to believe about creation based on the lifestyle we want to live. To live by faith we must trust Christ.