

# What Faith Is and Isn't

Insights from Hebrews 11  
Pastor Bob Johnson, April 19th, 2020

## The Facts Easter Establishes:

(Mark 10:45, 1 Timothy 2:4-6, John 10:10, Ephesians 2:8-9, Colossians 2:6-7, Hebrews 10:36,39; 11:6; 12:1)

## The Faith God Encourages:

Trusting God enough to ...

## Four Faulty Faith Ideas:

### 1. Risk ...

(Luke 14:28-32, Proverbs 22:3, Proverbs 27:12)

### 2. Positive ...

(John 16:32-33, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Isaiah 5:20)

### 3. Never ...

(Acts 12:5, 14-16, James 1:6-8, Hebrews 11:32, Judges 7:9-11)

### 4. Mentally ...

(Acts 16:30-31, Hebrews 11:6, John 5:24; 6:40, 11:25)

## This Week's Discussion Guide:

Welcome to our first week of this 11 week study of Hebrews 11-13. Our last week of small groups for this season will be the last week in June.

At GPC, we are big on small groups :). May our church family grow warmer together even through this social distancing season as we connect with each other through our phones and computers.

The good news is that we don't have to wait to be physically together to meet together, develop friendships and encourage each other as we learn to apply God's truths to our everyday lives.

## Getting Started:

When this season started, most of us thought it would be all over by now. But ... we are still somewhere in the middle of this Covid-19 pandemic!

Not to get us complaining ... but ... what do you miss back in the old days before this viral breakout that has altered much of what we used to call our normal lives?

In any local, national or global crises, there are heroes that emerge. What stories have you heard that exhibit good character through these challenging days?

We all know exercise is a good idea while we are more at home than we usually are. What have you done ... or ... what are you intending to do ... to try and get some exercise in?

At GPC, we have been encouraged to not just 'get through' this season, but to actually grow through it.

What have you learned and/or how have you grown or been stretched these past weeks?

The first verse Bob shared last Sunday was Mark 10:45. "Jesus came to serve and not be served, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Speaking of serving, these past weeks, who do you appreciate that has served you somehow?

Who have you had an opportunity to serve?

Who around your neighborhood have you or do you have an opportunity to serve while this season stretches on?

## Quick Review:

Bob shared the following definition of faith that summarizes the stories of Scripture: Trusting God enough to do what He says.

Based on that description, how have you been practicing your faith lately?

Several early examples in Hebrews 11 of people choosing to illustrate this definition were Noah, Abraham and Moses. Each of their stories were full of faith steps.

Just for fun, which one do you think was most challenging?

If God were to have you choose which one to live out, which one would you choose? Which one are you most glad you weren't asked to volunteer for?

Of the four 'faulty faith' ideas that were described, which one do you think is most common in our culture? Which one is closer to creep in to your understanding of faith if you are not careful?

Sometimes, God does call us to take a risk in obeying Him. When have you been stretched as God has prompted you to follow His leading and take a risk? What was risky about it? If it's been awhile, what were the results of obeying God?

A truth that is throughout Scripture is that honoring God in our lives is not about how much we know but how much we follow or obey.

Read the following passages and share any further insights related to this truth:

Hebrews 5:13-14  
John 13:17  
John 14:15  
Matthew 21:28-32

In obeying, God does promise to reward our trust but not necessarily here on earth.

Read the following passages and share any further insights related to this truth:

John 16:33  
Hebrews 11:39-40  
Genesis 4:1-8

Bob shared that, according to Scripture, the same way we accept Christ is the way we are to live out our Christian faith.

Read again Ephesians 2:8-9 and Colossians 2:6-7.

Salvation has always been by faith and not works. Read the following passages and share any further insights related to this truth:

Galatians 3:6, John 3:16, Galatians 2:16

While we are saved by grace through faith, it is also clear in Scripture that faith without works is not Biblical faith.

Read the following passages and share any further insights related to this truth:

James 2:26, 1 John 2:3-6

What are some of the challenges to living a life of faith based on the above passages?

Which of the above truths or passages do you think is something for you to reflect more on in the days ahead?

## Wrapping Up:

Looking back on the message from Sunday and from our discussion, what is one truth that stands out to you that you can prayerfully ask God to help apply to your life somehow?

Before we wrap up our sharing time, let's prayer for one another!

What are some specific requests we have that we can pray for?