

Faith

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 October 2011

Preacher: John Overton

[0 : 00] Sorry, I just turned this thing on a lot. Then we discussed what repentance actually is. Number one, we said repentance is seeing one's sin, recognizing one's sin, seeing it for what it really is, seeing it in light of how God sees it.

Number two, we said repentance is sorrow over one's sin, results in a brokenness, results in a contrite heart. We see that in Psalm 51 and other places in Scripture, Psalm 38.

Thirdly, we said true repentance was confessing one's sin. That's kind of the verbal expression of repentance in the life of a believer.

And then fourthly, we said that it's a turning away from one's sin, which is kind of what we normally want to think about when we think about repentance. It's first and foremost in our minds, often a turning away from one's sin. But that's kind of the last stage in the process of actually repenting. It's turning away. So, okay, in light of last week's lesson, this week we're going to be talking about the other subtopic of conversion.

[1 : 00] So we have repentance in one side and we have faith on the other side. Okay, so the other aspect of conversion is faith. Jesus Christ came in Mark 1.15 and he said, repent, and then he said, and believe in the gospel.

So first he said, repent, then he said, believe. These are the two aspects, main aspects of what conversion actually is. If repentance is a turning away from sin and thusly a turning around towards something else.

Okay, so I'm going this way and then I repent and I do an about face and I turn a different way. Then faith is the thing that propels you forward toward something else.

Okay, so I'm walking this way. I repent. That means I turn the other way and then I walk towards something else. Faith is what enables a person to do that. Okay, it's the actual going the different direction that faith is.

I kind of gave you a flawed illustration last week by saying that, by saying or telling you to think about conversion as a body and then faith and repentance as the legs of that body that enable it to walk around and move.

[2 : 11] I think it would be more accurate to say that conversion is the body, okay? Repentance is the legs of that body and then faith is kind of like the muscles. That give movement, that give mobility or strength to the legs to actually function and work.

I think that's more accurate. So repentance by itself is not a mobilizing thing. Just like legs without muscles are not a mobilizing thing. You have to have faith in order to move.

So no man has ever come to Christ solely on repentance. Repentance. It's kind of like taking a sip of water when you're thirsty, but not exercising the proper muscles to swallow.

Okay, it doesn't benefit you if you don't swallow the water and let it digest in your system. So the same thing is that if you only have repentance, if you only have the taking in of water, but you don't actually exercise that repentance with faith, it's kind of like you're wasting your time.

So again, no man has ever come to Christ solely on repentance. Many people genuinely repent for crimes against others or for misconduct or for acting irresponsibly.

[3 : 17] They genuinely feel broken about stuff like that. I recently was watching the news and I saw this guy, a young man whose face was covered in tears. He was sobbing, crying, yelling because he had been driving drunk and it had hit an oncoming car that was, I think, filled with children and killed them.

Okay, so this guy's in an orange jumpsuit, you know, on the defendant's side of a courtroom with his hands behind his back, you know, in handcuffs and he's crying out, he's sobbing, he's crying out, begging for mercy from the families that were prosecuting him for this crime.

Okay, that's an element of repentance. I think the guy was genuinely broken about that. But that isn't biblical repentance. It's not going to get him anywhere. It's not going to benefit him in Christ. It would not bring the man any closer to Christ.

And so a like-mannered repentance by you will not bring you any closer to Christ. There's a lot of things that we repent about, we feel sorry for, we get upset about, maybe tears stream down our faces about, that is not genuine repentance.

Okay? Genuine repentance is God-centered. God-centered. On the last day, if that man wanted to use an argument of, hey, well, I mean, I was genuinely repentant about this thing that I did.

[4 : 42] But he had no repentance or sorrow because he had committed some kind of offense against God, that wouldn't do him any good on the last day. He would still be judged as a sinner and still condemned to hell because he did not repent to the right person, to Christ.

True biblical repentance is directed towards the Creator and not fellow creation. Psalm 51.4 is a great verse. Turn there really quickly. I'll show you. Psalm 51.4.

This is a really common, again, chapter of Scripture, kind of like Hebrews 11.

And David is kind of had freshly committed adultery with this lady named Bathsheba. And then he had killed her husband to cover it up.

And he is approached by a prophet who exposes this for him. And he's led to kind of write this psalm or pen the psalm and his brokenness. And he says this in verse 4.

[5 : 49] So mind you, again, keep this in mind. He has just killed the husband of the woman that he committed adultery with. And he says, against you, referring to God, you only have I sinned against.

And done what is evil in your sight. He says, against you and you only have I sinned against. So David saw his sin as against, even in this situation, as against the Father.

And that's how you should think about true repentance. It's against God. You have sinned against God. He's the one supporting you accountable. You can sin against other people as well. And we need to ask for forgiveness for them as well.

We need to be given forgiveness when we sin against other people ourselves. But true repentance is against God. And that's where it's got to start. Okay?

Against you and you only have I sinned against. And done what is evil in your sight. So many men feel sorrow for sin. Not because of their crime. Not because of their offense. But because they were caught.

[6 : 55] Because by what they had done, they harmed themselves. They harmed some other person. So ask yourself this question. What good will it do me, having repented, to take a step in the wrong direction?

Okay? What good will it do you if you repent truly and then take a step in the wrong direction? If that step is anywhere that's not Christ, it's in the wrong direction. You could say it like this.

Just because you change lanes on the wide road doesn't mean you're not headed towards death.

Okay? A not God-centered repentance is kind of like changing lanes.

But you're still on the wide road headed towards death. You're not avoiding it at all. You're just changing lanes. Getting a clearer view to it, in a sense. The direction of one's faith, or the object of one's faith, or the person of one's faith, is by far the most important element of one's faith.

An element of repentance. Okay? There's only one way to get to God, and that is through Jesus Christ. John 14, 6 says what? I am the way. I am the truth.

[8 : 04] I am the life. Nobody comes to the Father except by me. So it starts with Christ, it ends with Christ. Your first step of faith after repentance must be towards Jesus.

And must remain towards Him until the day that you die. And that is the work of conversion. When somebody is converted, okay, when you are truly saved, you get an interest in Christ.

Your eyes fix on Jesus Christ. You see Him for who He truly is. You see your offenses against God, and you repent to God. Then He forgives you. He regenerates you.

He enables you to believe on Him savingly, and you start walking towards Him. And that happens for the remainder of your life. It's an ongoing thing. And so the life of a Christian is a life of repentance.

It's also a life of faith. Okay? We talked about repentance last week. This week is faith. That was the introduction. Let's get into it. Hebrews 11. If you turn to Psalm 51, go back to Hebrews 11.

[9 : 15] Again, now faith is the assurance or the substance of things hoped for. The conviction of things not seen. Here we are given the preeminent description of faith in all Scripture.

The best one is right here. It's only one little verse, and it's small, but it is loaded with truth. And I'm looking forward to getting into it.

And I want to start, as we begin to unpack this verse, I want to start with the very first word. It says, now. Okay? It says, now. We're going to start here. The author begins by saying, now.

Now, this word is a transition word. Meaning, that the reader should change the way that he was thinking to a new line of thinking.

Or he's, the author, in a sense, is going to transition the reader from what he just said to a new line of thinking. So, kind of like, in light of that, or like a therefore, or like a thusly, we're going to say this now.

[10:16] Okay? It's a transition phrase. A transition word. And because we're just jumping into this text, I need to give you guys some context. So you can understand what's happening here. It's going to help you understand the fullness of this verse, as we need to.

We need to be very careful to allow the verse to speak to us in its natural flow. So, here's a little context for you. For ten chapters now, the author has been laboring to prove one primary main point.

For ten chapters. That being, that the new covenant of grace, or of the blood of Jesus Christ, is better and is superior in every way to the old covenant of works.

Okay? There's these things called covenants. God makes covenants with man. In the old covenant that God made initially with Adam in the garden, he said, you've got to keep my word perfectly.

Now, Adam wasn't a sinner at this point in time. Okay? He had free will. He was completely free to choose to obey God. This is the Adamic covenant. Okay? And it has a lot more attached to it. But this is kind of where it starts.

[11:27] So, Adam had the choice to either choose to obey or not obey God. He did not. All of us fell into sin as a result of it. And so, that's the covenant of works that we were once in.

We were enslaved to the law of Moses, to the old covenant of works that said, hey, you can't earn me my favor, my righteousness apart from Christ.

So, they were living in this old covenant. Now, this new covenant came into play when Jesus Christ came on the scene, died, shed his blood, purchased for you life. Freedom from sin.

Perfection by faith in him. That's the new covenant. Okay? So, for ten chapters, this author, we don't know who the author is in this book, but the author has been trying to prove to these people, these Jewish people, that the new covenant of grace or the blood of Jesus Christ is far better, far superior to every way, to every way and everything in the old covenant of works.

And MacArthur once said this. He said, Christ is a better priest with a better sacrifice by which he sealed a better covenant. And he's writing to Jews to prove to them that the new covenant is the best.

[12:41] He says Christ is better than angels, than prophets, than Moses, than Aaron, than Joshua, than everything. That's what he's talked about throughout the first ten chapters. All these things. He's better than all these things. He's better than anyone and everything connected to the old covenant.

So, in essence, okay, when he gets to verse 1 of chapter 11, he's saying, you have got to appropriate the new covenant of grace. You've got to possess it.

You are not underneath this old covenant any longer. You need to possess this new covenant of Christ. Okay? See, the Jews were trying to earn their salvation.

They had twisted this old covenant that God had set forth for them over the years into this cultish, works-based salvation that was filled with rules and all kinds of ethical obligations. I think it's something like, I mean, the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' time had actually imposed upon the text of Scripture that they had at that point in time.

So, imposed upon God's covenant something like 400, 600, I don't know what it is, something, hundreds, hundreds of, like, rules that were not what God had said.

[14:04] All these rules. You can't do this and this and this and this and this and this. I mean, it was all this total legalism. And they thought, hey, I'm going to earn God's favor by keeping these rules. They were wrong. They could never do that.

They never could do that. God never intended it to be that way. So, they twisted the old covenant. And so, the 10th chapter closes with a warning to appropriate the new covenant.

To make the new covenant yours. To step away from Judaism. To step away from this temple stuff. This priesthood stuff. And all that came with that.

And come to the new covenant. Okay? Now, this brings up a question in the minds of the reader. Especially this early Jewish reader. That is, how?

How do I do that? How do I appropriate this new covenant of Christ? How do I come into the new covenant? What do I do?

[15:03] See, this Jew was, again, he was used to this work system. He had no idea. He had no concept of grace. He had no idea what grace was. And these works weren't even involved.

So, how then, one might ask, am I supposed to come into the new covenant? There weren't any sacrifices to make. Okay? There was no particular feasts that they had to observe.

Under this new covenant of Christ. There weren't any ritual washings to go through. There was not any ceremonies to go through. There was no circumcision any longer. There wasn't even any memorization of ethics or the law anymore. All these things were nullified when Christ came and fulfilled it all and then died in righteousness.

Perfect righteousness. All the works of the law were fulfilled in Christ. Someone said, or he corrects somebody I was looking for earlier. I couldn't find it. He says, I have not come to do away with the law.

I've come to establish it. I haven't come to abolish the law, all these regulations. I've come to fulfill it. To become it for you.

[16:12] Okay? And a lot of people, I mean, I'm saying all this stuff, but a lot of people these days are still underneath the same thing. They believe they have to tack on to what Christ has done. It's Jesus Christ plus my exterior ability.

Plus my ability to go to church on every single Sunday. Plus my, you know, going to Thursday night Bible study on fall break. Plus my, you know, like baking cookies for the Thursday night Bible study. You know, they have to do all these things to earn God's favor outside of Christ.

And that is a, God hates nothing more than that. Than you thinking you have to do anything to earn His favor outside of Jesus. That diminishes His glory.

Okay? And you get glory. That's why faith is a work of God. That's why your salvation is a work of God. That's why you're saved by grace through faith in Christ.

That not of your own doing. It's a gift of God. Not of works. Lest you can boast. So God strips away from all of you the ability to boast. Okay?

[17:09] In this new covenant. So the answer to the question that these Jews are posing, how do I do this? How do I get this? This new covenant applied to me.

The answer is believe. Have faith. It's so simple. Have faith. Have faith in Christ. Jesus' words when He died, His last words were what?

It is finished. Right? It is finished. That's a pretty awesome statement. That's a loaded statement. Because that means everything that was required of us for salvation was finished.

It is finished. So now we can justifiably say, all it requires is faith in Christ. Now we're going to see what real faith actually is.

That's not simply intellectual descent to something. It's not simply walking down an aisle. It's not signing a card. You know, we've said this a million times. It's not for the faint of heart.

[18:20] Okay? True faith is serious business. I think I said last week it's warrior work. It's serious. Okay? We're going to see what this is.

So having established this author, having established the preeminence of Christ over all areas of the Old Covenant, that the author now transitions in verse 1 of chapter 11 to reaffirm, firstly for the Jews, what faith is.

That's verse 1. He reaffirms, this is what faith is. Here's a good definition of what faith is. I'm going to describe it for you. Verse 1. And then he goes on to reassert for these Jews that it's always been faith that's saved.

It's always been faith, or by faith, that the righteous have lived and pleased God. So when someone asks you, how would somebody say before Christ?

By faith. It says it repetitively in Hebrews 11. It's never not been faith. It's always been intended to be faith. All the sacrifices that they were doing back in the day were meant to point to a Savior.

[19:26] To say, this is what you need. You can't, every day you're cutting lambs and bulls' throats and it's spilling blood because you don't have the ability to ever stop this work. This is kind of cool.

The only thing that was missing from the tabernacle, the only piece of furniture that was missing from the tabernacle was a place to sit down because the work was never finished.

Okay? So those priests never sat down because it was never done. Then Christ came and said, it's finished. I've done it. Okay?

So he's going to reassert for them that it's always been faith that saved you. Now, the author of Hebrews doesn't exactly tell us what the object of our faith should be until chapter 12.

He simply kind of describes its nature. He wants to kind of get into general, the general truth about faith first before he kind of gets specific. That's a common way that common way people write in the New Testament is to go from general to specific.

[20 : 36] So he does this. He goes general first. And I want to, I want to draw your attention for the sake of this teaching to chapter 12, which clearly, as you're going to see, distinguishes Christ as him to whom all of our faith, all of our confidence, all of our conviction should be applied.

Okay? Because if you don't know what you're aiming at, you're going to miss. Okay? So all your faith, all your conviction, all your confidence has got to be aimed at Jesus Christ.

Look at 12 verses 1 and 2. Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses, that's, he's referring back to what he just said in the entire chapter of Hebrews 11.

Okay? Those are the witnesses. These are the people that have come before us and witnessed for us this thing, this truth, this faith. So therefore, since we have been surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every encumbrance in the sin which so easily entangles us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

How? How? Fixing our eyes on Jesus who is the author and the perfecter of faith.

[22 : 00] Fixing our eyes on Jesus who is the author and the perfecter of our faith. This is so crucial. If you don't see Jesus as the one who has authored or written or created your faith and he is the finisher of your faith as well, he's the one that drives it on, he's the one that energizes it day to day, you will burn out.

You will find yourself trying to create faith from a human's ability. You will find yourself exhausted by ministry and exhausted by the scripture and exhausted by preaching and exhausted by praying and exhausted by loving and worshiping Christ.

You will find yourself burnt out if you do not see Jesus every single day as the author and the finisher, the perfecter of your faith.

Okay, you have got to remember this. This is so big. He's the one that gives you strength. Apart from me, you can do nothing. He says in John 15, 5.

Repentance is a turning away from sin and faith is that element of conversion by which the sinner comes to Christ. It's that element of conversion by which the sinner places their faith, their eyes of faith on Jesus.

[23 : 40] In the Gospel of John, chapter 6, Jesus finishes speaking to a multitude of people of his disciples. All these people gather around to hear him speak and he said some crazy, crazy stuff.

He says stuff like eat my flesh, drink my blood. It's really cannibalistic and weird and strange. But Jesus says this, okay, and it freaks everybody out. And a lot of them leave.

Okay, a lot of disciples part away from him and say, I can't handle this. This guy is strange. He's a Charles Manson kind of character. I'm not going to deal with this guy. Okay? So Jesus turns to his 12 disciples and he says this, you do not want to go away also do you?

Simon Peter answered him and said, Lord, to whom shall we go? you have the words of eternal life and we have believed and we have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.

Okay? So Jesus said some crazy stuff and a lot of people turned and left and went away from him. But he says through Peter, through Peter says, but you have the words of eternal life.

[24 : 53] We can't go anywhere else. I know it's hard to hear what you just said. It's a struggle for us to deal with that but we can't go anywhere else. We have to stay with you. You have the keys to the kingdom of God. Realize that Jesus is not an easy man to follow but he alone, okay?

He alone, there's only one person that possesses the key to his father's kingdom and we must by faith follow him no matter the cost. So I say this, okay?

I mention that verse to make a point. And the point is this, okay? The Jews struggled with Jesus.

When he was on earth, they struggled. They said, you say hard things.

You say things that are difficult to understand, that are difficult to believe and to comprehend. And not only that but you're from this town and your brothers say that you're not the real deal and there's

all these kind of speculative issues with Jesus Christ.

You know, I mean, you're teaching your doctrine. It's really authoritative. It's unlike anything we've ever heard. It's kind of new. We're afraid of new. You're authoritative. You know, you're doing all these crazy miracles. We don't know if it's demons or God.

[25 : 57] It's just, they struggled. The Jews struggled with Jesus. Okay? But those that knew Jesus, those that knew him experientially by faith, said, even though you're difficult sometimes, Jesus, I've got to stay with you.

So, you may struggle with questions. Okay? You may struggle with questions about Jesus' teaching. About the inerrancy of Scripture.

About certain doctrines. Okay? About truth that we may speak about Jesus Christ. About his resurrection. But I want to encourage you.

God will answer you in due time. He says to seek him with all your heart and you're going to find him. Ask and you're going to receive. Not, the door's going to be open to you. Okay?

I'm begging you. I'm asking. I'm pleading with you to just labor with Jesus. Don't get discouraged. Don't run away. Don't be like the crowd. Tarry with them.

[27 : 01] Okay? Trust in the Lord. Take him at his word. And I promise that he's going to comfort you. He's going to answer you in the end.

All right. First point. I only have two points tonight. First point. Faith gives things substance. Faith gives things substance.

The first phrase there in our verse, Hebrews 11. One says, faith is the substance of things hoped for. The word substance is hypostasis in the Greek.

And it could be translated ground or foundation or substructure. That which has actual substance. Real being. In the Greek. Real substance.

Real being is what it says in the Greek. Literally. A thing hoped for is not a tangible thing, is it? This is a strange phrase. I'll give you that. Listen. Faith is the assurance or the substance of things hoped for.

[28 : 09] Something hoped for doesn't have any ground. Doesn't have any foundation. Doesn't have any tangibility. It's hoped for. Okay. If I or I don't hope for an ice cream cone if I've got it, if I've got one in my hand.

I hope for an ice cream cone when I'm standing on the corner at my house waiting for the ice cream truck to come through my neighborhood and make it stop. You know, like that's what I'm hoping for that ice cream cone. It's not when I have it in my hand and I can lick it. That doesn't make any sense.

I'm not hoping for that if it's in my possession. So if the thing is already in your possession then you don't hope for it. Somehow faith has the ability according to the verse to give a thing hoped for realness.

Substance. Okay. Realness. It's like tasting the ice cream cone before it's in your mouth.

That's kind of what faith does. So from the beginning this eliminates any notion that faith is whimsical, faith is emotional, unintelligible, silly, easy, mystical, fantastical, anything like that. Okay.

[29 : 17] Biblical faith is rocky. It's real. It's tangible. It's got content. It's got substance to it. It's not some fan, you know, idea.

It's real. It does things. What does this mean though? What is this? Faith is the substance of things. What does that mean? MacArthur kind of put it like this. Faith gives things hope for a present substance.

A presence. I'm going to explain this. A present substance. The examples of our author that he's about to give and illustrate in the rest of this chapter illustrate time after time a person that believes in a promise of God so much so that it radically affects the way they think about things.

I'm going to say that again. Okay. Time and time again the author illustrates for us a person believing in a promise of God so much so that it radically affects the way they think about things.

They can be in a crazy, bad, horrible circumstance and yet be content somehow. They can have joy in the midst of suffering somehow. Now, this, okay, I'm pausing because I want this to sink into your brain.

[30 : 46] This is incredibly important for you to understand what faith actually does to you when you exercise it rightly. They believe so strongly that what God said that he would do so much so that it radically affected the way that these righteous saints thought about life.

Take Abraham and Sarah for example first. Okay, Abraham trusted God for 19 years after he received the promise of a son. 19 years. His name was, this is kind of cool, his name was Abram initially which meant father of many.

Then, God said, I'm going to make you a father of multitudes and your name is now Abraham which means father of multitudes.

Now, Abraham was kind of a stationary guy. Okay, he was kind of like the first person you would see when you walk into town. So, what do you do when you meet somebody?

Hey, I'm John. You are Abraham. Oh, father of multitudes. How many sons do you have? None. And it was incredibly, this is a very, this is a very, sons and daughters, like that's an incredibly important thing back in the day.

[31 : 57] I mean, if you didn't have a family like you were considered to be, you know, you were like the, what's it called? The Brahmin and like the what? Untouchable. You were untouchable.

Yeah. Okay. It was, it was incredibly embarrassing. For 19 years, this guy just suffered through this. He was like, come on God, 19 years.

I was already father of many. That was embarrassing. Now I'm father of multitudes. And my wife is feral. This is embarrassing. Okay.

So somehow, faith for Abraham and Sarah, we learn this in Romans 4, 20. It says this about Abraham.

He didn't waver in faith. Even when he considered his own body. It was as good as dead, it says. He was like a hundred. You can't have kids when you're a hundred.

[32 : 52] Not wavering in unbelief, but growing strong in faith. He grew strong in faith and that gave glory to God.

He did not doubt God. He did Abraham's wife, Sarah, doubt God. Look at verse 11 of our chapter. It says this, by faith, even Sarah herself received the ability to conceive.

Even beyond the proper time of life that she was considered, keyword, considered, or thought, remember I said it changes the way you think about things? So Sarah considered a thought, God faithful who had promised.

Faith for her translated into a new way of thinking that gave her the ability to trust God. Even though it was impossible. The elements said it was impossible.

She's 90 years old. Her husband's 100 years old. They're past the time of childbearing. There's no possible way this is going to happen. They didn't bear children when they were healthy and vibrant. Now they're definitely not going to do it when they're old and decrepit.

[33 : 53] But they do and they have faith and it makes it happen. Faith gives the thing they hoped for, which is Isaac in their case, that was their son, son of promise, a present substance enabling them to patiently, faithfully, and even joyfully wait for the promise to be fulfilled.

Okay? That's what faith is. Real biblical faith is. That's one of the descriptions he gives you. There's a lot of them. And that gave glory to God. They didn't have a physical Isaac in their possession yet, but they believed so much so that it brought them real joy when they thought about it.

Okay? Abraham believed God so much so that it changed the way that he thought. Okay? Now realize this, okay?

You are called to have the same kind of faith. What does Jesus say in John 14, verse 1? Don't let your heart be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me.

Then what does he say? He says, in my Father's house are many mansions, many dwelling places. If it were not so, I wouldn't have told you that. I go to prepare a place for you.

[35 : 07] When I'm done with my stuff, I'm going to come back and get you. Now, you realize that's a promise that he's making to you. I'm going away. I'm going to come back.

I got dwelling places in my Father's house for you. That's a promise that's meant to quench your worry.

It's meant to pacify your anxieties. Okay? When you think about things that are heavenly like that, when you set your mind on heavenly things, it makes these earthly issues that we're dealing with obsolete in a lot of ways.

It kind of puts them in perspective. It's not really that big of a deal. I don't have a car. I don't have a job. I just got a job yesterday. I didn't have a job for a long time. I was poor. But at the same time, in light of the reality of me being saved by God's grace and God is coming back for me on a white horse with blood on his robe to kill all sin, death, and hell, and I'm going to be a part of that, I'm not

really worried about it.

It's not a big deal. That's what faith is meant to do. It's meant to free you from these kinds of things. [36 : 21] He says, don't let your heart be troubled. How? Believe in God. Believe also in me. Here's my promise. I'm coming back. Don't worry about it.

This is faith. Same thing of Matthew 6, 32 and 34. Through 34, he talks about, hey, if you're worried about your food and shelter and your clothing, I'm going to make a promise to you.

Seek first my kingdom and my righteousness and all these things you're worried about will be added to you. Don't worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow, today has enough trouble of its own. Just focus on right here, right now.

I'm going to, I have you in my hands. I love you. My righteousness is applied to you. Don't worry about that stuff anymore. I'm going to provide. And he always has.

Show me a verse. Show me a point in time in history. Show me a point in time in any true Christian's life when God really deserted them. And you can't do it because it hasn't happened.

[37 : 24] That's the reality of faith. The thing to admire about these Old Testament saints we read in Hebrews 11 is their faith. They're incredible in the way that they persevere.

The promises that came to those people were so real that even though they never saw them, they based their life on them. Do you realize that? They never saw these promises fulfilled. I mean, Abraham had one son.

That wasn't multitudes of people. God said, go look at the stars. As many as you can see, that's how many sons you're going to have. faith. Like the grains of sand on the beaches. He saw one. He grew strong in faith. He believed in what God said. And his people continued and continued and continued. And the story of the Old Testament is incredible to see how God raised up a people through Abraham's lineage, through Isaac and Jacob and the sons of Judah and all these people. and he preserved them. You see things like Joseph, you know, he was traded into slavery in Egypt and then he was shipped off and he was in jail for running away from Potiphar's wife, I think, or something like that.

[38 : 35] And then he was brought back up and Pharaoh put him as his second hand man and then he was able to save the rest of his family, the lineage of Abraham, because he was in that position to do so.

God is just time and time again providentially answering and answering and answering and answering and saying, my promise is going to be fulfilled. My promise to Abraham is going to be fulfilled. All these things are happening. My Davidic covenant is going to be fulfilled.

Abrahamic covenant is going to be fulfilled. All these things God is doing and is doing and is doing and preserving and he's never not fulfilled these promises. 2 Corinthians 1 something 20 says this, for as many as may be the promises of God and him that's in Christ, they're yes.

Wherefore also by him is our amen to the glory of God through us. So we have nothing to worry about.

These Old Testament people simply took God at his word and they lived on the basis of that. They were people of faith and that faith gave substance to what was in the future.

[39 : 46] Maybe you're still confused, okay? Maybe you are. I don't know. I'm making it more practical for you. Have you ever hoped for anything with such certainty that it became a present reality to you?

Have you ever so hoped for something that it became a present reality for you? Maybe like vacation, right? It's May.

No. It's April. Crazy school April where all my tests are happening. I'm psyched out and there's that, there's those few moments when I know that, hey, my vacation in May is coming up and I'm thinking about it and I'm thinking about my feet being in the sand and in the ocean and I'm thinking about just relaxing on the beach with a book and hanging out with my best friends and soaking in the rays and I'm just like, I can feel, oh my gosh, I cannot wait to that moment.

Right? You so dwell upon that moment that it becomes a present reality for you and you take joy in it. Right? That's an example. Another example is a baby, right? You don't have a baby yet but you prepare for the baby.

You get all excited about the baby. You paint the room. You get all the, you get the cradle. You get all these things set up. You get the colors. You, you know, see this sonogram whatever thing it's called and then finally the baby does come but before that you're still, you're rejoicing in that baby's

preparation.

[41 : 11] You can, you're thinking about it. You're anticipating it. You have faith that it's going to come and because of your faith, because of your certainty of that thing happening, it gives you a present substance.

A present reality. A realness. A tangibleness. Right? Steak dinner is the same way.

Going home after a long day is the same way. Heaven is the same way. Read Revelation. It's incredible what you agree about reading about heaven. John MacArthur, what he was like, he was saying this, this, a great sermon I listened to kind of preparing for this on this passage.

He was like, you know, I've, I've, I've basically been to heaven in a lot of ways. Like I've read so much about this and I've studied it so hard and I've seen the pearly gates and I know, and I know the dimensions of heaven and I've been to the, to the, you know, glass or crystal sea and I've seen that tree of life and all these things and I've, I've pictured and I've imagined and I've meditated on God sitting on his throne.

He's like, I've been there. I mean, it's given me present reality and joy even though it's not here yet. Right? But it is here. Already, but not yet kind of idea.

[42 : 24] So, J. Mac said, faith is the ability to take that which is in the future and give it a present substance. That's what it is.

Here's the difference though between bringing present substance to those things that I just mentioned and being able to bring real and present substance to Jesus Christ. It is the supernatural work of God that enables a man to see and to believe in Christ with such assurance that it becomes a present reality.

Okay? Everybody can do that for a steak dinner or for a vacation. But not everybody can do this with Jesus.

So, the difference is faith is a thing that God must give you. He is the author. He is the finisher. The perfecter of your faith.

Okay? So, if you don't have this, this faith in Christ that enables you to have Him as a present reality, to go about your days, to endure persecution or suffering or bad days or good days or whatever else it may be, if you don't have that Christ, then you need to pray on your knees for that Christ.

[43 : 53] you need to ask God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength to give you Jesus Christ no matter what it costs you.

There is nothing in this world that is better than Him. There's not a single thing. Okay? So, if you don't know Jesus in this capacity where He is a real thing to you, if He's just some distant idea or some guy that you've learned about like you've learned about a John Calvin or a John Wesley or if He's just some historical figure to you, then you're not saved.

Because salvation produces this faith that takes hold of Christ and says, this is my Christ now. He's my possession.

I'm going to cling on to Him. It's a cool... Mary, right? Mary, another good example. She sees Jesus at the tomb.

She's so elated. She's so filled with joy to see Jesus. He says, don't cling to me. Don't cling to me. We should be that kind of way. You know? May Jesus say, get off me.

[45 : 06] You're clinging too close to me. You know? He's not going to say that. I'm just saying, in this scenario, we should be like a Mary that just grabs on to Jesus and holds on to Him. The Scripture says that Jesus knows His church like Adam knew His wife.

That's an intimate thing. I mean, it's sexual intercourse between Adam and Eve. And that's meant to be reflective of God's intimacy with His people.

It's intense. It's not sexual. I'm just saying it's intense, though. You know? True faith isn't mystical longing.

It's a certainty about Christ. It changes the way you think about everything. A true man or woman of faith will be able to actively believe in the promises of God so as to bear the fruits of faith.

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness. These things are a reality for the believer because of their faith in Christ who supplies them with it. And it's not circumstantial.

[46 : 11] I want to give you one more illustration from the Scripture. Turn to 2 Corinthians. This is just a good illustration of what I've just said.

Faith has the ability to change the way you think about things. 2 Corinthians 1, beginning in verse 8. This is Paul.

He says, We do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia. So in Asia, they were afflicted. They were persecuted for something.

That we were burdened excessively beyond our strength so that we despaired even of life. So Paul, in a sense, was suicidal. Okay? He was so afflicted in Asia that he despaired of even living.

He didn't want to live anymore. He was so afflicted. Indeed, we had a sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.

[47 : 22] Who delivered us from so great a peril of death and will deliver us. He on whom we have set our hope and He will yet deliver us. So Paul is burdened excessively beyond what he can bear.

And he says, the only thing that sustained me was that promise that you see in verse 9 there. I put my hope, I put my trust in God who raises the dead.

That was the promise that Paul clung to in his persecution that enabled him to endure. And then he goes on and he starts praising God and he says, who delivered us from so great a peril of death and He will deliver us.

He on whom we have set our hope and He will yet deliver us. Three times in one verse He says He's going to deliver us. He's going to deliver us. I know it is true. It was a certainty about Christ.

There wasn't some mystical, you know, wishful thinking. I hope it happens. It wasn't a maybe this is going to happen. I hope it happens. It was a I know in Christ this will happen.

[48 : 25] He will keep me. He will enable me. This is faith. Okay, this is what faith is. Changes the way that you think about things. Secondly, oh, good quote for us from Spurgeon.

Little faith, a little bit of it, will bring the soul to heaven. But much faith will bring heaven to the soul. Little faith will bring you to heaven.

But much faith will bring heaven to the soul. Now, do you lack in joy? Do you lack in hope? Do you lack in peace?

You've got to grow in your faith. Start taking God at His word and just reading it and saying, all right, God, you said, you said this today. I'm going to apply it to my life. You said it's better to give than to receive.

So give me the grace to give today. I'm just going to trust it. Right? And sure enough, I promise you, God's going to come through on that. He's going to prove it. Second point, she's going to be shorter. One page.

[49 : 37] Faith gives things feet. First point was faith gives things substance. Second point is faith gives things feet. Feet. faith says verse one.

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for. It is the conviction of things not seen. These are very closely related. These two phrases are just a kind of a description here.

But the big discrepancy between the first phrase and the second phrase is the idea of action. OK, the first thing changed the way you thought about it.

The second, the conviction of things not seen changes the way that you live. Changes the way that you live. The word for conviction is I can't say L.

L. L. L. L. That's the Greek word for conviction and it means a proof. That by which a thing is proved or tested.

[50 : 44] L. L. L. L. L. L. L. but it's also in the way that one lives. This is a little bit further step from the phrase of our verse.

It implies action, as I said, okay? It implies an action, activity, something that I do in light of what I believe now. J. Max said, this is banking your life on your hope.

This is putting all your chips in to Christ. The faith, this faith is lived out. I like to think of it as an expression of one's faith. Have you seen God?

Have you smelled Him? Have you tasted Him? Have you touched Him? Have you heard Him? No. Yet you believe. Not one of your five senses has ever sensed Him, yet you believe.

Can you observe Him? No. Can you test Him in a test tube? No. Can you look at Him through a microscope? No. Yet you believe in Him. So although you cannot prove God scientifically, you still believe in God.

[52 : 01] That's a strange thing. That's weird that you would do that. The word elechaz could also be translated evidence. Okay?

Evidence. It's the evidence of things not seen. Faith in the life of a regenerate person is the greatest evidence that there is a God. God has seen fit to shame the wise people, the worldly wise people, by enabling the...

What was it again? Not the Brahmin and the... The untouchables. We're the untouchables. He's enabled the untouchables to do His will.

To live a life of faith. To accomplish things that really can't just be explained. I don't think it's coincidental that God has ordained the majority of His salvations to come through the faithful witness of His people.

You can see more of God in the life of a believer than anywhere else. Okay? So faith is something that's supernatural. It's not going to be simply ascertained by a Bunsen burner and microscopes and test tubes.

[53 : 25] Okay? God is an invisible God. And He has revealed Himself in Christ. So if you want to know about God, if you want to study God, if you want to understand Him, if you want to get evidence for Him, first look at Christ who says, I have...

If you've seen me, you've seen the Father, He says. If you've seen me, you've seen the Father. So look at Christ, firstly, and then look at His people. And you will know that there is a God.

Faith in the first place, first phrase of our verse, actualizes a future truth. It brings it into one's possession. Okay? Faith in the first phrase, which is the substance of things hoped for, brings a future truth into your possession.

It brings it into the heart and the mind of the believer. The second phrase commits a life to it. It commits your life to it.

It changes the way that you think, then it changes the way that you live. Look at Noah, verse 7 of Hebrews 11. By faith, Noah, being warned by God about the things not yet seen, in reverence, prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

[54 : 52] This is ridiculous what Noah did. Okay? Backward information on Noah. Noah lived in a time in which it had never rained before. He had never seen rain.

Ever. There was a vapor canopy surrounding the earth at this point in time. This is pre-flood. It was different back then. People had to be 900 years old. UV rays were basically non-existent in a lot of ways.

It's wild. Okay? He had never seen rain. God says, build a ship. I'm going to flood this place. Noah says, okay, 120 years later, God lets rain happen.

120 years. Okay, if you think Abraham's ridicule was bad, imagine Noah's. What are you doing? You're building a boat?

It's been 80 years. It's not rain. It's not going to happen. The guy's an idiot. Right? 120 years.

[56 : 03] It's one thing to think about rain and say, that might happen. Yeah, I hope that happens. It's another thing to commit a life to it. This is the example of faith that we're given.

This is God saying, hey, your faith should be like this. It's ridiculous sometimes. It doesn't make a lot of sense sometimes. You know, we're worried about putting more than 10% in the offering plate. Noah's worried about rain coming after year 85. Okay, faith is nothing. But this is the kind of faith we're called to have. This is the kind of faith that God will give to His people.

Faith is to believe it and then bet your life on it. Boom. But the natural man can't do this. He cannot, like Moses in 1127, see Him who is unseen.

They can't see this. They can't see God. They can't see the reason in doing that. They think it's foolishness the Gentiles do. Foolishness, atheists will call you. Idiot.

[57 : 07] Wasting your life. Missing the point of life. No. No.

Not the last day. We'll see if it's the last word. This faith in which we speak cannot be acquired through observable proofs.

1 Corinthians 2.9 establishes this. Things which eye has not seen, ear has not heard, which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.

For to us... Who's that? Who's the us? Christians. Christians. All that God has prepared for those who love Him.

For to us, God revealed them through the Spirit. So if you have Christ, you have His Spirit. His Spirit is a guarantee.

[58 : 04] His Spirit is a pledge. It's a down payment. That this is true of you. You have this ability. You have this salvation. I'm going to give you my Spirit to prove it.

But the world can't see it. Their ears can't hear it. They can't perceive it. It hasn't entered their heart yet. It's a supernatural thing. How do you know what real faith looks like in a very practical sense? I think you should turn to the parable of the sower. Okay? Test yourself to this. In Matthew... You know what? I'll tell you what.

I'll just explain it. Matthew 13. Alright? Matthew 13. Jesus describes the parable of the sower. And He says, the first... He says, a sower goes out to sow some seed.

He sows some seed against the rock, against the pathway, basically, on the rock. Then He sows some seed on... No. Okay. Forget about it. I can't recall it.

[59 : 07] We're going to read it. Alright? I know it's already 10 till... It's fall breaks and nobody's got a test tomorrow so I can keep you longer. Let's just read this.

It's so good. 13.1 On that day, Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea and great multitudes gathered to Him so that He got in the boat and sat down and the whole multitude was standing on the beach and He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went out to sow.

And as He sowed, some seed fell beside the road and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell upon the rocky places where they did not have much soil and immediately they sprang up because they had no depth of soil.

But when the sun had risen, they were scorched and because they had no root, they withered away. And others fell among the thorns and the thorns came up and choked them out and others fell on good soil and yielded a crop and some 100 fold, 60, or some 100 fold, some 60, some 30. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Okay? So He tells the story, He says, Hey, some seed fell upon the side of the road, some seed on the rocky soil, some seed in the midst of thorns and some seed on good soil.

[60 : 17] Then He explains it in 18. And He says, Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart.

This is the one on whom the seed was sown beside the road. And the one on whom the seed was sown in the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy. Yet He has no firm root in Himself.

It is only temporary. But when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately He falls away. And the one on whom the seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and it becomes unfruitful.

And the one on whom the seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit, and some are bringing forth some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. So you want to know if you have faith or not?

Test yourself to this passage. Are you the kind of person that it goes in one ear out the other? You never really even consider the things that you hear in church?

[61 : 30] Buildings? Number two, are you the kind of person that has the seed of the gospel, the truth about Christ sown upon you? You receive it with joy for a moment at a New Year's conference or at a Thursday night Bible study or Sunday morning church service.

You receive it with joy in a moment. You feel convicted the lights are dimmed low and the candles are lit and the aroma is nice and the preacher was hilarious. And you receive it with joy and you're so happy for a week and a half and it's ah, Jesus isn't really as exciting as it used to be.

You forget about Jesus and it withers away. Persecution comes, somebody approaches you by your faith, the going gets hard, the road's a little bit rocky, and you just forget about it, I'll deal with it later.

That's not faith. Thirdly, are you the kind of person that is the word of God sown upon you, the seed of Christ, the gospel of Christ comes into your ear, you hear it, you receive it, it springs up for a time, it looks like, hey, this is genuine faith, this guy, we should bring him into the church.

Then all of a sudden you see this guy has got a strange interest in riches, and he just cannot get away from the pleasures of the world, and worldliness just chokes him out.

[62 : 53] It's not true faith either. True faith, when it comes into your heart and into your mind, takes root and bears true fruit. Some 60, some 30, some 100, but it bears fruit.

And it continues and it persists. And Jesus says himself, those that the Father gives me, I don't lose them, any of them. If you're truly his, he's not going to lose you.

That's a good way to test it. So what a salvation we have. Worthy is the Lord of all the glory. There is a natural faith people are acquainted with.

Everyone lives by the principle of natural faith. You go to the doctor's office, they say, you have cancer. You say, okay, you come back, right? He says, I'm going to cut you open with a scalpel, cut this tumor out, so you back up and then send you on your way.

It's going to cost you \$100,000. And you say, all right, fine, I'll talk to my insurance company. You go back, you willingly get stuck with the needle, shot drugs up you, you pass out, you get cut open, sliced open, they fool around inside of you, and then after a few hours, you're back out.

[64 : 15] That's natural faith. I don't know, I mean, I'm trusting this guy who knows what he's doing. You drink water from a water fountain, I hope it's clean. I hope I don't get Ebola virus from this water, you know?

Not here, obviously, but other places. That's natural faith. God is requiring of you a supernatural faith that you can't conjure up.

An enduring faith. Trusting faith. Faith. That is patient. That is steadfast.

That is immovable. A faith that results in work and love and joy in Jesus. It moves a man to action. Right? Okay, so faith is gives things substance and faith gives things feet.

[65 : 22]