

THE NECESSITY OF FAITH

HEBREWS 11:6 • TV128B

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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 of them that diligently seek him.”

I have a subject today that I think is going to interest most of you. I’m going to speak on the subject: **“THE NECESSITY OF FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.”**

I’m going to be reading from **Hebrews 11**. If you will turn to **Hebrews the 11th chapter** in your Bible, I am going to read **verse 6** for a text.

Now, I am always interested in any message that I can read or hear on the subject of faith; faith is the important grace, the foundation grace.

I want you to listen to this subject today: **“THE NECESSITY OF FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.”**

Now listen to Paul as he writes in **Hebrews 11:6**; the apostle says: *“But without faith it is impossible; (now notice his choice of words, the Holy Spirit is giving him the Word; all Scripture is God breathed and given by inspiration of the Spirit of God) without faith it is impossible to please God.”*

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He didn't say it was difficult or it's hard to do, he said: *"It's impossible to please God: for he that cometh to God (whether for mercy, whether for comfort, whether for salvation, whether for healing, whether in prayer; he that approaches God in any way) must believe."*

It's essential, *"he must believe that God is and that God is the rewarder of them that diligently, diligently, (not half-heartedly, not in an indifferent careless fashion) but to them who diligently seek him."*

Now, did you get those words? *"For it is impossible; without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*

Now, our Lord said this: *"If you can believe all things are possible to them that believe."* You see, the Word of God has a lot to say about faith. We are on the subject today that we can just go from Genesis to Revelation and find Scripture, after Scripture.

Our Lord said: *"Thy faith hath made thee whole, thy faith hath made thee whole."* Paul said, *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Paul wrote again in **Ephesians 2**: *"For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it's the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."* Peter said, *"We are kept by the power of God through faith."* So, here we go on the necessity of saving faith!

Now, I don't claim to know a lot about faith. I feel like the Centurion; I want to feel like the Centurion. I do it by choice because it is a reality. I feel like the Centurion who said: *"Lord; I believe help thou mine unbelief,"* don't you?

I will tell you this, any man who claims to be an authority on faith is most likely a stranger to faith. That's right; any man who claims to be an authority on saving faith is most likely a stranger to true saving faith.

When our Lord was going to the cross He said to His disciples: *"one of you will betray me."* And do you know what they all said, every one of them? *"Lord, is it I?"*

There wasn't a one of them that said: *"I know I won't do it."* Peter later said: *"Though all men forsake you, I won't."* But every one of them said: *"Is it I?"* We are not authorities on faith. Paul said: *"I'm not perfect; I've not arrived."*

But my friends; there is something I do know about faith; I do know these things by the Word of God. I do know them by the Spirit of God's revelation and I do know them from experience. But mainly I know these things from the Scriptures.

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I'm going to give you some marks or evidences of saving faith. I know something about faith and I will give you these things:

First of all: I know this, faith is the foundation grace!

Love, according to **1 Corinthians 13** is the greatest of these and hope is the comforting grace. Love is the greatest and hope is the comforting grace but faith is still the foundation grace. All other graces come from faith.

He said: *“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, but how are they going to call on him in whom they have not believed?”* There is no way to call on Him if you've not believed on Him.

You see, so faith is the foundation grace. Listen to this: *“He that believeth on the Son of God hath life: he that believeth not the Son of God shall never see life.”* You've got to believe on Christ even to have life, even to have love, and even to have hope. He's got to believe on Christ. That's the foundation grace!

Our Lord sent His disciples forth and He said: *“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned.”*

So, I know this about faith, it is the foundation grace. All other graces springs from faith. All other grace is built on faith. That is the foundation; that's the footer; that's what the whole building rests on.

When our Lord Jesus Christ said to Peter: *“You will deny me. Satan hath desired thee that he may sift thee as wheat, but I pray for you that your faith fail not.”*

His love got kind of shaky. His hope got a little shaky. His boldness got a little shaky but Christ said: *“I pray that your faith doth not fail.”* So, I know that faith is the foundation grace.

Second: I know this; I know this from the Word of God: *“faith is the gift of God.”*

True saving faith is not the product of the human heart. A man may have all types of faith in many things but I'm talking about saving faith in Christ. Listen to the Word of God, *“For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it's the gift of God.”* What's the gift of God? Faith is the gift of God, *“not of works lest any man should boast.”*

Listen to **Philippians 1:29:** *“It is given unto you to believe on Christ and to suffer for his sake.”* Faith is not the product of the human heart. It's impossible for any man apart from the aid and power of the Holy Spirit to believe anything about the Bible.

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In **Galatians 1:15** Paul said: *“It pleased God who separated me from my mother’s womb to reveal his Son in me.”* How did Paul get knowledge of Christ? Christ was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit.

How did Paul come to faith in one whom he hated before? The Holy Spirit gave Him faith to believe. So, I know this: *“faith is the gift of God.”*

It’s not produced out of a natural garden, it’s a flower that is not produced from the heart, from the natural heart; it is just not to be. It grows only in the garden of God. *“Faith is the gift of God.”*

Third: I know this; I know that we are justified by faith alone!

Four times in the Word of God, it says: *“the just shall live by faith.”* We are justified by faith, *“therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,”* knowing that a man is not justified by works in the sight of God or by the deeds of the law in the sight of God but by faith in Christ.

Martin Luther (the great German leader, reformer) in his early days was studying in a Monastery. Martin Luther was trying to gain acceptance with God by his own works. He was trying to gain favor with God by his own self-righteousness.

He found sin in himself. He would lie; he would pass the days and he would lie on the stone floor, the cold stone floor, in his little cell. That’s what it was, a cell in a Monastery.

They would find him almost unconscious and nurse him back to life. He would beat his body with all kinds of thorns when he had thoughts of lust, and thoughts of sin.

He would get thorns and beat his body until it bled because he was trying to appease a Holy God. He was trying to make himself without sin and righteous in the eyes of a Holy God.

One day he was sitting in the library. This was 400 years ago and he was studying the Bible. The common people didn’t have the Bible. The only people who had Bibles were the priests in the Monastery’s and the nuns in the Convent.

Those Bibles were chained to a post. He was reading the Bible that was chained to the post and he came on this Scripture: *“The just shall live by faith, (not by works, not by repentance, not by body beating, not by fasting, not by penance) the just shall live by faith.”*

He read that four times but he just pushed it away from him because that wasn’t his system of religion, that wasn’t his system of doctrine, that wasn’t what the natural man thought, “do this and do that and do the other and God will bless you; give this and give that and give the other and God will reward you. Go here, go there, and go yonder and God will reward you.”

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“The just shall live by faith.” It just kept piercing his mind while he went on about trying to make himself holy by his own efforts, not knowing that the root of sin was in him, the principle of sin was in him, the nature of sin was in him.

Finally, he went to Rome. While in Rome he was climbing some stairs in St. Peters Basilica. Those stairs were said to be by an old tradition to have been the stairs up which Jesus Christ walked and Pilate’s Hall. That’s what they said; that’s one of their traditions.

He was climbing up those stairs on his knees and there was some glass covering on the stairs. They may still be there, I don’t know; they probably are, the glass covering on the stairs. Under that glass covering was some red spots. They said that was Jesus’ blood. This is all tradition; this is all heresy.

But Martin Luther was on his knees. You were supposed to climb up those stairs on your knees counting your beads and you are supposed to kiss each one of those red spots under that glass covering and say so many, funny, silly crèches, you know.

He was on his way up those stairs kissing those spots and God spoke to him just like a bolt of lightning. This Scripture came to his mind; (this is Martin Luther I am talking about, to verify this story and it’s easy to find anywhere).

“The just shall live by faith, the just shall live by faith.” It’s not by works, not by these deeds of the law, not by these fastings, and beating his body and mistreating himself and living alone like a hermit, as a monk separated from the people: *“The just shall live by faith,”* faith in Christ, faith in His blood, faith in His merit, and faith in His righteousness.

And Martin Luther jumped off those stairs and ran out of that place. God almighty made him one of the greatest preachers of His Gospel that ever lived on this earth. He became the author of many hymns like: “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.”

He set the church to singing. Up until the time of Martin Luther the church didn’t sing, just some choir chanted in some foreign language. But, he set the church to singing. He published the first Hymn Book ever published on the face of this earth with seven hymns in it and set the church to singing.

But what set him free? One verse of Scripture: *“justified by faith, justified by faith.”* You better learn that!

Our Lord will not share His glory with a man. He will not share His glory with a system. He will not share His glory with a doctrine. He will not share His glory with anything. He’s the Saviour.

We are justified by faith. I know that is so! I know that if we are justified by works nobody’s going to be saved. You’re not and I’m not because if I make myself clean, if I claim I have no sin, my own mouth will prove me a liar.

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“If any man says he has no sin, he’s a liar and the truth not in him.” That’s what God said. *“If any man say that he hath not sinned; he makes God a liar.”* and that’s pretty dangerous; that is blasphemy. No sin, no sin can come before God unless it is paid for, unless it’s cleansed, unless its atoned for in the blood of Christ.

I know we are justified by faith and I’m going to preach that as long as God gives me a breath. *“It’s not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy,”* His mercy, and it’s not mercy if it’s bought, it’s not mercy if it’s earned, it’s not mercy if it’s paid for, and it’s not mercy unless it’s free to the guilty.

Fourth: I will tell you something else that I know; I know that saving faith is a growing grace, it’s a growing grace!

I hear people walking down an aisle shaking a preacher’s hand and making a decision and that’s the last you see of them. But are they saved? They say they are that’s what they say.

I see folks joining the church and getting baptized and getting their names on the roll and that’s the last you see of them. They don’t pray, they don’t witness, and they don’t rejoice in God. They don’t worship; they don’t praise His name.

They don’t love Christ; they don’t love one another. They are full of bigotry, hatred, malice, envy and jealousy. They don’t grow. They just stay that old, dried up, withered, church members all their lives.

Faith is a growing grace. Anything that grows not, knows not. This pulpit before me; it doesn’t grow because it’s got no life. But anything that’s got life grows. Faith is life and life is faith.

Paul said **2 Thessalonians 1:3:** *“Your faith growth exceedingly.”* Again he said: *“Grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.”* As your faith grows your assurance will grow. That’s right!

How do you grow in faith? *“Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow,”* grow in love, grow in joy, grow in peace, and grow in faith.

As your faith grows your love for Christ will grow, your love for one another will grow. As your faith grows your peace will grow and your rest will grow. The more faith you have in Christ, the less concern you will have for the world and for the flesh and for the luxuries of the world and all of these things. The more faith in Christ the less concern you will have for these things.

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It seems to me that the more some so-called, “Christian leaders,” the more they claim to believe, the bigger house they have to have, the finer wardrobe they have to have, the more luxury they have to have. I don’t understand that.

I always thought as you grew in faith, as your faith grows, that your concern for the flesh and your concern for the world, and your interest in the things of the world, and the fretting under trials and all of these things; I always thought they grew less and less as Christ grew greater and greater to you. Faith is growing grace.

Fifth: I know this; I know this about faith; I know my friends that there are many imitations of faith!

Now you stay with me and you listen to me; I’m going to tell you the truth: I have nothing to profit to tell you a lie. Like the preacher that said recently, “in order to tell you the truth, I’m going to have to tell you the truth” and that’s what I am going to do.”

There are plenty of imitations of faith that cannot save. There are plenty of imitations, for example:

First of all: A false faith! Now, people have faith. They have faith in this and faith in the bank and they have faith in the doctor and they have faith in the druggist, faith in this and faith in that and faith in the other. They have faith in their baptism and faith in their prayers.

They have some kind of faith but a false faith can excite the emotions. It said in **John chapter 2:23**, “*Now; when he was in Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did; (they were fascinated, they were amazed).*”

Our Lord healed a blind man and a deaf man and a lame man and they were amazed. They were fascinated and it says: “*they believed on him.*”

But read the next verse: “*But; the Lord Jesus Christ did not commit himself to them.*” He knew them. He knew their emotions were excited. He knew their emotions were stirred and He knew they were covetous people and He knew this interested them what they saw.

I will tell you another crowd that believed on Him, were those that He fed, the 5,000, with the two loaves and five fish, when Christ fed people, they followed Him.

He went on across the lake there and they showed up on the other side. He turned and He said: “*I know why you follow me; you follow me not because of the miracles but you follow me because of the loaves and fishes. You did eat and were full, that’s why you are following me to see what you can get out of me.*”

Secondly: Now, false faith will excite the emotion and it will whet the appetite; it sure will and

it will make a man follow Christ to see what he can get out of Him, see if he can get a new car, you know, or see if he can get a new house, if he can get his broken bones healed or see if he can get his cancer taken out.

He will follow Christ to see if he can get a yo-yo to play with in heaven, or, you know, a mansion or a cabin or whatever you want to call it; he will follow Christ for what he can get out of it. That's false faith.

Thirdly: False faith can reform the outward man!

Christ said to the Pharisees: *"You make clean the outside of the cup. You are like a grave; on the outside you appear beautiful to men, but on the inside, you are full of extortion and excess and lies and corruption."* You have done nothing but cleaned up the outward flesh and God doesn't look on the outward man; He looks on the heart.

Fourthly: And false faith can speak well of Christ!

Nicodemus did; he came in and said: *"Good Master."* The rich young ruler did, he said: *"Good Master."* These fellows called him *"good Master."* They spoke highly of Him but they didn't have saving faith.

The rich young ruler walked off; he didn't have saving faith but he spoke well of Christ. He said some good things about Christ.

Fifthly: Then, false faith can feel sorrow over sin!

It says: *"Well, I was awful sorry for my sins."* Judas was too. Judas brought the money back. A lot of you don't even bring the money back. Judas brought the money back and threw it on the floor and he said: *"I betrayed innocent blood."* He didn't have saving faith.

His false faith convicted him; his false faith gave him a sorrow for his sins. He said: *"I've was wrong."* Then, he went out and hanged himself.

Sixthly: False faith can do religious works!

The Publican in the temple said: *"I fast twice a week. I give tithes of all that I possess. I give alms to the poor."* Christ said: *"He went home not justified,"* he had false faith.

Seventh: False faith can tremble under the preaching of the Gospel!

"The more I heard that preacher the more my knees shook." Felix did too. *"I heard that preacher and I liked him."* Herod liked John the Baptist until he finally wound up killing him. False faith can make you tremble under the preaching of the Gospel.

Eighth: False faith can even gain high office in the church!

There wasn't but one treasurer in the early church in the disciple's group; that treasurer was Judas.

Ninth: I'll tell you something else; false faith can even persevere to the Judgment!

Men can hold to a false faith all the way to the Judgment and even stand and look into the face of Jesus Christ Himself and claim that they have a right to enter heaven and say, "Lord; now wait a minute, let's hold Judgment up a moment. Let me make my final plea."

Matthew 7:22 says: "*I preached in your name. I cast out devils in your name. I did many wonderful works in your name.*" And then, even in the Judgment, while they are holding to their false faith and holding to their profession of religion, and holding to their claim to heaven on the basis of their good works, He says: "*I never knew you; depart from me.*"

What is saving faith, this faith that is necessary?

Saving faith; I cannot give you a plan or a blueprint by which you can follow and can attain saving faith except to say "*that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*"

If I didn't have saving faith and I was desirous of saving faith I would bury myself in the Scriptures. I'd bury myself in the Word of God and I would go hear somebody who's preaching the Word.

I hear these fellows always talking about preaching the Gospel all the way around the world. I don't ever hear them preach the Gospel. I hear them go over here and pick out a verse of Scripture that has to do with giving so they can get some more money you know.

I hear them going over here and picking out a verse of Scripture that offends nobody and covers everything and touches nothing. I don't hear them reading the Scriptures and preaching the Gospel and telling sinners how God saves sinners.

If I were you, my friend, I'd go get me a Bible and I would bury myself in that Book because "*faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God: of his own will begat he us through the word of truth.*"

That's right; "*We are born again not of corruptible seed but of the incorruptible seed, the (blessed) Word of God.*" But, I would point you to God's Word.

First of all: I will tell you this: what is saving faith?

Saving faith consists of knowledge. Now, remember this, Paul said: "*I know whom I have believed.*" A man cannot believe what he does not know. That is impossible. You can't trust an unrevealed Saviour.

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A man cannot believe what he does not know; that's impossible. In order to believe, a man's got to know something about the Bible because that's where the Gospel is revealed in the Word of God. He's got to know something about the Book.

In order to be saved, in order to have saving faith a man has got to know something of the character of God. He's got to know something of the character of God.

In order to have saving faith a man's got to know something of his own character, his own condition. When the publican came to Christ for mercy he knew that he needed mercy because he was a sinner.

When the thief on the cross pleaded for mercy and for Christ to remember him he said: *"Lord; you are coming into a Kingdom. I'm getting what I deserve."*

He knew something of the character of Christ; he knew something of the power of Christ. He knew something of the glory of Christ and he knew something of his own inability and his own need and his own sinfulness.

In order to have saving faith a man's got to know something of the work of Christ. Throughout heaven we are going to sing this song:

**"Unto him who loved us
And washed us from our sins
In his own precious blood
And hath made us
Kings and priests to our God
Unto his name be glory
Forever and ever."**

Who is Jesus Christ? Who is He? You better know something about who He is. *"How can you call on him in whom you've not believed and how shall you believe in him of whom they have not heard. How shall they hear without a preacher?"*

You better know who He is and you better know what He did. He didn't die of pneumonia; He died on a cross. He shed His blood for sin. He didn't die as a martyr; He died as a sin-offering. He didn't die as a reformer, a defeated reformer; He died as a substitute, bearing our sins in His body.

But He didn't stay in the tomb, He arose again. Where is he now? *"He's at the right hand of God."* Well, why did He do all of this? Could somebody else have done it? Maybe you could have done it; maybe an angel could have done it. Maybe they don't need Jesus Christ.

Oh yes we do! He's the only Saviour because He's the only one who can enable God to be *"just and justify the ungodly."* He's the only one, the God-man who is able both to satisfy and

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to suffer, to satisfy God's righteousness and to suffer under the condemnation of God's judgment and live again. So, faith is knowledge.

Secondly: I would say that faith is agreement!

Paul said: *"I know whom I have believed. I am persuaded he's able."* I know He's able. I not only have read the Scriptures, I not only understand what they say about God and what they say about me and what they say about Christ but I agree with them, I agree with them. *"I believe the record that God hath given concerning his Son."*

There's no way; (listen to me now and you remember that I said this to you) there's no way to have saving faith and at the same time put a question mark on the Word of God. Can't be done; the Word of God is the final authority, it's the final authority.

"If they speak not according to the law and the prophets (the word) it's because there is no light in them." If any man bring not this message, if he bring any other message, Paul said, *"let him be accursed,"* (I don't care, he said) *if it be an angel from heaven, if it speak not according to God's word, let him be accursed when Jesus comes."*

So, I agree; I agree I am sinner. I agree I deserve to go to hell. I agree God doesn't owe me anything and I agree that God is the only one who can save and that through the blood of Christ.

Thirdly: All right; wait a minute! Saving faith knows; *"I know whom I have believed;"* saving faith is in agreement with what God says and saving faith makes a committal!

Now, my friend, you are going to make a committal, you are going to make a committal. You can die and perish knowing some things and even agreeing to some things but you've got to make a committal to Christ.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life." Not he that knows there is a Son of God, not he that agrees there ought to be a Son of God, but he who personally believes on the Son of God.

Christ said: *"Believe on me;"* I do, Lord I do. Christ said: *"Come to me;"* the best I can I come. Christ says: *"Trust me;"* I commit it to you, my home, my health, my happiness, my future, even my refuge:

**"My life, my love, I give to thee
Thy Son of God who died for me
Oh may I ever faithful be
My Saviour and my God."**

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I do believe that Jesus died for me. I rest in him; I trust in him, I commit my soul to him. Thomas Brooks said this: “He that believeth on Christ shall be saved, be his sins never so many. He that believeth not on Christ must be damned, be his sin never so few.”

What is saving faith? It is to “*know whom you have believed,*” not to trust an uncertain person, an uncertain sound or an unrevealed Saviour; it is to trust Christ as He is revealed in God’s Word. It’s to agree with Him, it’s to agree to be persuaded that “*God able to do all that he promised*” and it’s a committal.

“If thou shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead and confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord; thou shalt be saved: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, with the mouth confession is made unto salvation!”