

POWER HOUR

6/1/2025

Lesson Text:
Hebrews 11:1-2, 4-13

Background Scripture:
Genesis 4:3-7, 5:21-24, 6:9-22

Devotional Reading:
Genesis 12:1-5, 17:15-22

“LEARN FROM GOOD EXAMPLES”

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. **Hebrews 11:6 NLT**

Time: about A.D. 67

Place: unknown

Hebrews 11:1-2 NLT

¹Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. ²Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation.

Hebrews 11:4-13 NLT

⁴It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed His approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith. ⁵It was by faith that Enoch was taken up to heaven without dying—"he disappeared, because God took him." For before he was taken up, he was known as a person who pleased God. ⁶And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek Him. ⁷It was by faith that Noah built a large boat to save his family from the flood. He obeyed God, who warned him about things that had never happened before. By his faith Noah condemned the rest of the world, and he received the righteousness that comes by faith. ⁸It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. ⁹And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner,

living in tents. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same promise. ¹⁰ Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God. ¹¹ It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep His promise. ¹² And so a whole nation came from this one man who was as good as dead—a nation with so many people that, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore, there is no way to count them. ¹³ All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it. They agreed that they were foreigners and nomads here on earth.

INTRODUCTION

Cooperstown, New York is the home for the Baseball Hall of Fame. People come to see Babe Ruth's uniform, Ty Cobb's glove, and many other artifacts and displays. It holds a collection of plaques honoring all those considered worthy of induction into the Hall. The Bible, too, has something of its own Hall of Fame, and it can be found in Hebrews 11. What sets the Bible's Hall of Fame apart is that it centers not on human achievement but on faith in what God can do. It is a "Hall of Faith." The entrance is marked by a succinct definition of faith followed by accounts of its members as they are marked by humility and a heartfelt confidence in God's goodness and grace. The Bible makes it clear that faith is the essential ingredient of the Christian life. This being the case, it is important that we consider exactly what faith is. Our lesson text presents a picture of biblical faith, first by description and then by examples. We have the names of people willing to trust God in the face of opposition against all odds. They pleased God with their faith, and serve as good examples for us.

- 1. Faith defined (Heb. 11:1-2).** Faith is the assurance of things that have not yet come to pass. In our minds, they are as good as done because we take God at His word. If God promises something we can be confident that it will happen, for God does not lie (Titus 1:2). Faith confirms our trust in God, Who is truth (cf. John 14:6). Describe some of your past struggles to trust God in the face of difficult circumstances. What happened? Looking back, what could we have done differently? Was the lack of faith justified? Have you ever noticed that one way God gives us courage in the present is to remind us of the ways He has worked in our lives in the past?

2. Faith in early history (Heb. 11:4-5). The hall of faith is listed for us so that we can look back at those who trusted God in biblical history and be encouraged to do the same. They provide us good examples to imitate (cf. 1 Cor. 11:1). Abel, the second son of Adam and Eve, brought a sacrifice that was accepted, unlike his brother Cain's. Abel's heart was in the right place, having given by faith the firstborn of his flock. His attitude was right before God. Faith has its roots in a right attitude before God. Did not God remind us that man looks at the outward appearance but God looks at the heart (1 Sam. 16:7)? We are also told that those who are pure in heart will see God (Matt. 5:8). What might be instances that hinder a pure heart in our lives and how those things can affect faith if not addressed.

3. Faith needed to please God (Heb. 11:6). Here is the crux of the matter; we cannot please God without faith. In other words, if we do not trust and rely on Him, we cannot please Him. What areas in life do you find it hardest to trust the Lord. Think of ways to encourage faith in those areas. Are there characters in the Bible who experienced struggles with similar issues? How did God take care of them? If we are to have faith in God, we must first believe that He exists. Further, we must believe that God is omnipresent and that He is working in our lives. We must believe that He rewards us when we seek Him. We must believe He is personal and seeks to have a personal relationship with us. He will never let us down. When we trust Him, He will provide for our needs in His own way and in His own time. The result will always be better than what we can plan for ourselves.

4. Faith to face the Flood (Heb. 11:7). The faith that Noah exercised was incredible. First, he had the task of living a righteous life in an evil community. Noah also had to trust God that He would send rain just as He promised, even though he may have never seen rain before. Genesis 2:5-6 tells us that it had not rained at that time; instead, a mist went up from the earth and watered it. It is possible this continued up to the time of Noah. Because of his faith, Noah continued to build the ark for over a hundred years before the flood came. He obeyed God and preached about righteousness and the oncoming punishment for the world if people did not repent (cf. 2 Pet. 2:5). It took faith to do that.

5. Abraham's faith (Heb. 11:8-12). Here is an account of a man who was asked to leave his country and go to an unknown land. There was no map or compass to guide him, and he did not even know the destination. He only had the promise of an invisible God that He would show the way one step at a time; but Abraham obeyed and left everything when he was already seventy-five years old (cf. Gen. 12:4). Abraham, like Isaac and Jacob who came after him, lived in tents and moved around in the wilderness because he trusted in God's promise of a "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). The hope of something truly permanent, even while they were in the wilderness, came with trusting God. We also read of Abraham in his old age trusting God for the child that was promised. He trusted God to keep His word, even though the situation seemed to make it impossible. Abraham waited for twenty-five years in faith before God's promise was fulfilled. Are we willing to hold on that long to the promises of God? Do you have some favorite promises from God. How long do you pray for something? Have you ever given up. Be encouraged and hold on in faith.

6. A visionary faith (Heb. 11:13). Sometimes God does not fulfill His promises as quickly as we want Him to, but God always has a plan. We must be willing to wait for God's very best, even if it takes a little longer.

POINTS TO PONDER

God commends those who trust Him when they do not see His promises immediately fulfilled (Heb. 11:1-2).

True faith always impacts the way one worships and lives (vs. 4).

Faith prompts us to act in accordance with the conviction that God will reward us (vss. 5-6).

People of faith obey God even when they do not fully understand Him (vs. 7).

People of faith act on what God says, leaving the results to Him (vss. 8-10).

God always rewards our faith, no matter how small or faltering it may be (vss. 11-13).

CONCLUSION

All over the world, people of all cultures and creeds are doing whatever they think they have to do to please God. Some offer sacrifices, and others follow strict rules in order to

prove their devotion; but the Bible makes it clear that all we need is to take God at His word and walk by faith in Him. Faith will show itself through obedience, but faith itself is the real issue.

The Bible is full of good examples that we can imitate. Christians must walk by faith, believing that God exists and that He rewards those who faithfully seek Him. Although God's timing is not always the same as ours, He is always faithful to keep His promises.

QUESTION(S)

1. What does the word "substance" in Hebrews 11:1 mean?
2. How is the biblical idea of hope different from the world's?
3. What does it mean to obtain a "good report" (vs. 2)?
4. What does "he being dead yet speaketh" mean (vs. 4)?
5. In what special way did God bless the faith of Enoch?
6. What are the two crucial components of faith that make a relationship with God possible?
7. How did Noah demonstrate that he was a man of faith?
8. Why did the author of Hebrews devote extra attention to the life of Abraham?
9. What circumstances acted as tests of Abraham's faith?
10. How should the fact that we are strangers in this world affect the way we live?

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is *"Learn from Bad Examples"*

Lesson Text: **1 Corinthians 9:24-10:13**

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