

You Got To Have Faith!

"What Happens Next" Series- Part 05

Share/Connect time: If you could relive one year of your life, what year would you choose? Why?

How's your faith? In his book, "Mere Christianity", C.S. Lewis made the following statement:
"To have Faith in Christ means, of course, trying to do all that He says. There would be no sense in saying you trusted a person if you would not take his advice. Thus if you have really handed yourself over to Him, it must follow that you are trying to obey Him. But trying in a new way, a less worried way. Not doing these things in order to be saved, but because He has begun to save you already. Not hoping to get to Heaven as a reward for your actions, but inevitably wanting to act in a certain way because a first faint gleam of Heaven is already inside you."

What part of that statement really jumps out to you? What different elements of faith are mentioned in this brief statement?

Book: Hebrews 11:1-7

Heb 11:1 Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.

Heb 11:2 Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation.

Heb 11:3 By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.

Heb 11:4 It 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.

Heb 11:5 It 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.

Heb 11:6 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.

Heb 11:7 It 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.

Let's get into the Word:

The above passage is often referred to as the "Hall of Faith" because it recounts certain Old Testament characters and how they acted extraordinarily out of "faith".

Which of the seven verses listed above, gives you the most encouragement to live in an uncertain world?

Which aspect of these examples of faith is most challenging to you?

Why is having faith in God as Creator foundational to knowing God and growing in our faith?

I think we can agree that “*authentic faith*” requires a certain kind of close relationship, whether placed in another person or in God, our Creator. Let me share at least three principles that are essential to developing a close personal relationship:

1. **Trust** is essential for close personal relationships. If you are not able to trust someone, you will not allow yourself to get close to that person.

2. **Truth** is the basis for trust. If someone lies to you or deceives you, you will not trust what they say or do. You will always be on guard. A lack of truth erodes trust and causes distance in relationships.

3. **Love** is the response of trust and truth in a relationship. By love, I mean, “seeking the highest good of the other person”.

Let’s discuss how these three principals intersected with God and how they were evident in the relationship of faith within the stories of the above characters:

Faithful Hero	Evidence of Trust	Evidence of Truth	Evidence of Love
Abel			
Enoch			
Noah			

Look at Heb. 11:6 again. How does this verse speak to you about approaching God, pleasing God, and about rewards?

Homework:

When it comes to having a close relationship with God, which of these three areas would you like to improve upon? Trust in God? Obeying the Truths of God? Responding to others in love because of your faith?

Can you identify one step to take to move forward in this spiritual improvement.?