

Building blocks of Faith

Your **faith** is one of the most powerful elements in your life. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is a picture gallery of the heroes of faith. It also begins with a description of what **faith** is. We always need a description in order to know what we are talking about. Paul's words are very accurate and should be properly understood. **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."** The American Standard Version reads, **"Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen."** In the margin it reads, **"Now faith is the giving substance to things hoped for, a test of things not seen."**

This is a practical rather than a definitive picture of faith. Faith is accepting something as true and then acting upon that thing as truth - with all **confidence**. As it relates to God, it is taking God at His word. It is believing His promises. It is personal acceptance of His promises, relying on those promises, and making them the basis of your life. One aspect of **faith** is confident trust: the other is confident action. We read of the **"full assurance of faith."** Such 'full assurance' should always result in great accomplishments.

In **Hebrews 11** and elsewhere we read of what was done through **faith**. We often look upon those who accomplished such great things as being, in some way, superhuman. Too many Christians are inclined to believe, as the doubters of this world believe, that the day of supernatural faith has largely passed away. But that is not true. There are mighty works of faith being carried out today.

Faith is just as effective today as in any former age. There are people who have great faith and the might of their faith is manifested in awesome deeds of power. Many miracles are being performed by faith today, however, the world carries on in ignorance of them. Most people overlook the fact that those 'heroes' who are mentioned in Hebrews 11 were just ordinary people who did not consider their faith as being something special. They were probably entirely unaware of the great accomplishments of their faith. In like manner, many people are ignorant of the wonderful accomplishments of faith that are also prevalent today.

When we read of the "hero's" faith it is natural for us to say, *"I am not like them; I cannot have the faith they had."* But I am not so sure of that! They were only common folk with perhaps more than average faith. It may be that we shall accomplish a little less than they accomplished, but the faith in us should produce real results just the same. The time in which they lived was no more favourable for faith than today. In fact, there was probably not as much **faith** then as today. Why? Because greater knowledge of God and His Word have laid a broader and surer foundation for our faith. Perhaps we may not be able to duplicate the things they did, but our faith is a **gift of God** and He is still willing to impart it to each of us in sufficient measure. He is not a "respector of persons."

Faith brings certainty. Without faith there can be no certainty. It brought certainty to Paul. He declared, **"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him."** God is worthy to be believed. He cannot lie because His nature is truth and righteousness. He never changes. He never forgets His promises. He never turns away from those who trust him. Therefore, have faith in God. God's promises are **fact**. The greatest fact in our lives is that we believe in God, and act upon that belief in a way that produces definite results. In fact, there can be no other basis of true happiness except **faith**. It is the foundation of all. To believe in God as the New Testament pictures Him, and to accept Him as He is represented to be, and to submit to Him as such faith would lead us to do, is to be truly **happy**.

Abraham believed God; therefore he did not stumble at God's promise. He took God at His word, then acted upon His word just as though there could be no such thing as questioning it. God's Word is true. His promises were meant to be fulfilled. They are "yes and amen" to everyone who believes. God has no desire to avoid fulfilling that which He has promised to do. He is under no compulsion. He promised because He wanted to do the things He has promised to do. Yes, He will do what he has promised. Do you believe it? It is true, whether or not you believe it. You will get the benefit of it only by believing it. You can believe it! You have the power to believe it. All fears that God will not do what He has promised are foolish fears. If you will believe, God will do the rest, and victory will be yours.

Faith will give you **courage**. There is no telling what God will do for those who trust him. The life of faith is the most satisfactory of all lives. In fact it is the only satisfactory life. Matthew Henry has said, *"None live so easily, so pleasantly, as those who live by faith."* Children live easily! Children implicitly trust their parents. They believe they will be cared for. They believe their needs will be supplied. They believe they have nothing to fear. They have the **confidence** expressed by a little boy who was threatened with injury by a larger boy. He said (as he looked the other squarely in the face), *"No, you won't hurt me. My daddy won't let you."* If we have the same confident **trust** in God, we too can say, *"My God will not let you"*. This is not imagination. It is reality. We should cultivate an attitude of **faith** toward God, an expectancy that He will take care of us. This

brings to us the confident assurance that we have nothing to fear. This in turn brings **rest** and **peace**.

Someone once said, *"We should train ourselves to meet everything in that attitude of mind that expects all things to work out right."* Why should we not have such an attitude? Why should we not expect such things? We've every reason to be confident of this result. Instead of questioning, fearing, trembling, in case we might fail, let us exercise definite **faith in God**, and build a life worthy of the great God that helps us. A motivational speaker said, *"Don't wonder if you will fail, but rather think how you are going to succeed."* That is the attitude with which we should face life.

Faith produces the **building blocks** with which we build true character. With them we can build a life that the earthquakes of unfavourable circumstances cannot tear down. And always remember, faith manifests itself in or leads to **obedience**. If we believe God is King then He has the right to rule over us, And if we believe the Bible is His law, it will bring us into an attitude of obedience. It will be our joy to do His will. Such faith will end rebellion. There will be no questioning, but sincere, whole-hearted **obedience**. It will not be the obedience of fear but the obedience of love. Its language is, *"I delight to do your will, O God."* Faith also manifests itself in submission to God's will, and this yielding to His will becomes a great building force in our lives.

Sometimes it is easier to believe in God than to believe in ourselves, but there are abundant reasons why we should have faith in ourselves too. If we know we're sincere, earnest, and trying to do God's will; if we know our purposes are right and our actions are founded on such purposes; we have an excellent foundation for having faith in ourselves. I do not mean faith in ourselves apart from God, but faith that God and us are **partners**, that God and us can accomplish great things. God wants us to walk boldly - unafraid that He will fail us and unafraid that we shall fail. We need self-respect and also self-esteem. We need to have confidence in ourselves, in the sincerity of our motives, and in our just and right intentions.

Again, we should have faith in God's respect for us. It is not humility to call ourselves "worms of the dust." We are men and women of God. We are somebody. Worthy children of God. Jesus said, ***"They shall walk with me in white for they are worthy."*** To be sure, there is no Biblical standpoint from which we should consider ourselves unworthy. We have wonderful possibilities. We are wonderful beings. God counts us worthy to stand in His presence before His throne. There is therefore no need that we should go through life in sackcloth and ashes. We should recognise that God respects us and esteems us highly. He would not have sacrificed His Son for us had this not been true.

We must therefore, stand by **faith**, learn to exercise **faith**, learn to **live by faith**, and judge ourselves righteously. Do not let your feelings master your faith. Make your faith master your feelings. As a general rule, when you believe right you will feel right, but very often faith is based on feelings instead of on realities. It does not matter how you feel, or how you feel you are? This is to be settled by your faith quite apart from your feelings. So when you settle it leave your feelings out, as they are not evidence. Faith itself is the only evidence!

We should make a practice of building into our lives (day by day) the **building blocks of faith** - not the building blocks of doubts and fears, anxieties and worries. There are plenty of building blocks of **faith** to be had and used straight from God's word. In learning to build with these **building blocks** of faith we learn the secret of a "singing heart" - of a joyful happy Christian experience, of a certainty for our future (together with as much certainty for the present).

So remember, have a confident assurance that God will help you build your life His way! And His way will cause you to succeed in all matters of life!