

Faith

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[0 : 00] Together from Hebrews, I'd like to speak to you this evening about the crucially important subject of faith.

Faith. And I'd like to take as my text the first verse of Hebrews chapter 11, which says, Now, faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

There's nothing more vital for us to study than this most important subject. The New Testament tells us that we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ.

The Bible tells us that the just live by means of faith. And we've also read in this passage that without faith, it's impossible, impossible to please God.

Faith is the great issue behind this letter to the Hebrews. Now, this book of the Bible, as I'm sure you all know, was written to a group of Jewish believers, Jewish Christians.

[1 : 21] They had trusted in Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah. And they had broken away from their community and from their families and from their friends and from their relations.

They had broken away from the Israel of the day. And they had put their faith in Jesus Christ. And probably at the start of their hopeful Christian lives, they had been optimistic, hopeful, that they would see many of their fellow Jews, their Jewish friends, relations, coming to share their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But by this stage, the years had passed. And those hopes were not realized. The conversions they had expected had not taken place.

And the reality was that most of the Jewish people continued in unbelief with regards to Jesus Christ. And these few believers were having now a very difficult time.

They had been persecuted. They had had their goods plundered. They had been mistreated. Some of them had been put into prison.

[2 : 48] Their families and their friends were sometimes quite hostile to their faith. They themselves deeply missed the magnificent worship of the temple in which they had been raised.

With all its rituals. With all its ceremonies. With the grandeur. With the tradition. They felt sometimes that they were just some strange or weird little group of people.

Some kind of cult that was meeting in a room down a back street of the city. And not really a proper religion. And their faith was beginning to wane.

They were thinking of giving up. Some of them had stopped coming to church. Some of them had abandoned the church.

And it seems that there was quite a number in the church. Who were really being shaken by these turns of events.

[3 : 59] And they were wondering, is it really worthwhile following Jesus Christ? The situation we're facing is so difficult and so discouraging.

Perhaps we should simply give up and go back to the old ways. Now the whole letter to the Hebrews is written really to persuade them not to do that.

To persuade them to continue in the way of Christ. To persevere in their faith. Not to waver and not to go back to Judaism.

Now while we're not in the same position as these early Hebrew Christians were. Yet there are similarities between our position today.

And their position of all those centuries ago. In some ways it's no easier to be a Christian now than it was in the first century AD. We're surrounded, aren't we, by many people who have no interest in the things of God.

[5 : 08] Perhaps many of us have family or friends, close friends, who don't share the faith that we have. And who don't understand us. And if truth be told, they're probably at times exasperated with

us.

Because of our rather strange ideas as far as they're concerned. And day by day our faith is constantly being tested.

And so what I want to do this evening is to focus on chapter 11. Particularly of this book of Hebrews. Where the writer brings his argument in the letter to a practical point.

And shows us what it means to live by faith. And how we can live by faith. And how our Christian faith can be strengthened and made fruitful.

Now right at the end of chapter 10. The writer sets out. You notice two alternative ways. Two alternative paths.

[6:17] For human beings in this world to take. And each one of us. In one way or another. Is facing this choice. The writer says.

We are not of those. Who shrink back and are destroyed. That's one way. But we are of those who have faith.

And preserve our souls. That's the other way. And these two ways are the only two categories. In which human beings are divided.

On the one hand. There are those who do not believe in Jesus Christ. And the truth. The tragic truth. But the truth nevertheless. Is that they.

Are lost. They will face eternal destruction. From the presence of the Lord. And then there are those.

[7:17] Who believe. In the Lord Jesus Christ. Who rest their souls. On the Lord Jesus Christ. And in so doing. Their souls are preserved.

For all eternity. And then the writer immediately moves on. To the next person says. In effect. This is what faith looks like. Faith is the assurance.

Of things hoped for. The conviction of things not seen. Let's think about these words for a moment. We need to be reminded that this definition.

Though it is a definition. Isn't a comprehensive. Definition. Of faith. It's not saying everything there is to say. About faith. It's not a complete definition in that sense.

He's not talking here about justifying faith. Faith. He is only meaning to emphasize. One aspect. One important aspect of faith. In fact.

[8:20] It's the aspect of faith. That his readers. Really need to hear. Most of all. Faith he says. Is the assurance.

Of things. Hoped for. The conviction. Of things not seen. What he is teaching them is this.

Faith. Primarily. Has to do with the future. The things. Hoped for. The things we have not yet fully received.

And faith has to do. Not only with things that are future. But things that are invisible. To us at the present time. Things. Not. Seen.

So. Biblical faith. Is focused. Primarily. On the future. And on the invisible. Not on the present.

[9:18] And not. On what. We can know. Through our senses. Now that is. Basic to the whole. Position. Of the Christian.

And what I want to do this evening. Is to look with you. At four things. In this chapter. We want to look at the foundation. Of this kind of faith. We want to look at the fruitfulness.

That this faith produces. We want to look. At how foolish. This faith seems. In the eyes of the world. And last. And very briefly.

Just a few words. On the focus. The focus. The focal point. Of this faith. That's the plan of action. The route. I want to take. This evening.

Let's see how far we get. First of all. What does this chapter say. About the foundation. Of faith. What is faith. Built on.

[10:16] What does true. Biblical faith. Rest on. A building. A building. Of course. Must have. A foundation. And faith.

Is like a building. It. Must. Have. A foundation. Otherwise. It is worthless. It will collapse. It will disintegrate.

When put to the test. Now you and I know. That the world. Is full of all sorts. Of faiths. And people believe. These days. In anything. And everything.

At one level. We could say. There is too much. Faith. In the world. It was G.K. Chesterton. The author. Who. Famously wrote. About a century ago. When people.

Stopped believing. In God. They do not believe. In nothing. They believe. In everything. And that is exactly. What we are seeing today. People believe.

[11:13] Almost literally. In everything. And lots of those. Faiths. Are worthless. Hopeless. And ultimately. Destructive. To the one. Who believes.

Those faiths. Will destroy. People's lives. And futures. So if we are. Committing ourselves. To something. And especially. If we are committing.

Ourselves. To something. That will involve. Effort. And suffering. And pain. In this world. Then we need. To be sure. Don't we? That our faith.

The thing. That we are committing. Ourselves to. Rests. On a sure. And solid. Foundation.

Foundation. And in the opening verse. Of Hebrews chapter 11.

The writer shows. That Christian faith. Is built. On the most solid foundation. In the universe. And that is. It's built on the word of God.

[12:09] In these opening. Seven verses. Of chapter 11. He shows us. And summarizes. For us. The most basic teachings. Of the Christian faith.

And he says. In effect. These are the foundations. Of faith. Christian faith. Is founded. On the revelation. Of God.

It's founded. On what God. Has said. In his word. So look at verse 3. For example. He starts off.

With the doctrine. Of creation. He says. By faith. We understand. That the universe.

Was created. By the word of God. So that what is seen. Was not made. Out of the things. That are visible. He says.

This universe. It's a gigantic. Object lesson. Because. The whole universe. Is telling us. That what we cannot see.

[13:03] Is more real. And more important. And more lasting. Than what we can see. Where did this world come from? It came.

From. The hands. Of. An invisible. God. The God. The God. Whom we cannot see. Or touch. How can we be sure.

That faith. Is the conviction. Of things not seen. Because this world. This world. In which we live.

The very ground. In which we stand. The air. That we breathe. The bodies.

That we have. The sun. That we feel. Shining upon our skin. All these things. Come from one. Who is. Invisible. And that is the reason.

Why. What is invisible. It's more important. And more real. Than what is visible. And what we can see. And creation.

[14:01] And creation tells us that. The Bible's teaching. That God made the heavens and the earth. Reminds us. That we cannot see. What we cannot see. God himself.

Is more real. Than what we can see. What we cannot touch. Is more lasting.

Than what we can touch. What we can reach by faith. Is more important. Than what we can reach. Through our physical senses.

Is it any wonder. That the devil. For the last. 150 years or so. Has aimed his attacks. On the doctrine of creation. And has done all he can. To drive.

Christian people away. From believing. The biblical accounts. Of creation. Because creation. Demands. Faith. In. An invisible. God. It is the conviction.

[15:04] It is being certain. Of things not seen. And then in verse 4. He goes on to talk about. The doctrine of salvation. Or. Or the doctrine of the only way.

To approach God. How can we find acceptance. With this God. He says. By faith. Abel. Offered to God. A more acceptable sacrifice.

Than Cain. You remember how Cain. Brought. To God. His own achievements. His own works. His own accomplishments. And God rejected him. But Abel.

Brought to God. The sacrifice of the lamb. From the flock. An innocent life. Given. In the place of his. Guilty life.

And God. Accepted. Abel. On that basis. So that is the second. Biblical doctrine. There is creation. There is the. Only way back to God.

[16:00] We either come to God. Like Cain. With our own good works. And our own achievements. Or we come to God. Like Abel did. Trusting in God's lamb. God's provision. And then in verse 5.

We have the doctrine. Of God's holiness. By faith. We are told. Enoch. Walked with God. He was commended. As having pleased God. How did he please God? The scriptures say. That Enoch. Walked. With God. This is the scriptures. Teaching about holiness. Of life. Isn't it? Enoch.

Enoch. Worshipped God. He obeyed God. He lived in love. And goodness. And obedience. Before God. And he was taken up. The Bible says. So that he shouldn't. See death. And then in verse 7. We have mention. Of the doctrine. Of the coming day. Of judgment. By faith. Noah.

[16:56] Being warned. By God. Concerning events. As yet unseen. There we have it again. Those words. As yet unseen. The invisible. In reverent fear.

What did he do? He constructed an ark. For the saving of his household. He believed in something. Something invisible. God said. There's going to be a flood. But there was no evidence. Of that flood. No sign. No proof. Nothing you could see. Or write down. Just God's word. But Noah believed. Just God's word. And he said. There's going to be. A day of judgment coming. And so here.

Right at the very beginning. Of this chapter. The writer has set out for us. The foundation stones. The building blocks. Of biblical faith. Someone with biblical faith. Will believe in the Bible.

[17:55] Will believe in the teaching. Of the word of God. Will believe the doctrine. Of creation. Will believe the doctrine. Of salvation. Will believe the doctrine. Of holiness of life.

Will believe the doctrine. Of a coming day of judgment. And the last things. These are not human ideas. These are not visions. That people have dreamed up. Out of their own heads. God has told us. Here in the Bible. Of these things. And the writer is saying here.

This is the foundation. For our faith. The word. Of God. And this is how. We will develop our faith. And this is how.

We will strengthen our faith. By reading. And studying. Prayerfully. The Bible. And by soaking ourselves. In the word of God. Reading it. Thinking about it.

[18:51] Meditating on it. Letting it shape us. And fill us. And as we do that. The. Truth. Will. Strengthen us. Faith. Will develop. Muscles. And sinews. As it were. We will know. What we believe. And.

We will know. What we believe in. And why we believe it. And we will be able to open our Bibles. And say to other people. Here is what I believe.

Because. Here we have. The very words of God. So let me ask you. Is this the foundation. That you have. For the things that you.

Believe. Sometimes we talk to people. Don't we? Who claim. To have faith. But when you talk to them. A little bit more.

[19:47] Their faith is so vague. So mystical. And so. Up in the air. That they really. Don't know. What they believe. Or.

Who they believe in. But I have faith. They say. I have faith. But their faith is. Like in some. Celestial.

Father Christmas. Figure in the sky. Who is going to make things. All right. Sometime. In the future. And that's the extent. Of their.

Their faith. But that's not. The faith of the Bible. It's not. Faith that's founded. On the word of God. So let's move on.

And look at the fruitfulness. Of faith. Because. We have to say. It's one thing. To have your. Notions. Your ideas. Educated.

[20:43] And trained. Developed. By the word of God. But it's another thing. To. Really. Believe. In those things.

In such a way. That. It affects. And shapes. Everything you think. Everything you say. Everything you do. It's not enough.

To accept. Things. Theoretically. Just as notions. In the mind. We. We begin there. Yes. But faith. As we know. Is something. That has to be lived out.

We have to act. On what we believe. Faith. Without works. Is dead. So we have to be so impressed.

By the reality. Of what God says. In his word. That our whole life. Is saturated. And directed. And inspired. And motivated. By God's truth.

[21 : 44] And surely. That's the point. Of all of these. Wonderful illustrations. That were given. In Hebrews chapter 11. These people. Who believe. To have faith. How their daily lives.

Were transformed. Because of what they believed. They were so different. In the way they lived. They didn't have a. A one day a week religion.

Look at some of them. Look at Noah. Now I don't know what Noah did. Before God spoke to him. But he knew that.

After God spoke to him. He had to become. A ship builder. He had a dramatic. Change of career. He spent his whole life. Doing something.

Totally different. Why? Because he believed. What God had said. Look at Abraham. He left his country. He left his family.

[22 : 41] His culture. His people. His language. His business. He left everything. That was familiar. And he became. A wandering nomad. Why Abraham? Why did you do this?

Because. Because. I believed. God. And later on. In his life story. He. He took his beloved son Isaac. And he tied him down.

On an altar. And he was prepared. To kill him. Because. He believed. God. God. And then Moses. Moses gave up the lifestyle.

Of a millionaire. And became a beggar. Accepting a lifestyle. Of hardship. And poverty. In the place. Of a life.

As a prince. In a palace. Why? Because he was a believer. In what God had said. Because he believed. God. His life.

[23 : 37] Underwent a revolution. The whole pattern. Of day to day conduct. For Moses. Was totally changed. You see. Realities. Heavenly. Unseen realities.

God. And his word. And his will. And his calling. Were more real. To Noah.

And Abraham. And Moses. Than their. Money. Their business. Their possessions. Their families. Their comfort. More precious.

And real. To them. Even. Than what people. Would think of them. And their lives. Were different. Because. Of what they believed. And faith.

Is immensely. Fruitful. And the writer. Is saying. That if we are believers. Our daily lives. Not just our Lord's day lives. But our every single day lives. Should be different too.

[24 : 39] We're to apply our faith. We're to be. Shaped by our faith. Our whole lives. Are to be changed. Just as the lives. Of the people. In Hebrews chapter 11. Were changed. Now isn't it true.

That one of the great. Stumbling blocks. That people in the world. Today have. With regard to the cause of Christ. And to the work of the gospel. Is that professing Christians. Are not really very different.

In their daily living. From the people. Who live. Around them. And beside them. You look at the way. They spend their money. Perhaps. Or the way. They entertain themselves.

The sort of people. They are. They're not very different. From the people of the world. But these people. In Hebrews chapter 11. They are different.

You could say. That they're startlingly different. Dramatically different. And it's all because. They really.

[25 : 35] Believed. A word. That came from God. It changed them. I wonder. Have we. As professing Christians.

Become. Too much. Like the world. Around us. Have we become. Conformed. To the standards. Of the. Fallen.

And sinful. Society. In which we live. Are we. Fitting in. Are we. Afraid. To be different. And to stand out. But their faith.

Was fruitful. In another way too. Because this. Faith. Produced. Spectacular. Results. Sarah. Sarah. Had a child.

When she was long past. The age of pregnancy. The walls of Jericho. Fell down. One of the most. Powerful. Military cities.

[26 : 32] In the ancient world. Was captured. By these people. Verses. 33 to 34. We read about. What these believers did. We're told.

Through faith. They conquered kingdoms. Enforced justice. Obtained promises. Stopped. The mouths. Of lions. Quenched. The power of fire.

Escaped. The edge. Of the sword. Were made strong. Out of weakness. Became mighty. In war. Put foreign armies. To flight. Why. These people. Really did. Change the world.

In the days. In which they lived. It's a mighty thing. Through faith. Miracles. Happened. Don't know about you.

But. Reading. These parts. Of Hebrews 11. Really challenges. And rebukes me. And I ask myself. Do I. Do I expect.

[27 : 27] Miracles. To happen. I ask you. Do you expect. Miracles. To happen today. You're praying.

For someone. Perhaps. Someone you love. Who's not a Christian. Has the expectation. Become dimmed. In your heart. Has the flame.

Of your faith. Started to burn. Really low. Have you begun. To think. And say to yourself. Well. Well. I don't think.

God is going. To do anything. When you think. I don't think. I don't think. When you think. About the community. Of Livingston. In West Odee. In which we live. Are you overcome.

Now. By a sense. Of hopelessness. The writer. Is pointing. Us here. To what God. Will do. Through faith. You may be.

[28 : 22] Praying. For an Isaac. Here were parents. Who were dead. They couldn't. Have children. But they believed. And God.

Gave them. Life out of death. You may be. Faced with a Jericho. Some great. Sinful. Obstacle. In your personal life. Or family life. Or in this community.

Perhaps. You say. Look at this. Powerful obstacle. Of evil. In front of me. What can overcome it? God.

Overcame. Jericho. For you may be. Like Daniel. In the den of lions. And the writer says. They stopped. The mouths. Of lions. For you may be.

Like the three young Hebrews. Who were put. In the fiery furnace. By Nebuchadnezzar. And the writer says. They quenched. The power of fire. Very easy.

[29 : 19] To be defeatist. When we get. Discouraged. But this passage reminds us. In the words of William Carey. To expect and to attempt.

Great things. For God. Jesus says. Doesn't he? According to your faith. Will it be. To you. Have we. As the people of God. Good and solid. And faithful. Though we be. Have we lost something. Of the optimism. And the expectation. That God can do wonders.

That God can grant revival. That God can sweep. A whole community. And nation. Into his kingdom. And bring life. Out of death. Has our faith.

Grown. Weak. Have we stopped. Praying for great things. Has our God. Become. Too small. My friends. Look at these people again.

[30 : 15] People just like us. And see what they did. By faith. See what they accomplished. By faith. See the amazing. Fruitfulness.

Of their faith. That brings me. To the next point. And I'll try to. Cover it quickly.

Because this is one. That really comes. Close to home. The foolishness. Of faith. Now. Let me say. Faith. Is not foolish.

But it certainly. Appears. To be foolish. In the eyes. Of the world. Around us. And I have to say.

That if you're not. Prepared. To be. Or appear to be. A complete fool. For Jesus Christ. This would be. A good time. To leave the building. And go home. And never come back again.

[31 : 11] If we're going. If we're going. To follow the Lord. Jesus Christ. Let's settle it. In our minds. We're going.

To look foolish. In the eyes. Of the world. And if we can get that. Settled. And sorted. We'll be. So much. The better for it.

And I think this comes across. Time and again. In this chapter. The. Utter. Ridiculousness. The utter.

Crazy. Mad. Foolishness. Of what these people did. Take this man. Noah. For example. Possibly living.

What? Hundreds of miles. From the sea. In the middle. Of a desert country. What is he doing?

What's Noah doing? He's spending years.

[32 : 07] Building a gigantic ship. Can you imagine. What the neighbors. Would have said. Oh there's crazy. Old Noah. Over there. Hey Noah.

How's the ship. Coming along? It's going to be finished. Anytime soon Noah. When are you going to be.

Taking it. For sea trials. And Noah. Just worked on. With everybody. Laughing at him. And pointing the finger. You see.

A day of judgment. Was coming. A flood. Was coming. God said. It was coming. Noah didn't care. If they said. Behind his back. Or in front of his face. How ridiculous. Can you get. And then here's Sarah. Sarah.

[33 : 03] Sarah is 90. Years. Of age. Where's she going? She's going. She's going. She's going to the local supermarket. What's she going to buy? Well on her shopping list.

She's got. Nappies. And baby food. And a pram. And everybody says. Sarah. What on earth. Are you doing? And Sarah says. Well I'm going to have a baby. And everybody. And everybody looks at one another. And shakes their heads. And they say. Poor old Sarah.

90 years old. The Alzheimer's set in. Her mind is gone. How foolish. How utterly stupid.

And then here's Joshua. The commander of the Lord's armies. And he's come to Jericho. One of the most. Powerfully fortified cities. In the ancient world. And I want you to imagine.

[33 : 59] Here's a. Here's a Hittite. Or an Amorite military expert. Coming along. And saying to him. Now Joshua. Commander Joshua. What are your plans?

To capture this city. And Joshua says. Well. Here on day one. We're going to walk around the walls. Oh. Right. And then what are you going to do? Well. On day two. We're going to walk around the walls.

Again. And then we're going to. Keep on. Walking around the walls. And then eventually. We believe the walls. Are going to fall down.

How ridiculous. How utterly. Silly. How crazy and foolish. These Hebrew people. Well. They were a complete puzzle. And mystery.

[34 : 57] To those. Of the world around them. You see the foolishness. Of faith. But did a flood come? Was Noah saved in the ark?

Did Sarah have her baby? Did the walls of Jericho fall down? Are we willing.

To look foolish. In the eyes of those around us. Are we willing. To. To. To. Behave. In a way. That the world just finds.

Utterly ridiculous. Are we willing. To have people. Point the finger at us. And laugh at us. Thinking that we're. Silly. That we are. Some.

Neanderthal. Fundamentalist. Pre-scientific. Nerds. Who don't. Really belong. In the 21st century. Imagine. Separating ourselves.

[35 : 57] From things. Because they don't. Please God. Imagine. Keeping one day. In the week. Holy. Imagine. Struggling against temptation. And turning our back.

On pleasure. And wealth. Where it is sinful. And choosing. Suffering. And want. These Christians. Are totally. Bad.

And more than that. Because we read. In this chapter. That many of these people. Died. As failures. Failures.

In the eyes of the world. Take Abraham. He never possessed. The promised land. All he had. In his possession. When he died. Was a small. Burial. Plot of ground.

And the writer says. In verse 13. These all died. In faith. Not having. Received. The things. From us. Think about that. Moses.

[36 : 56] What happened to him? He died alone. On the top of a mountain. In the desert. With nothing. To his name. And.

If any of his Egyptian friends. Had known of it. They would have said. That man. That man. Could have been. A millionaire. He could have been. A king. But he turned his back on it all.

What a fool he was. He wasted his life. He gave everything up. And he never even got. Into the promised land. That he talked to us about. And then.

Does the tear not come to your eye. When you read verses 36 to 39. These are your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. You're reading about. Others suffered mocking and flogging.

And even chains and imprisonment. That's the life. Of many a believer. And many a believer in this world today.

[37 : 56] They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats. Destitute.

Afflicted. Mistreated. Wandering about in deserts and mountains. And in dens and caves of the earth. And then he concludes. All these did not receive what was promised. They died with the mocking laughter of the world. Ringing in their ears. They died as failures. They died as flops. They died as nobodies.

This is the pathos. Of the glorious life of faith. These people died. As little old weak. Pain ridden. Suffering failures. But did they care? Did they care? No. It made no difference to them.

[38 : 55] They didn't waver. Because we're told they were looking. They were looking for the city. That has foundations.

Whose designer and builder is God. And that was forward. That was future. That was coming. Not having received the things promised. But having seen them.

And greeted them from afar. They died. They died. In faith. They were looking forward.

To the reward. They endured all of these things. Because they saw. By faith. Him. Who is. Invisible. And he's the one.

Who really matters. How different. How very different. This. Biblical concept of faith is. From the faith that is so.

[39 : 52] Cheaply. Bandied about. Today. I remember. Speaking to a pastor. Some years ago.

And God. Seemed to have wrought. A miraculous cure. In his congregation. A lady. Had been very ill. And she had been cured.

And. I believe. She was. Miraculously. Cured. By God. Her disease. Had been taken away. And this pastor. Was commenting. On this.

Dear. Lady. And saying. How great. Her faith was. And I. Think. She did have. Great faith.

And I thank God. For it. But I said. To him. I had a lady. In my congregation. Who was.

[40 : 50] Even. Greater. Faith. Because. Her illness. Didn't get better. But got worse. And worse. And she was in constant pain.

And yet. Till the end. She was cheerful. And happy. And serene. And believing. And she held.

On. To her savior. And believed. To the end. To the end. That God. Does all things well. And she. Looked forward. To the time. And. And. And. And. She will have a.

Pain free body. To the time. To the time. When God. Will give her. Everything.

[42 : 08] That he has promised. She didn't see it with her eyes. She saw it. By faith. Do you know what her dying testimony was?

I know. I'm not ashamed. Because I know. Whom. I have believed. That is faith. That's real faith.

That's biblical faith. It is. The assurance. Of things hoped for. It's the conviction.

That we're prepared to die for. Of things we can't see. The world says. That's foolish. That's madness.

But the Bible says. This is the faith. That we need. And this is the unified faith. Of the great cloud of witnesses. That appears.

[43 : 07] For us here. In Hebrews chapter 11. And it comes. Over like a metronomic beat.

Throughout this passage. It comes again. And again. And again. It is by faith. It is by faith.

It is by faith. It is by faith. And this is the genius. Of the writer to the Hebrews. These Hebrew Christians were saying. We're tired of being Christians. We want to go back.

To our ancestors. To the faith. Of our fathers. And he says. Well. Listen. I want you to go back. To the faith. Of your ancestors.

And what was the faith. Of your ancestors. What was the faith. Of Abraham. And of Moses. And of David. It was faith. In what they could not see.

And I ask you. Have you this faith. This saving faith. Faith. Faith that is based firmly. On the teachings of the Bible. The word of God. That accepts this book.

[44 : 07] As the holy. Infallible. Inerrant word of God. In every word and syllable. Do you believe that? Is that what your faith is built on? And is it a faith that affects.

Your whole life. That controls. What you do at work. And leisure. And hobbies. And the way you spend your money. And the way you treat people. Does it make a difference?

It is a faith. Is it a faith that. Is looking to God. To do great things. Is it a faith that makes you willing. To be laughed at. Makes you willing to be awed.

And out of step. With the world around you. Is it a faith that is. To. Prepare to. Suffer. Anything. In order to. Keep looking to God. That's faith. Let's not be satisfied. With a counterfeit. I just want to end by.

[45 : 10] Pointing your attention. To the focus of faith. In the opening verses. Of chapter 12. And you know what. That is. We mentioned it this morning. The thing that brings it all together.

Into a sharp focus. Is the Lord Jesus Christ. Who is described. In chapter 12. As the founder. And perfecter. Of our faith. And we are to look to him. And we are to consider him. Because he was the man.

Who believed. And he was the man. Who died as a failure. Who died. Amid. The gales. Of mocking laughter.

He died in the soul. Though. In the head. Who one day. He will reward. Through this earth.

[46 : 12] The man who gives you. To the mother of God. We will reward. Our fear. Looking. Keep looking. Continuously looking.

to Jesus, the finder and perfecter. Let's pray.