

## Living By Faith – Hebrews 11:1

**Introduction:** One of the basic elements of the Christian experience is faith. But for the Christian, one of the easiest things to do in life is to stray away from the basics. As we go along in our walk with Christ, if we're not careful we can get hung up in looking for some deep theological meaning when in reality, all we need is to accept it unconditionally and have the faith of a child.

Tonight, I want to talk to you about Faith. Particularly, what it means to live by faith. We are going to look at the kind of faith you need to be saved, then we're going to look at some examples of Faithful Servants, then we are going to discuss ways to strengthen your faith. First, let's examine:

### 1. Saving Faith

The best example of saving faith is the faith of a child. Once, there was a little boy who was caught in a fire at home. He couldn't get out of the burning house. He climbed up on the roof and began to cry for his father's help. The father looked up at his son from the ground, and told him to jump. *"I can't see you daddy, how will you catch me?"* said the son. The father said, *"Don't worry son, I can see you."* Without further hesitation the boy jumped into his father's arms. The faith of a child is a wonderful thing.

**Matthew 18:2-4 (NIV)** says, *"He (Jesus) called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: 'I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'"*

Why does Jesus say this? Well, think back to your childhood days. When you are a kid, you had no worries. You didn't have to worry about where your next meal came from. You didn't have to worry about paying bills. You didn't have to worry about things like insurance, and rising gas prices and getting stuck in traffic when you're late for work. You just didn't have the worries of this world when you were a kid.

Really the only thing that you had to worry about was getting home from school in time to play outside before dark. You didn't have worries because you know you were being taken care of by your parents.

When you were a kid, life was simple, and you followed simple rules. You knew that if you broke the rules you'd get punished, and if you obeyed the rules you'd be rewarded. You knew that your parents would protect you because they loved you.

The faith of a child accepts what the parents tell him because he knows he is loved unconditionally. The faith of a child knows his parents would never hurt him. Small children haven't experienced right or wrong yet so they just accept the parent's teaching. Do you see why Jesus wants us to be like children?

Jesus wants us to have a faith like the faith of a child, so that we'll be able to accept Him unconditionally. He wants us to believe in that which we cannot see and to be certain of what we hope for. Because we cannot see eternal life, we have to accept it by faith. Because we cannot see salvation, we have to accept it by faith. Because we cannot see Jesus, we must accept Him by faith. *"...faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."* Next, I want to show you some:

## **2. Examples of Faithful Servants**

Hebrews 11 is known as God's Hall of Fame or Hall of Faith. In this chapter, we're given many examples of faithful servants so we could learn and see what it means to have faith.

Faith is a scary thing because it's taking a chance on that which you cannot see and sometimes leaving your comfort zone.

Look at some of the people who lived by this kind of faith:

**Abraham** – God called him to leave his home and go to a place he would show him. Was he reluctant? Probably, but he obeyed because he had faith that God would not lead him astray.

Later, he was called upon to sacrifice his one and only son. Was he afraid? Probably, but he was willing to do it because he had faith that God would provide the sacrifice.

**Moses** was led back to Egypt some 40 years after killing an Egyptian. Was he just a little apprehensive? You bet, but he went anyway because he was confident God knew what He was doing.

**The Israelites** had to exercise their faith when they passed through the Red Sea. Don't you think they were a little bit timid about venturing out into that narrow dry canal with a 40 foot wall of water on each side? Sure, but they had faith to believe that the God who caused the waters to part, could keep them that way until they were safely across.

You see, something inside them put them at peace. They could not see God but they knew there was a God, and that He was on their side. They could just feel it all over.

Finally tonight, let's look at some:

### 3. Ways to Strengthen Your Faith

Again, we're talking about some basic things here. These are not hidden secrets that can only be found by living in a monastery in Tibet. Living by faith and strengthening your faith involves some simple disciplines.

First there is the discipline of:

**A. Bible Study.** You must read God's word and become familiar with it. You must apply it to your life. 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV) says, "*All scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*"

Second, there is the discipline of:

**B. Prayer.** Prayer is something you do all the time. 1 Thes. 5:17-18 (NIV) says, "*Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*"

1 Timothy 2:1 (NIV) "*I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone...*"

Third, You must:

**C. Listen.** Romans 10:17 (NIV) says, "*Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*" Finally, you must

**D. Test Yourself.** 2 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV) says, "*Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you - unless, of course, you fail the test?*"

James 1:3 (NIV) says "...*because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.*"

**Conclusion:** In Matthew 17:20 (NIV) Jesus says, "...*Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.*" The Bible says that without faith, we cannot please God. That is why it is so vital that we live by faith.

### Living By Faith – James Wells

1. I care not today what the morrow may bring, If shadow or sunshine or rain.

The Lord, I know, ruleth o'er everything. And all of my worry is vain.

2. Tho' tempests may blow and the storm clouds arise; Obscuring the brightness of life.

I'm never alarmed at the overcast skies, The Master looks on at the strife.

3. I know that He safely will carry me thro' No matter what evils betied;

Why should I then care, tho' the tempest may blow, If Jesus walks close to my side.

### **Chorus**

Living by faith in Jesus above

Trusting, confiding in His great love

From all harm safe in His sheltering arm

I'm living by faith and feel no alarm.