



HEBREWS

JESUS IS BETTER

Hebrews 11:1-3

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the people of old received their commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

Outline

- 1. What is faith?**
- 2. Why do we need faith?**
- 3. How do we strengthen our faith?**

1. What is faith?

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Misconceptions about faith

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- “Blind faith” – faith vs. rationality
- “Name it and claim it” – word of faith theology
- Nominal faith – assent without action

1. What is faith?

The nature of faith in Hebrews 11:1

- Rational basis → God's word of promise: "*things hoped for, things not seen*"

God, Revelation and Authority Volume III

GOD WHO SPEAKS
AND SHOWS

FIFTEEN THESES, PART TWO

Carl F. H. Henry

No biblical basis exists for contrasting faith with knowledge, if by faith one means belief in the absence of evidence and by knowledge what is objectively meaningful and true. In the New Testament, faith presupposes intelligible revelation. Faith links us to realities presently invisible, realities that in the future will be acknowledged by all; faith is not blind belief.

—Carl F. H. Henry

1. What is faith?

The nature of faith in Hebrews 11:1

- Rational basis → God's word of promise: "*things hoped for, things not seen*"
- Future orientation → Promises yet unfulfilled: "*things hoped for, things not seen*"

Romans 8:24-25

For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

1. What is faith?

The nature of faith in Hebrews 11:1

- Rational basis → God's word of promise: "*things hoped for, things not seen*"
- Future orientation → Promises yet unfulfilled: "*things hoped for, things not seen*"
- Personal confidence → Certainty resting in God and acting in obedience: "*faith is the assurance... the conviction*"

1. What is faith?

Contrasts between distortions of faith and the real thing

- **Blind faith vs. the rational basis of faith**
- **Name it and claim it faith vs. the future orientation of faith**
- **Nominal faith vs. personal confidence**

1. What is faith?

Application: Three tests of faith

- Is your faith based on understanding of God's word?
- Is your faith oriented to God's promises?
- Does your faith lead to action?

2. Why do we need faith?

Hebrews 11:2-3

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a) Our relationship with God (v. 2)

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b) Our understanding of the world (v. 3)

2. Why do we need faith?

- a) Our relationship with God (v. 2)**
- b) Our understanding of the world (v. 3)**
- c) Our perseverance in faith (the argument of the letter)**

2. Why do we need faith?

Unbelief and belief / faith in Hebrews

- 3:12-4:3: unbelief kept Israel from entering God's rest, we enter through faith

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- **11:3-40: "by faith" or "through faith" (20x)**
- **12:1-2: "run the race . . . Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith"**

3. How do we strengthen our faith?

Three practical strategies

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a) Train the virtue of faith



Unless you teach your moods ‘where they get off’, you can never be either a sound Christian or even a sound atheist, but just a creature dithering to and fro, with its beliefs really dependent on the weather and the state of its digestion. Consequently one must train the habit of Faith. The first step is to recognize the fact that your moods change. The next is to make sure that, if you have once accepted Christianity, then some of its main doctrines shall be deliberately held before your mind for some time every day.



That is why daily prayers and religious readings and churchgoing are necessary parts of the Christian life. We have to be continually reminded of what we believe. Neither this belief nor any other will automatically remain alive in the mind. It must be fed. And as a matter of fact, if you examined a hundred people who had lost their faith in Christianity, I wonder how many of them would turn out to have been reasoned out of it by honest argument? Do not most people simply drift away?

—C. S. Lewis

3. How do we strengthen our faith?

a) Train the virtue of faith

b) Put faith into action

3. How do we strengthen our faith?

- a) Train the virtue of faith**
- b) Put faith into action**
- c) Focus on the object of faith**

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.



But remember, sinner, it is not your hold of Christ that saves you—it is Christ; it is not your joy in Christ that saves you—it is Christ; it is not even faith in Christ, though that is the instrument—it is Christ's blood and merits; therefore, look not . . . to your hope, but to Christ, the source of your hope; look not to your faith, but to Christ, the author and finisher of your faith; and if you do that, ten thousand devils cannot throw you down.

—Charles Spurgeon