

Last week we looked at: **TWO COMPELLING REASONS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS.**

The last few verses of chapter 10 are the bridge from the preceding chapters of the Book of Hebrews into the last few chapters of the Book of Hebrews. Like so many of the writers of the New Testament, especially Paul, they develop the WHEREFORE in the start of the book and then end with the THEREFORE. The THEORY comes first, then the practical APPLICATION follows.

Let me remind you that the writer of the Book of Hebrews was writing to a group of predominantly Jewish converts to Christianity. These converts had come out of the Jewish system of offering sacrifices to try and deal with their sin, to a religious system that requires you to put your FAITH in the founder of this NEW RELIGIOUS SYSTEM, who said that, if you follow him, he would save you and take you to be with him in heaven. Many of the early believers thought that Jesus was returning in their lifetime to collect them, and now that he had not, and that they were beginning to experience persecution of their new religion, WERE STARTING TO DOUBT THEIR FAITH. So, the last few verses of chapter 10 say:

*v35 Do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord, no matter what happens. Remember the great reward it brings you! v36 Patient endurance is what you need now, so you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. v37 "For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. v38 And a righteous person will live by faith. But I will have no pleasure in anyone who turns away." v39 But we are not like those who turn their backs on God and seal their fate. We have faith that assures our salvation.*

After spending nine chapters proving the SUPERIORITY of JESUS over every aspect of other faiths, and one chapter on how we should RESPOND to the SUPERIORITY of JESUS, In chapter 11, the writer of the Book of Hebrews, is reminding us as to why OUR RESPONSE OF FAITH is superior to all other systems of religion.

I have given the following title to this message.

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS**

*v1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. v2 This is what the ancients were commended for. v3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. v4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead. v5 By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. v6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. v7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. v8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and*

*went, even though he did not know where he was going. v9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. v10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*  
*Hebrews 11:1-10*

## BEFORE WE CAN EXPLAIN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS WE MUST

### 1. UNDERSTAND WHAT IS SAID ABOUT FAITH

The opening verse of chapter 11 gives us some great insight into how we should understand FAITH. The verse says:

*v1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

#### 1.1 FAITH IS A VERB NOT A NOUN

The verse does not begin with some deep philosophical definition of the concept of faith, it simply describes the activity of what goes into having faith.

This concept is very clearly described in the book of James, the brother of Jesus and leader in the Jerusalem Church. James has the following to say about the integrated nature of faith and action.

*James 2:14-24 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? v15 Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. v16 If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? v17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. v18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. v19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder. v20 You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? v21 Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? v22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. v23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. v24 You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.*

#### 1.2 FAITH HAS TO DO WITH BEING "SURE"

*v1 Now faith is **being sure of** what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

Faith and "being sure" sound like an OXYMORON. Let me remind you of an English lesson. An oxymoron is a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear together.

The KJV translates the verse in this way "**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for**". This is a more accurate translation of the original Greek text. The word translated "SUBSTANCE" is a Greek word which means "to stand under", (a foundation)

## **FAITH MUST BE THE BASIS (FOUNDATION) OF RELIGION**

### 1.3 **FAITH HAS TO DO WITH HOPE**

*v1 Now faith is being sure of what **we hope for** and certain of what we do not see.*

The Greek word translated as “hope for” is not a matter of uncertainty but of EXPECTATION. Let me illustrate it like this:

If you are a waiter in a restaurant, you hope you are going to get a “tip” at the end of the meal. However, there is no guarantee, your pay depends on the generosity of those that are paying to bill. HOWEVER, if you are the cook, you hope to (and you better be) paid at the end of the meal.

We do not ever need to doubt about the future of God’s promises in Christ. WE HOPE IN CONFIDENT EXPECTATION OF GOD DOING WHAT HE SAID HE WOULD DO!!!

### 1.4 **FAITH HAS TO DO WITH CERTIANTY**

*v1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for **and certain of** what we do not see.*

The word translated “certain of” in the NIV is only found twice in the scriptures. Here in this verse and in 2 Timothy 3:16. A verse is vital for our trust in the value of the Word of God. The verse is translated in the Analytical-Literal Translation as:

“All Scripture [*is*] God-breathed and [*is*] beneficial for teaching [*or, doctrine*], **for verification [*or, reproof*]**, for correcting faults, for instruction in righteousness [*or, the behaviour that God requires*]”

SO, what the writer of the Book of Hebrews is saying is “**FAITH VERIFIES THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS**”

### 1.5 **FAITH HAS TO DO WITH THE UNSEEN**

*v1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of **what we do not see**.*

When we think about faith, we often think about what is going to happen in the future. The word used here refers not only to what we haven’t seen about the future, it also refers to what we haven’t seen in the past as well.

We can have confidence about the future, BECAUSE WE CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE ABOUT THE PAST. Jesus implied this when he spoke to “doubting Thomas” in

*John 20:24-29 Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. v25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." v26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" v27 Then he*

*said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."  
v28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" v29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

SO, AS WE CONSIDER THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS WE HAVE TRIED TO  
**UNDERSTAND WHAT IS SAID ABOUT FAITH**

NOW, AS WE CONSIDER THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS WE MUST SECONDLY

**2. UNDERSTAND HOW THIS RELATES TO GOD**

*v3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. v4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead. v5 By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. v6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

**2.1. FAITH HAS A PARALLEL IN CREATION.**

*v3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

The fundamental issue in the world today is the matter of CREATION. If you have a purely scientific worldview, then you don't need faith. If all created matter is merely an accident of the "Big Bang" theory, then GOD and FAITH are not necessary. In this worldview, we are not accountable to God.

HOWEVER, if you believe in CREATION, then you must believe in GOD, and if you believe in God, then you must BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO HIM

**2.2. FAITH IS NECESSARY TO PLEASE GOD.**

*v6 And without faith it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists.*

The point is simple. If you don't have faith, you can't believe in the existence of God. And if you don't believe in the existence of God, how can you please HIM. It would be illogical and foolish to try to please God if you are not a person of faith. The point is simple. WHY DO ANYTHING RELIGIOUS IF THE STARTING POINT IS NOT FAITH

**2.3. FAITH RESULTS IN REWARD.**

*v6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that **he rewards those who earnestly seek him.***

The delight of Jesus was to do the will of the Father.

**John 12:49-50** *For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. v50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."*

**John 15:10** *If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.*

Jesus also said in:

**Matthew 16:27** *For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.*

SO, AS WE CONSIDER THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS WE HAVE TRIED TO **UNDERSTAND WHAT IS SAID ABOUT FAITH**  
**UNDERSTAND HOW THIS RELATES TO GOD**

NOW, LET US CONSIDER

### 3. **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS**

The SINGLE POINT OF HAVING FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS IS

**YOU WILL RECEIVE ALL THE PROMISES THAT ARE PROMISED IN JESUS**

*v2 This is what the ancients were commended for.*

*v4 By faith Abel .... was commended as a righteous man,*

*v5 By faith Enoch .... did not experience death;*

*v7 By faith Noah .... became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.*

*v8 By faith Abraham, .... receive his inheritance,*

*v9 By faith ..... Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.*

*v10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*

## **CONCLUSION**

**SO THE FINAL QUESTION IS:**  
**WHY WOULD YOU NOT HAVE FAITH THE**  
**SUPERIORITY OF JESUS?**