

FAITH

Sunday Morning: December 9, 2001

Text: Hebrews 10:34-39 ". . . **knowing** [present active participle] in yourselves that ye **have in heaven** a better and an **enduring** [present active participle] **substance**. 35. Cast not away therefore your **confidence**, which hath great recompense of **reward**. 36. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, **ye might receive the promise**. 37. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38. Now the just shall live by **faith**: but if *any man draw back*, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39. But we are not of them who **draw back** unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

Hebrews 11:1 "Now **faith** [noun] is the **substance** of things **hoped** for, the **evidence** of things **not seen**."

Last Sunday we looked at a very significant thought of the meat of the Word which is the Word of God in contrast to the scriptures. The meat of the Word speaks of faith. This morning I want us to reflect upon what faith is. I am not sure just where we are headed but we will be looking at verses that deal with faith that pleases God.

FAITH DEFINED

Faith is a noun that **names something**:

Hebrews 11:1 "Now **faith** [noun] is the **substance** of things **hoped** for, the **evidence** of things **not seen**."

First of all, faith is a noun and not a verb. A noun is a person, place or thing. Faith, being a noun, is a quality like the noun beauty.

FAITH NAMES HOPE AND EVIDENCE

Faith names the **substance** that a child of God **hopes** for. Faith **names** the **evidence** of the things not seen, yet hoped for.

What does verse 1 really mean? By faith I put substance to things that I can not see that I find written in His Word so that they become real to me. Substance produces reality. When I pick up the Bible I experience it's substance. Another factor is that I can see the Bible that I have picked up therefore faith does not enter into my experience of picking up the Bible.

Faith operates in a different realm. Faith puts substance on things that I can not see, so that I can touch it in my heart and thoughts. When I walk through a room that has tables and chair in it my path of walking changes so that I do not trip over the tables and chairs. Not only does faith provide substance to things that I am hoping for, but it also provides evidence that they are real. Seeing tables and chairs in a room I know that they have substance. Because they have substance, I change my path through the room based upon that knowledge. When faith puts substance to things that I do not see yet I hope for them, I alter my walk in a way so that I can obtain them. We know that there are two roads. There is the narrow road and the broad road, and by faith we walk down the narrow road to obtain the objective of life the coming kingdom.

Faith provides substance for things that we hope for like rewards and treasures in heaven. Faith put substance to being recognized as a good and faithful servant. Faith puts substance to the joy of the Lord. Faith puts substance to the kingdom of the heavens.

These are things that we hope for and may not get. There are those who want to teach that *hope* in the Bible is a sure thing. Common since tells us that what we hope for we may not obtain or attain.

We have an example of faith in practice in:

EXAMPLE

Matthew 9:21-22 "For she said within herself, If I may but **touch** [evidence of faith] his garment, **I shall be whole** [substance]. 22. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; **thy faith** hath made thee **whole**. And the woman was made whole from that hour."

Faith put substance to being made whole. The evidence of that hope of being healed or made whole was the touching of the garment of the Lord. Again faith put substance to the thing hoped for and that was healing. The evidence was working her way through the crowd and got down on her knees and touch the hem of his garment, Matthew 9:20. The Lord did not heal her on purpose, it was her faith in being made whole that caused power to go from the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

FAITH IS NEW TESTAMENT

Romans 10:17 "So then **faith cometh** by **hearing**, and hearing by the **word of God** [Christ]." (Word of the kingdom Mat. 13:19)

This verse gives insight in how faith is built up. Faith does not grow by feeding on the milk of the Word. Paul wanted to perfect that which was lacking in the faith of those in Thessalonica in 1 Thessalonians 3:10 "Night and day praying exceedingly that we . . . might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?" How would Paul perfect that which was lacking in the faith of those in Thessalonica? By preaching the *Word of God* which is the word of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The *word of God* is defined in the following verses.

THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM

Luke 8:10-11 "And he said, Unto you it is given to know **the mysteries of the kingdom of God** (the word of the kingdom, Matthew 13:19): but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. 11. Now the parable is this: The **seed is the word of God.**"

The mysteries of the kingdom of God in this verse is also referred to as *the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven* in Matthew 13:6 and *the word of the kingdom* in Matthew 13:19. Faith is increase by the preaching of the word of the kingdom or the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens and not a message from the milk of the word on salvation.

It is by the hearing of the *word of God* that faith is increased and the *word of God* is the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

FAITH AFTER LAW

Galatians 3:23 "But **before faith** came, we were kept under **the law**, shut up unto the **faith** which should **afterwards** be **revealed.**"

This verse helps us to know when faith was revealed. Faith was not revealed until after the Mosaic law, with it's ordnances, were nail to the cross. It was after the law that faith was revealed.

Someone might say, "What about all those in Hebrews 11 who lived by faith?" That is a good question and we find the answer to that question in Romans 4.

BEFORE LAW, FAITH RECKONED

Romans 4:9 "*Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that **faith** was **reckoned** to Abraham for righteousness."

What was reckoned to Abraham? Faith was reckoned, imputed, or counted to him for righteousness. Because faith was not revealed until after the law, God gave him credit for living

by faith. There is no word *faith* in the Old Testament. There is faithfulness, but the word faith is not in the Old Testament like we have in the New Testament. Because Abraham put substance to the promise of God, and produced evidence by leaving his family and traveling to the land promised. Because of Abraham believed God and lived accordingly, God reckoned to him faith.

STRONG IN FAITH

Romans 4:20-24 "He staggered not at **the promise** of God through unbelief; but was **strong in faith**, giving glory to God; 21. And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22. And therefore **it (faith)** was **imputed** to him for righteousness. 23. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that **it (faith)** was imputed to him; 24. But for us also, to whom **it (faith)** shall be imputed, if we believe [present active participle] on **him [God the Father]** that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;"

God promised Abraham a son through Sarah. Because of the ages of Abraham and Sarah it would be impossible for Sarah to conceive, yet Abraham did not stumble at the promise. Abraham was fully persuaded that Sarah would conceive and bear a son to them. Because he was fully persuaded that what God had promised he would perform, therefore faith was imputed to him for righteousness.

The promise given to Abraham and Sarah had a broader vision. The promise made to Abraham was that his seed would inherit the land of Canaan as well as the kingdom of the heavens. That promise was given to him in Genesis 15.

Verse 24 tells us that faith will be imputed to us if we continue to believe in the present tense. The word *believe* is a present active participle and being a participle a verb has been changed into a noun. Faith will be imputed to us if we continue to believe in the present tense. The present tense implies that believing can come to a halt. If we stop believing in the present tense, then faith will not be imputed to us and we will have the righteousness which is of faith imputed to us either.

The later part of verse 24 is telling us that faith is imputed to the ones believing on *him*. The pronoun *him* is a reference to God the Father. This is not salvation. We are born from above when we believe on the Lord Jesus and his finished work on Calvary.

When we believe in the present tense on God the Father, we are bring to mind the resurrection of Jesus or Lord from the dead. 1 Peter 1:21 "Who by him do believe [present active] in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your **faith** and **hope** might be in God." 1 Peter 1:3-4 "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a **lively hope** by the **resurrection** of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4. To an **inheritance** incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,"

FAITH CAN FAIL

Luke 22:32 "But I have **prayed** for thee, that **thy faith fail not**: and when thou art converted (turned around, come back to me), strengthen thy brethren."

The Lord prayed for Peter that his faith would not fail. Faith can fail. If our faith fails we will miss what we are hoping for. Faith fails when the thing that we are hoping for does not seem real. The substance of the thing hoped for is gone. When we lose the substance we change our evidence by departing from the faith.

When we talk about faith failing we are not talking about loosing our salvation but the reward of the inheritance.

LACKING FAITH

1 Thessalonians 3:10 "Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is **lacking** in your faith?"

Our faith can be lacking or wanting. We can be short on faith or the substance of the thing hoped for begins to diminish. When that happens then our behavior giving evidence of the thing hoped for also wavers.

LITTLE FAITH

Matthew 8:25 "And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, **save** (hope to be saved) us: we perish. 26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye **fearful** (no evidence of faith), O ye of **little faith**? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm."

Here we have an illustration of lacking faith. The disciples were on the sea of Galilee and a storm came upon them and they began to sink. The Lord was at peace and taking a nap even though the waves of the sea were coming over the boat. They asked the Lord to save them. That was the hope that the disciple had, and that hope had very little substance. The evidence they demonstrated was fear. When fear rules, evidence of faith is lacking. The Lord rebuked them for not having faith.

SALVATION NOT A HOPE

Acts 16:30-31 "And brought them out, and said, Sirs, **what must I do to be saved?** 31. And they said, **Believe** [verb, not faith, aorist tense] on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **thou shalt be saved** [not a hope, it is indicative, a fact], and thy house."

When Paul told the Philippian jailor to believe on the Lord Jesus he did not use the word hope at all. If you believe on the Lord Jesus you will be saved and you do not have to hope you will be saved. Salvation becomes a fact and a reality.

When you accept the Lord Jesus you do not have to wonder about whether you are saved or not. If you have genuinely accepted Jesus Christ as your personal savior. One thought to keep in mind is that if you don't know you are lost and need of a savior you can't get saved. You have to know that your sins have separated you from God, and that you are dead in those sins. When you accept for yourself what Jesus Christ did on the cross for your sin you are born into the family of God.

The verb that Paul used emphasizes that salvation is a one time event. Paul uses the aorist tense of the verb believe. By using the aorist tense he was telling the jailor that salvation is a single act of believe which brings birth from above.

HOPE OF GLORY

Romans 5:2 "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in **hope of** the glory of God."

The hope of a Christian is the glory of God. Sometimes we get the wrong idea about the glory of the Lord because of the art that we see in the museums. Artist conception of the glory of God is a head glowing with a circle of light which is known as a halo. The glory of the Lord is not a shining light but honor, and position or rank.

I do not hope that I will be glowing in heaven. I do not want to just glow. Moses was a man that glowed and what did they do to him? They put a sack over his head. I do not want to have a sack on my head during the millennium but I do want to have honor and a prestigious position. What prestigious positions are available? Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. I want

to have the honor of a king or a lord. It is through faith that we access the grace to make it possible for us to stand and rejoice in that hope.

HOPE OF JUSTIFICATION

Galatians 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have **believed** [verb, aorist tense] in Jesus Christ, that we **might** be **justified** by the **faith** of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

The verb *believe* is in the aorist tense which indicates that they were saved. After salvation, then, there is the possibility that **might** be justified.

What does it mean to be justified? To be justified is to stand in His presence without charge. I do not want to hear the Lord say that you were a wicked and unprofitable servant. You saved your life for yourself rather than living it for me. You tried to gain the whole world, therefore you are going to lose your life in the coming kingdom. I do not want to hear him say depart from me because you lived a lawless life.

I do want to hear Matthew 25:23 ". . . Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Notice that justification is on the basis of *faith*. If I do not make shipwreck of the faith I will stand approved and receive the above commendation. If I make shipwreck of the faith, that is the day I stop pleasing the Lord and will become chargeable of departing from the faith.

DEPARTING FROM THE FAITH

1 Timothy 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall **depart** from the **faith**, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"

Notice that the teaching of the devil and his demons is to depart from the faith. If you stop living by faith you have believed what they have taught you and I assure you that will not be pleasing to the Lord. If you depart from the faith you will not be justified.

HOPE OF FAITH A CROWN

2 Timothy 4:7-8 "**I have fought a good fight** (evidence of faith), I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a **crown of righteousness** (substance of faith), which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Notice that the **evidence** of **faith** is fighting a good fight and **finishing** his course and **continuing** in the faith. The substance of Paul's faith is the crown of righteousness. There is one other evidence of Paul's faith and that is loving the appearing of the Lord for him. If you are anticipating the soon return of the Lord you will produce the evidence of the substance of faith.

SUBSTANCE, REWARDS

Hebrews 10:35 "Cast not away therefore your **confidence** (evidence of faith), which hath great recompense of **reward** (substance of faith)."

Here we have another example of the substance of faith and the evidence that the substance is real in our minds and heart. The evidence of faith is confidence and the substance of faith is rewards. I hope that I will have some rewards in the day that I stand before the Lord. I may not have rewards because of 2 John 1:8 "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."

Do not cast away the evidence of your faith which is confidence. Put substance to the rewards that you are hoping for.

HOPE OF THE PROMISE

Hebrews 10:36 "For ye have need of **patience** (evidence of the hope), that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive **the** (definite article, a defined promise) **promise** (substance hoped for)."

What is the patience or endurance? It is the evidence that promise is real. What makes the promise real? Faith. Faith gives substance to the promise and our enduring give evidence that we really want the promise. What is the promise? Notice that the word *promise* has the definite article before it and what that is saying is that there is a definite promise in mind and it is defined in the following verse.

THE PROMISE DEFINED

1 John 2:25 "And **this is the promise** that he hath promised us, *even eternal life*."

The promise is a life of honor in the kingdom age. The word *eternal* is not translated correctly. It should be translated age or age-lasting because it is an adjective describing the life. What age will we enter into life? It will be the kingdom age.

THE PROMISE NOT SURE

Hebrews 9:15 "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions (transgressors) *that were* under the first testament, they which are called **might receive the** (definite article, a defined promise) **promise of eternal inheritance**."

This verse is speaking to those who are **the called**. There is the definite article before the participle *called*. Who are the called? It is the saved that are called according to 2 Timothy 1:9 "Who hath **saved** us, and **called** us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," What are the saved called to? To his kingdom and glory according to 1 Thessalonians 2:12 "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." Notice the word *might* before the word *receive*. The verb is aorist subjunctive. The subjunctive indicates that there is a possibility of failing to receive an inheritance in the coming kingdom. What does the inheritance have to do with? Our inheritance will be rewards gained through works according to Colossians 3:23-24 "And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

We need the Lord's help to put substance on the rewards that we will enjoy during the millennial kingdom. Not only do we need to put substance to the rewards we need to produce the evidence that those rewards are real. All of this is done by faith.

HE IS COMING!

Hebrews 10:37 "For yet a little while, and **he that shall come will come**, and will not tarry."

We do not know the day or the hour when the Lord will come to catch the church away to heaven with him, but one thing is for sure, we know when the time comes he is not going to wait around for a few days. What will he have with him when he comes? He will have those that have gone on before us with him, but he also will have his reward with him as well.

REWARDS?

Matthew 16:27 "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels;

and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

When the Lord returns he is going to reward every saved, called child of God according to their works. If we have walked circumspectly we will receive a full reward. If we have departed from the faith we will be appointed our portion with the unfaithful.

REWARDS FOR EVIDENCE OF FAITH

Revelation 22:12 "And, behold, I come quickly; and my **reward** *is with* me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

The evidence of faith is works. If we have put substance to the rewards it will produce the evidence. You can not prove you have faith with words. It takes evidence.

EVIDENCE OF THAT

James 2:18 "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me **thy faith** without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works."

James tells us the evidence of faith is works. We are not talking about works of the flesh in this message but works of faith.

SUBSTANCE WITH EVIDENCE

James 2:20-22 "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith (hope of justification) without works (evidence of that hope) is dead? 21. Was not Abraham our father **justified** by **works** (evidence of that faith), when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22. Seest thou how **faith** (justification hoped for) wrought with his **works** (evidence of faith), and by works was faith made perfect?"

This passage in James is dealing with justification or approval before the Lord. Faith puts substance to being approved at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Faith without evidence is idle or doesn't work. The word *dead* is also translated *idle* in other translations. Obviously dead faith does not accomplish anything, just like a dead man cannot dig a ditch.

DRAW BACK FROM FAITH

Hebrews 10:38 "Now the **just** shall **live** by **faith**: but if *any man draw back* (just but not living by faith), my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

This verse warns us about drawing back from faith. The Lord is blunt about it when he says that *my soul shall have no pleasure in him*. I assure you I do not want that burden of knowing I am not pleasing him and he is not taking any pleasure in me.

FAITH PLEASES GOD

Hebrews 11:6 "But **without faith** *it is* impossible to **please** *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a **rewarder** (substance of things hoped for) of them that diligently **seek** him (evidence of that faith)."

This verse is also blunt. Without faith it is impossible to please God. We must put substance to rewards and the evidence that the substance is real by diligently seeking him.

NOT LIKE ISRAEL

Hebrews 10:39 "But **we are not of them** (Israel) who draw back unto perdition [destruction, ruin]; but of them that **believe** [of faith] to the saving of the **soul** [life and rewards]."

Those who draw back will be ruined when it comes to rewards and the millennial kingdom. The writer of Hebrews is encouraging them to continue in the faith by his confidence that they are of faith that will bring life for the kingdom age.

HAVE FAITH

Hebrews 4:1-2 "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*."

Instead of *a promise* in this verse, it should be *the promise*. The rest here in type is the kingdom of the heavens or the millennial reign of Christ. Israel failed to enter the land flowing with milk and honey, a type of the millennial reign of Christ from the heavens. The promise was preached to a saved people, the nation of Israel, but they would not put substance to the promise. Without substance given to the promise there was no need to produce evidence that what God said he would do.

The gospel of the promise has been preached in this message. Are we going give substance to the promise and then evidence needed to enter into the promise.

CONTINUE IN THE FAITH

Acts 14:22 "Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to **continue** in the **faith**, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

Paul was exhorting the disciple to continue in the faith. Continue to please God. Continue hearing the promises so that they become real. Becoming real, they have substance. If our faith has produced substance to the things that we hope for then we need to produce evidence that the things hoped for are real. We need to find out what we need to do that will give evidence that the things hoped for are real.

BE NOT MOVED AWAY

Colossians 1:22-23 "In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and **unblameable** and **unreproveable** in his sight: 23. **If ye continue in the faith** grounded and settled, and **be not moved away** from the **hope** of the gospel, which ye have heard, . . ."

If we continue in the faith then we will be holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight. It is important that we live a holy life. Living a holy life is living a life that is just. If we are just then we can live by faith. To be holy is to lead a clean life. You don't have to read very much Old Testament to see how important it is to God for his children to be clean. We find that in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. If you just touch a dead person you are unclean. That law does not apply today, but the point is that we can be soiled by those around us. We need to be careful how we walk and live in this present life. If we become unclean and do not obtain cleansing from sin, our vision of the hope will become blurred. When the vision of the substance is blurred or lost then the evidence also stops.

The day will come when you will see what you once hoped for and you will be denied the blessing of that hope. When that happens there will be weeping and bitter tears. May the Lord help us to continue in the faith.