

By Faith

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Date: 19 April 2026

Preacher: Tyler Lawrence

[0 : 00] Well, hello and welcome. My name is Pastor Tyler. I'm the worship and tech pastor here at First Christian Church of Greensburg, Indiana.! Before we jump in, I just want to say thank you for not running. I know I'm not the normal guy who gets to preach. That's actually Pastor Ray, our lead pastor.

Unfortunately, he is sick, and so I'm going to be filling in for him this week. But if you would like to know a little bit more about who we are, we would invite you to go to our website at FCCGreensburg.com or find us on Facebook or YouTube or Instagram.

We try to get our message out there as easily as possible and for you to understand who we are and how you could even be a part of FCC Greensburg. But no matter if you're listening on the radio, if you're watching this from the app or on YouTube, whatever the case may be, thanks for being here with me.

As I mentioned, unfortunately, Pastor Ray is sick, and so you're stuck with me. So we're going to be taking just a brief step away from what Pastor Ray started this past week in our sermon series entitled Move.

The sermon series Move that Pastor Ray started last week is a sermon series where he has taken so much time to just understand our three-year strategic plan that our leadership and some key volunteers has put together.

[1 : 14] And we're going to step aside from that because I'm not going to try and step in on all the work that he's put in. Instead, I would like to point out that no matter where God wants to take us spiritually, wherever he wants to move us in our spirits, we must first go with God and we must follow him, but we must also go in faith.

So I want to ask you this question. Are you a person of faith? Consider what I think is really a great point that Alistair Begg paints with this humorous story about a man who was suffering with kind of a strange mental issue.

So he decided to book an appointment with a local psychiatrist. She agreed. He drove over at the appointed time, walked up the stairs, flopped down in her very comfy chair.

And once she had adjusted her glasses and her notepad, she says, OK, what seems to be the trouble? And he says, well, I don't know how else to say this. I'll just be blunt.

I'm dead. You're you're dead. What do you mean you're dead? Oh, yeah, I died. I'm not sure when, but I died. Well, how could this be true?

[2 : 30] You walked in, you walked up the stairs, you sat in my chair. You know, you can't be dead. No, I'm telling you, doc, I have faith I'm dead. I'm not I'm not really sure when, but I did. I died.

I'm telling you. She says, well, you're conversing with me. We're talking right now. How could you possibly be dead? I don't know. I just have faith. I'm telling you. OK, how about this?

And she stood up. She walked over to her bulletin board, pulled out a thumbtack and came back over and poked his finger into a little droplet of blood began begin to form at the tip of his index finger.

And so she sat down and he just stared kind of confused. And she says, see, can dead men bleed? And he goes, wow, I guess they can. I had no idea. Listen, faith is not this example that I just painted here for you.

It's not blind. It's not frivolous. It's not dense. Instead, it is it is the hope for things that we have not seen yet. And we're going to talk about that here a little bit in our scripture.

[3 : 36] But first, think about or consider this quote from John MacArthur, one of my other favorite pastors. He says you can't confuse childlike faith with childish thinking.

Those are not the same things. You see, childlike faith is simple. Think about this. We've all seen it on on movies. Perhaps you've had the privilege of experiencing it.

But when I walk through the door, my kids come running across the house and they sometimes tackle me nearly to the ground before I can finally regain my balance.

That's that's the childlike simplicity that we can have with God, that kind of faith. But that doesn't mean that it's childish, that our faith itself is childish. It's not frivolous or stupid or any of those other types of things.

And as people who who have faith, we can't ignore the evidence. Don't ignore the evidence. Here's a great example of some of the evidence that we see in scripture. Psalm 19, 1, it says this, the heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

[4 : 41] Another great section of scripture on this is Romans chapter 1, 18 and 20. We're just going to look at verse 20 right now, but it says this, for his God's invisible attributes, namely or mainly his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in things that have been made so that they, people who are not believing, are without excuse.

Friends, what that means is that if we go out and we walk around and we look up at the night sky and all the stars or we take a hike through the woods and we notice all of God's creation, it would become very clear that this is not accidents and incidental.

This is on purpose and intelligent design. God has built this into our creation so we can walk around and see the fact that there is a God and that he is obviously higher than us.

Now, kind of switching gears a little bit, where we're going to be talking today has a lot to do with faith. We're going to be in the book of Hebrews. And so if you're not driving while listening to this, please pull out your Bibles or follow along on the screen or even pull it up on your phone.

We're going to have a lot of reading today and a lot of fill in the blanks and some notes. By the way, if you want to take your own notes or fill in these blanks, you can pull up our Church Center app.

[6 : 01] It's called Church Center. It's a free app. You download it. You find our church, FCC Greensburg, First Christian Church Greensburg. You'll go to the sermons tab and then you can go to today's sermon, which is entitled By Faith.

And then you can hit take notes and go in there and fill in all of the blanks. But Hebrews, what we're going to be reading in is pretty far through the Bible. Most of the ways you can see here from my Bible.

And Hebrews is also interesting in a sense that we don't officially know who the author of Hebrews even was. Now, I have a feeling based on this that he was obviously a strong believer.

He was obviously somebody who God had guided his pen as he wrote down the words of the scripture. And it almost seems as if he's preaching a message and that this book, the book of Hebrews, is sort of a compilation or a collection of a number of different sermons that this man preached.

But it's revolutionary as well, Hebrews. It's revolutionary in this way. Look here at Hebrews 3, verses 1 to 6. It says, That's revolutionary.

[7 : 24] Verse 2. Pay attention to this comparison between Jesus and Moses.

Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of the house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.

Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house, and we are his house.

And if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence in the hope in which we glory. Did you see what was going on there? The author here, he points out, Hey, listen, Moses, we get it.

Moses was awesome. He was a great servant. And just to kind of give you an idea of how awesome the Israelites would have viewed Moses, he helped, he was born, he was born a Jew under captivity, and then he was hid by his parents.

[8 : 30] He was sent down the river, and God guided that basket. He was a baby in a basket down the river. He guided him to the daughter of Pharaoh.

He was raised practically as royalty. And then later on, he decided to go into hiding after he committed murder. And then when he came back, he was this older, wiser guy that God used, along with his brother Aaron, to eventually lead his whole people after years and years in captivity in Egypt, out of Egypt, performing a number of miracles on the way.

He brought them the Ten Commandments. He brought them something called the Mosaic economy, the way that they just did life. He brought them the Mosaic covenant.

Listen, when you have a covenant named after you, you know that you've done something right. But as great as Moses is, as faithful as Moses was to God, Jesus is God.

So he's higher than Moses. And as amazing as Moses is, Jesus is higher. We could say that all day. But listen, that is the kind of revolutionizing talk that we see here in the book of Hebrews.

[9 : 43] It is, to me, it's such a cool book. And where we're going to be at today is in chapter 11 of the book of Hebrews. It's oftentimes nicknamed as the Hall of Faith, a Hall of Fame for people who expressed a deep amount of faith and action as well.

And speaking of action, we see this kind of like an equation pop up. You'll see, by faith, a person and an action. By faith, this person did this.

So you have this person who has to do both faith and action. Now, if you've ever studied the Bible, you may have noticed that different parts of the Bible may seem to contradict with itself.

And I just want to say, listen, if you, I've been there, I've seen that. And I've thought to myself, man, why is it saying this? But it's saying this and it's just completely opposite. I have to tell you, there are no contradictions in scripture.

Okay, this is God breathed. We can trust this wholeheartedly. And so if there seems to be a contradiction, friends, just know that it is, it's something that we're just missing. There's a shortcoming in our own understanding because God doesn't contradict himself.

[10 : 55] Now, speaking of those apparent contradictions, Paul says this in Ephesians chapter two, for it is by grace that you've been saved through faith. And this is not of yourselves. It's a gift of God, not by works, not by what you do.

So that no one can boast. Later on, though, in the Bible, James says this in chapter two, verse 14. Well, what good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?

Now, that's posed as a rhetorical question. Of course, that kind of faith isn't going to save you. So what's the deal? Is it faith? Is it works? And the answer is, it's both. It's both.

Imagine telling a person that you're a Christian, but you don't bear any fruit. You don't reflect the fact that you are a Christian in any of the way that you act. That doesn't make sense. That would be strange.

And even more strange, even stranger, is if somebody was performing all of the acts of being a person of faith, and yet they didn't actually have that faith. How strange would that be? No, to worship in spirit and in truth, which is what we see in scripture as well, to worship him with our whole selves, We must have the faith that he is the son of God, that he did come and die for us, that he did rise on the third day, that he is worthy of our faith, worthy of everything that we can give back to him.

[12 : 12] And then we do something with that faith, because it changes us fundamentally from the inside out. We are no longer the old person. We're a new person, a new creation.

And so we have faith. This person now acts. That's what we should see. Let's go ahead and read now through a couple of verses in Hebrews chapter 11. And notice as we go that there's always this emphasis placed on the invisible, the unseen, or the things that are seen from afar.

So what we're going to do today is we're going to read some scripture. We're going to pause. I'm going to give you a little bit of a fill in the blank or some notes, along with a for today application.

So let's go ahead and start here in verse 1, chapter 11 of Hebrews. Now, faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. Pause there for just a second.

No fill in the blank quite yet. But think about this. This is a definition of faith. The author starts this entire chapter off by just laying it out there.

[13 : 14] Here's what faith even is. Let's read it again. It's confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not yet see. This is what the ancients were commended for.

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. By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did.

By faith he was commended as righteous when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks even though he is dead. By faith Enoch was taken from this life and he did not experience death.

He could not be found because God had taken him away. For because he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. Here's our first fill in the blank.

Faith is rooted in God's character. It's not rooted in circumstances. That first verse that we read there. It's confidence about what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

[14:16] And you can even see don't see yet. Your faith must be rooted in God's character, not in your circumstances. So here's our application for today.

What does this mean for me today? Well, it means this. In a world of uncertainty, of economic instability, of rising cost of gasoline and eggs and pretty much everything else, health challenges, cultural shifts, faith anchors you to a trustworthy God rather than your shifting circumstances.

I feel like that causes me to take such a deep breath of relief. That God has me in his hands and that he's trustworthy and I can trust him and that's where my faith is going to be rooted.

Let's read a couple more verses starting here in verse 6. And without faith it's impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen in this holy fear, built an ark to save his family. By faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is keeping with faith.

[15:29] Faith can look foolish to the world. That's your next fill in the blank. Faith can look foolish to the world. By faith Noah built an ark to save his family.

Now, we may think that that's just kind of normal. Maybe you've heard that story that Noah built this ark. But listen, the ark was not built on the water and we don't necessarily think it was built right next to the water either.

So, how are you going to get this really, really massive vessel into the water? And Noah probably would have responded to the people asking that question, Well, it's going to rain. Well, what's rain? Guys, I don't know that we always think about this, but it had never rained before God flooded the earth in Noah's time. So, imagine how silly that would have looked. Imagine how foolish this would have looked.

Our application for today is that living by faith may mean that people just don't understand you. They may see you doing this. They may see you choosing generosity over hoarding.

[16:26] They may see you choosing purity over pleasure or truth over popularity. Whatever the case may be, faith sometimes just looks weird. It looks irrational. It involves more than mere intellectual assent to truth.

This is a quote from John MacArthur. It involves more than an intellectual assent to truth of the gospel, meaning like a head knowledge. A saving faith includes trust, I would even add, in your gut, in the Lord Jesus Christ and surrender to His lordship.

Whenever I explain lordship to a child, I always use the word boss. Like, you make Him your boss. You make God your boss. That's where faith really is. Let's continue reading here.

Verse 8. Faith acts without full clarity.

And kind of building on that last point, it might look silly, but faith acts without full clarity. In verse 8, it says that by faith, Abraham obeyed and he went, even though he didn't know where he was going to be going.

[17:49] The application for us today, friends, is that you don't need to know all the details before obeying God. And whether it's a career move or a ministry calling or a difficult relationship, faith often means taking the next step before the whole path is visible.

And one more note on this before we move on. It's really difficult to understand and to recognize the voice of God if you are not a praying person.

Not just a person who prays, but a praying person. It's hard to recognize truth when you are not in the word, in the scripture, studying it out for yourself. So be in scripture, be in prayer, be a person who practices their faith in private and in public.

Be a consistent person so that when he asks you to take this next step, even if you can't see the whole path, you're able to do that in confidence. Let's go ahead and continue reading, starting here in verse 10.

And so from this one man, and he was good as dead, which I think is hilarious of a way to say that he was old, right?

[19 : 13] From this one man came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the countless as the sand on the seashore. All these people were still living by faith when they died.

They did not receive the things promised. They only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on the earth. This is our next point.

Faith perseveres through disappointment and even delay. It perseveres through disappointment and delay. We read that all these had died in faith.

They didn't receive the things that they had promised yet, but they had seen them from afar. It says that they even greeted them from afar in the English Standard Version. The application for us today is this, that you may not see the results of your obedience immediately.

You may not ever see the results of your obedience in your lifetime. But that doesn't mean that your faith was wasted. Because faith often means trusting that your obedience, it matters eternally, even if you don't understand the why right now.

[20 : 20] Okay, let's continue. Pick back up with me here in verse 14. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.

If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had an opportunity to return. But instead they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son. Even though God had said to him, it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.

Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead. And so in a manner of speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of his sons and worshipped as he leaned on top of his staff.

By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his bones. Guys, I feel like this speaker, I feel like this passage is picking up steam, like we're building into something.

[21 : 34] And I think one of the things that we just read as we were going through this section of Scripture is that faith leaves a legacy. Did you notice that the whole thing about by faith Isaac and by faith Jacob and by faith Joseph, those were sons of sons of sons.

We have three generations just right there in that little bit that we just talked about. And so today the application for us is that your faith today will shape generations after you. When you live with bold trust in God, faith, it creates this ripple effect that your kids, that your co-workers, that those around you will remember how you lived.

Remember, people won't always remember what you said to them, but they will remember how you acted and they'll remember how you made them feel. Let's continue.

Like I said, this is kind of picking up steam here. And I think this is, to me, one of the coolest parts of this passage of Scripture. Here we go. Verse 23. By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, like I was talking about earlier.

Let's go down here to verse 24. By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

[22 : 44] He regarded disgrace for the sake of who? Of Christ. Guys, Moses knew that there would be a Christ, a Messiah, long before the Messiah actually even came.

Let's continue reading here. Verse 27. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger. 28. By faith he kept the Passover and the application of the blood.

29. By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land. When the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell after the army had marched around them for seven days.

By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. And what more shall I say? It's like I said, like this pastor saying, like, what else am I going to say? What else do I have to say to convince you guys?

I don't have time. Verse 32. I don't have time to tell you about Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah and David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms and ministered justice, gained what was promised, who shut up the mouth of lions, who quenched the

fury of the flames, escaped the edge of the sword, whose weakness was turned to strength.
[23 : 52] And became powerful in battle and rooted foreign armies. Guys, there's so much that's going on in that. We could spend the next year just breaking down all of the stories of faith that we just touched on for just a moment.

But here's one of our last things I want to leave you with. Faith. It transforms weakness into strength. In verse 34, it said, whose weakness was turned to strength. What that means for us today is that God isn't looking for the strongest among us or the most qualified because he honors your faith. Your inadequacies, they don't disqualify you. There's an adage, an old saying that goes around that says that God doesn't call the qualified or the equipped. He equips the called. It's the other way around. You know, your inadequacies, they don't disqualify you.

In fact, oftentimes our weakness is the stage in which God uses to display his power and what a powerful God he is. Listen, he deserves our faith.
[24 : 55] And as we are nearing the end of our time together and as we're kind of wrapping up here in chapter 11, I just want to continue to push this idea to you. He deserves our faith.

This quote from C.S. Lewis, I think, is awesome. He says, Every faculty that you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment is given you by God. If you devoted every moment of your life exclusively to his service, you could not give him anything that was not, in a sense, his own already. So that when we talk of a man doing anything for God or giving anything to God, I'll tell you what it's really like. It's like a small child going to its father and saying, Daddy, give me six pence to buy you a birthday present. Of course, the father does and he is pleased with the child's present. It's all very nice and proper. But only an idiot would think that the father is six pence to the good on the transaction. Listen, he deserves our faith.
[25 : 57] He deserves our entire lives. He deserves to be not just our savior, our get out of hell free card. He also deserves to be our boss. And he's so much better at running our lives than we are, guys.

Living in surrender is exactly where we need to be. You know, I mentioned just a second ago that we're finishing up in chapter 11 for today. There's a little bit more that happens in there. But take a look at the first couple of verses of the next chapter, chapter 12. Therefore, or responding to all of these cloud of witnesses, these faithful people, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely. Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

God, guys, he deserves all of us. He deserves our faith. And so no matter where he wants us to move spiritually, no matter what he wants from us, God, guys, he is deserving of it all.
[27 : 09] So I just want to invite you now to just consider, where am I not acting in faith? Where can I be better in the way that I conduct myself?

Where can I take my faith to the next level? Have I really been praying the way that I'm supposed to? Have I really been reading and studying scripture the way that I'm supposed to? Or have I gotten distracted by all the things that are around me?

Listen, there's still time. There's still breath in your lungs. You still have a beating heart in your chest. And it's time now to take hold of your life and to give it back to him. Let's pray. God, thank you that we have the opportunity to take faith seriously. That it isn't just frivolous. That it isn't silly or stupid or ignorant. God, faith isn't even a crutch. It's a hope for things that we haven't gotten to see yet. And God, we pray that you would help to strengthen us.

[28 : 07] Because as we go through hard times and trials, God, we pray that you would guide us. It's in your holy and precious name we pray. Amen.

Amen. Thank you so much once again for joining me. If you want to talk to somebody about your faith journey, if you want to have more information about what faith really is and what it looks like, you can give us a call here at the church office at 812-663-8488.

Or you can email me at tyler at fccgreensburg.com. If you'd like to email Ray, his email address is ray at fccgreensburg.com. Like I said, you can find us on Instagram and Facebook and YouTube and on our app where you can even listen to our sermons like a podcast.

It's really neat. And we just want to be there for you because there's been so many people, like Ray says, every week, there's been so many people who've come alongside us. We want to come alongside you. So get a hold of us.

If you have any kinds of questions like about your faith or about how you can plug in here at FCC, we would love to help you take that next step. Whatever you do, though, go with God and go in faith.

[29 : 18] Thanks.