

Faith. Reality. Hope.

*"**Faith** shows the **reality** of what we **hope** for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation. By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen." Hebrews 11:1-2 NLT*

*"And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must **believe that God exists** and that he **rewards those who sincerely seek him**." Hebrews 11:6 NLT*

Faith **begins** by believing **God exists**.

*"You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! **Even the demons believe this**, and they tremble in terror." James 2:19 NLT*

Faith **builds** by believing **God rewards seekers**.

*"We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who **initiates** and **perfects** our faith." Hebrews 12:2 NLT*

1. Seek salvation.

*"It was by faith that Noah built a large boat to **save** his family from the flood. He obeyed God, who warned him about things that had never happened before. By his faith Noah condemned the rest of the world, and he received the righteousness that comes by faith." Hebrews 11:7 NLT*

2. Seek obedience.

*"It was by faith that Abraham **obeyed** when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going." Hebrews 11:8 NLT*

*It was by faith that Abraham **offered** Isaac as a sacrifice when **God was testing him**. Abraham, who had received God's promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, even though God had told him, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted." Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, **God was able to bring him back to life again**." Hebrews 11:17-19 NLT*

3. Seek promises.

*"It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that **God would keep his promise.**" Hebrews 11:11 NLT*

4. Seek blessing.

*"It was by faith that Isaac promised **blessings** for the future to his sons, Jacob and Esau. It was by faith that Jacob, when he was old and dying, **blessed** each of Joseph's sons and bowed in worship as he leaned on his staff." Hebrews 11:20-21 NLT*

5. Seek direction.

*"By faith Joseph, when his end was near, **spoke about the exodus** of the Israelites from Egypt and **gave instructions** concerning the burial of his bones." Hebrews 11:22 NIV*

6. Seek purpose.

*"It was by faith that **Moses' parents** hid him for three months when he was born. They saw that **God had given them an unusual child**, and they were not afraid to disobey the king's command. It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, **refused** to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He **chose** to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. He **thought it was better** to suffer for the sake of Christ than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was **looking ahead** to his great reward. It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt, **not fearing** the king's anger. He **kept right on going** because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible." Hebrews 11:23-27 NLT*

***"How much more do I need to say?"** It would take too long to recount the stories of the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets. By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions/hatred, quenched the flames of fire/racism, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight. Women received their loved ones back again from death. But others were tortured, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free. **They placed their hope in a better life after the resurrection.** Some were jeered at, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in prisons. Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half, and others were killed with the sword. Some went about wearing skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated. They were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground. All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith." Hebrews 11:32-39 NLT*