

# Real Faith (1) – It's All About Jesus

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Today we start a new series on Real Faith.

This is a challenge to move from the milk of the Word to the meat of the Word. It's fresh opportunity to challenge ourselves to grow in maturity.

As we approach the subject of Real faith lets be very clear. We don't look to idolise faith, or worship faith or need to find magic keys to faith. We simply need to focus on Jesus. Delight in Him, in His presence and love His Word.

This series on Real Faith is about real people who lived in the real world; that's why it's so relevant for us today. Hebrews 6:11-12

The context of any preaching is important.

Hebrews 11 comes after 1-10! It's all about Jesus. Originally written to Jews who would have understood the significance of these passages.

Hebrews starts with God's desire to speak to us and demonstrates His passion and care for us through Jesus Heb 1:1-3. It ends with Jesus Heb 13:8 In a nutshell start, middle and finish with Jesus. Heb 2:9-10, 14-15, Heb 3:1 Heb 4:14-16 Heb 7: 25-27 Heb 9:27-28 Heb 10:19-23

Two themes which run through Hebrews;

- **Jesus** - considering His example of faith 3:1, 12:3
- **Application** - real people applying real faith in real lives Heb 11

The so called hero's of faith in Hebrews 11 faced some tough times. They looked to the faithfulness and character of God which was ultimately displayed in Jesus. We are encouraged to follow their examples of faith.

## **Developing Your Faith** (To be expanded over the coming weeks)

Faith is vital in our lives. It is vital because;

- It pleases God. Hebrews 11:6
- Whatever is not of faith is sin. Romans 14:23
- Situations are moved by faith. Mark 11:23-24
- Faith is the receptive quality of prayer. James 1:6
- The Devil is resisted by faith. 1Peter 5:9

## **Important Distinctions of Faith**

Whilst faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit (see 1Corinthians 12:9-11), this gift is given by the Holy Spirit for creative miraculous work. There is also a work of grace in our lives which enables us to be saved (Ephesians 2:8) and to enable us to function as the Body of Christ and to live our lives in the will of God (Romans 12:3)

- 'Faith is a gift from God, not earned by works. Unbelief can become insistent thinking that by works of some kind it can force God to answer' E.W. Kenyon

## **So Faith is God given, not man made**

- Avoid legalism, that is 'forcing' faith by works or effort
- We cannot 'produce' faith for events; we have faith given to us for salvation. That faith can be weak or strong, but it can be increased!  
Romans 4:20-21 2 Corinthians 10:15b

## **Read Hebrews 11 verses 1 and 6 Amplified Bible**

1. Now Faith is.....faith is in the present tense. It is a present experience. Those strong in faith in the past are not necessarily strong in the present. Faith is not for the future in that sense. For example; he/she knows that God will heal them one day–this is not faith.
2. Faith is the substance of things 'hoped' for. There must be hope present for faith to be exercised. Romans 5:5 (NASV). Faith is released by the knowledge of God's love. It is released in the heart by the Holy Spirit and by the promises in the Word of God. Romans 15:13
3. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Faith has substance, but importantly this is not evident to the natural senses. It moves on the word of God and because God said it, not on physical evidence.
4. Faith believes that God is. This means recognising that God is God of the situation or circumstance and that He is both willing and has completed all that is necessary for the success of what is believed for. Faith is a receiving or an entering of rest, the rest of God. Heb 4:9-10. Moses experienced this when he encountered God through the burning bush in Exodus 3:14. Overwhelmed by the challenge of faith ahead of him God simply revealed Himself to Moses as 'I AM'. (Moses focused on his past fears and failures and the terror of the commission he was being given). But in the present tense God said 'I AM'.
5. Faith must come to God. This is clearly our responsibility. James 4:8. We must believe that He will reward those who diligently seek Him. There are numerous examples of this in New Testament as people came to Jesus. They believed that He was a healer and they diligently sought Him and pressed into Him. They walked for miles to hear Him; they ripped off roofs to get the sick to Him.

## **Summary**

Faith is a present experience. It is based on hope in the heart. It has substance despite being in an unseen realm. Faith is something experienced out of relationship with/& knowledge of God. This enables promises not seen to be possessed. It moves in an unseen realm - we walk by faith not by sight.

## **Cell Questions and Discussion Points**

- In what ways did Jesus display faith in God the Father and the Holy Spirit?
- How can something unseen become reality through faith?
- Give a personal example of when you recently stepped out in faith.
- How can we apply this word as we seek to reach others with the Gospel?
- Pray for and encourage one another.