

# CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES COURSE PAPER 8

## FAITH

### **Bible Memory Verses: Hebrews 11:6**

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him."

Hebrews 11 is the great faith chapter of the Bible, sometimes known as the "gallery of faith". It tells us how great men of faith in the Old Testament overcame difficulties and persecution. The Bible makes it very plain that faith is essential for the Christian life. Four times we read in scripture that "The righteous will live by faith." (Habakkuk 2:4, Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38)

### **Why is faith important?**

Our memory verse makes one reason very plain; we cannot please God without faith. Hebrews 10:22 explains a little more that we need faith to draw near to God. We read why this is so in Romans 14:23 where it says:-

"... and everything that does not come from faith is\_\_\_\_\_."

We saw in our first study that it is sin that is the barrier to us coming to God. He has told us that if we put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, our sin problem is dealt with, we are "justified" which means, made to be righteous before God "through faith" (Romans 5:1). If God has told us we are righteous in His sight through Christ and we don't believe it, we are telling Him that He is lying!! How can we draw near to God in such a way? Faith is central and essential to our whole Christian way of life.

### **What is faith?**

Hebrews 11:1 tells us something of what faith is, it says:

God's Word tells us that those things which cannot be seen with the natural eye are really the things that matter eternally.

Read 2 Corinthians 4:18 through to 5:5. Faith taking what God has said and putting our trust in Him and His promises rather than our feelings, circumstances, desires or even what our natural senses tell us. Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words, says that the word translated 'faith' means:-

"...a firm persuasion, ...a conviction based upon hearing..."

Rather than "running away from reality" since God's Word is the only thing that will endure for ever, we are, by putting our trust in Him, "running into reality" - the objective reality of eternity (see 1 Peter 1:23-25, Matthew 24:35, Psalm 119:152).

Faith is accepting God's word as true, and acting upon it, so that true faith always results in action - even if it is only the action of will determining to trust God and do nothing ourselves. (James 2:17-22). The evidence that we are accepting God's Word is clearly explained in John 8:31-32 which says:

"...if you hold to my \_\_\_\_\_ you are really my \_\_\_\_\_. Then you will know the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ will set you free."

This is what happens to us when we come to God with faith as Hebrews 11:6 says.

How and from where does faith come?

Write out Romans 10:17

What this tells us is that faith comes by the message of God's Word, so then it is necessary to read and study his word, to know what He is saying to us. In Romans 1:17 we find that our righteousness (being right in God's sight) is by faith "from first to last", a thought made a little more plain by Hebrews 12:2 where we read:-

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of our faith."

Jesus Christ (the centre of God's Word) is the source of faith.

These verses together make plain that the first key to understanding how faith comes is hearing, and accepting, God's Word.

The second key is believing. look at the example of Abraham in Romans 4:16-25. Another example of how faith works is found in Hebrews 11:7, where we can see:-

1. Roots of Noah's faith Response of Noah = warned of God
2. Response of Noah = moved with holy fear prepared an ark
3. Rewards of Noah's faith = to the saving of his house.

So we see that faith is essential for the Christian life and that faith comes from Christ through His Word. Let us together flow in faith and in love as did the early church believers. Write out 2 Thessalonians 1:3, which says: