

The Matter of Faith

Hebrews 11:6



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FOCAL Read Together Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Where Is Your Faith Placed?

What is the difference between the *known* great men of God – men like **Charles Spurgeon, John Wesley, Adrian Rogers, Billy Graham, Charles Finney, John Wesley** and others – and the unknown men of God? Why is it that some local Churches become mega Churches like Saddleback, First Baptist Church of Dallas, and Bellevue Baptist – and others do not? Do the so called “greats” become great because of location or some inborn talent that sets them apart from all the rest?

It's a matter of faith, and *where* your faith is placed.

Everyone has faith. Wal-Mart has faith! But *where* and *in whom* you place your faith is of utmost importance!

WORD STUDY “Faith” (the Greek πιστις pronounced pis'-tis) means “a conviction that something is true. **Belief, trust, and loyalty to a thing, a person, or a god**”. *Webster's Dictionary* gives one definition for “Faith” as “firm belief in something for which there is **no proof**”. That may be Webster's definition, but it isn't the Bible's definition of faith. For instance, the Bible says:

Psalms 14:1 The fool hath said in his heart, There is

no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

The Atheist and the Agnostic has faith in nothing.

They have no coherent answer to the questions of life. The Atheist looks as the intelligent design all around him and says “I see nothing, I hear nothing”. The Atheist says “Life is meaningless, death is nothing. We are but empty bubbles floating on the sea of life”. When a child dies as an infant the only response and only comfort that he can give is that the child is no more. Atheism cannot be moral, but rejects morality because of it's very belief in nothing. If you ask an honest Atheist about right and wrong he must honestly answer that there is no such thing. As **Richard Dawkins, the leading Evangelist for Atheism** said in his book *River Out of Eden*:

“The universe we observe has ... no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference. ... DNA neither knows nor cares. DNA just is. And we dance to its music” page 133

There are countries in this world where you are invited to dinner, and countries where you are *invited to be the dinner*. Unless there is a universal moral law implanted in each person by a Creator God there cannot be morality.

“Good” and “evil” cannot be defined by humans or by abstracts. The foolishness of Atheism says “there is no God, no evil, no good” - just **pitiless indifference**. Atheism is a religion without heart and without sense. This is why the Bible says **“the FOOL has said in his**

heart 'there is no God' “. Without God there is no sense to life. Just kill and be killed, survival of the fittest, destroy the runt and keep the strongest.

What about other faiths that believe in a god, but not the God of the Scripture?

Gautama Buddha – the founder of Buddhism – was an atheist or a non-theist. In Buddhism God does not exist. The Buddhist works his way through a *self imposed system of merit* – an eight-fold path of enlightenment that puts all trust in the person.

In Buddhism as well as Hinduism man must *work his way toward enlightenment*, being reincarnated or reborn over and over again until you obtain the proper level of perfection. These are religions that put strong faith in human ability.

In contrast to this the Bible teaches:

Jeremiah 17:5-8 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. (6) For he shall be like the {tumbleweed} in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. (7) Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. (8) For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Humanism or the strong faith in man's ability to be his own god is a very prevalent – and very foolish – faith. **Hollywood** will soon address the massive destruction of **Haiti** by resurrecting that old **Michael Jackson** song *We Are The World*. Some of the lyrics are:

**There comes a time
When we heed a certain call
When the world must come together as one
There are people dying
And it's time to lend a hand to life
The greatest gift of all**

**We can't go on
Pretending day by day
That someone, somewhere will soon make a change**

**We are all a part of
God's great big family
And the truth, you know love is all we need**

**We are the world
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
So let's start giving
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me**

Those are sweet sentiments, and I think it's a fine thing for everyone to work together to help someone else. But the truth is the faith of humanism doesn't work either. People don't naturally aspire to help one another. And, as

I've said before, Humanism has no good answer for the problems of life. Humanism looks to a generic god and makes us all part of this generic **“God's great big family”**.

ILLUSTRATE A little girl sitting at a table asked politely, “Will you please pass the salt”? The adults, ignoring her, kept on talking. Once more she leaned toward the person on her right and said, “Will you please pass the salt”? The one she spoke to ignored her, and continued to wax eloquent on his most important opinion. Finally the little girl yelled, “If you don't give me the salt, I'm going to knock your block off!” That got their attention. Humanism and humanistic religions look and sound good, but they don't change the human condition. Christianity does, for it invites God to invade the seeking life.

Malcolm Muggeridge said **“God is like the sun. You cannot look at it, but without it you can't look at anything else. To the modern skeptic, their god is like the moon, scrutable under a telescope. Maybe that's why the moon is the patron body of all lunatics.”**

Nothing works like Christianity. No one works like the God of the Scripture, the same Who is the Maker of all.

The faith that matters and the faith that works is the faith that is placed in the God of the Bible. Faith in atheism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Humanism, and even Islam all ultimately fail the test, for they all put their trust in the human. The only faith that has a proven track record is the faith of the Bible, the faith of

Christianity!

**Misplaced Faith Will Not Save You
For It Will Not Satisfy God**

FOCAL Hebrews 11:6 But **without faith it is impossible to please him**: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

WORD STUDY The word translated “impossible” is a very interesting word in the Greek. ADUNATOS (αδυνατος pronounced *ad-oo'-nat-os*) is actually the Greek word DUNATOS (δυνατος pronounced *doo-nat-os*) with the *alpha negative prefix*. The word DUNATOS means “to have the power or capability to do something”. When you put the alpha negative in front of it it means “to NOT have the power or capability to do something”.

What does our text tell us? **Without faith in the God of the Bible you – yes YOU – do not have the power or capability to please God.** Christianity is very clear that we are – of ourselves – incapable of making God satisfied.

There is no noble or good deed that you can do to satisfy God on your behalf.

When Nicodemus – a Rabbi of Israel – came to Jesus by night he acknowledged that God was with Jesus. Jesus – ignoring what Nicodemus said - immediately replied:

John 3:3 ... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

This is one of the **double amen statements** of Jesus. He said “**verily, verily**” or “**amen and amen**”. This is not just truth, it is most important truth worthy of a double amen! Jesus said “**unless you be born again you cannot see the Kingdom of God**”. How can you see God's Kingdom? How can you enter God's Kingdom? It cannot come of your own hand, but is likened to birth, to a *second birth*. **You must be born again.** This New Birth does not come by karma, by good deeds, by your own efforts. Jesus went on to say:

John 3:5-7 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Jesus was clear that New Birth is entirely an act of God. Everyone has one birth, the **birth of the flesh**. When you are born into this world you break your mother's water, you come from your mother's womb. **You are born of water, of the flesh.** That's the first birth. But this first birth is corrupted because of Adam's sin. The Bible says:

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

What does Christianity say to all the other religions?
By Adam sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. Can anyone please God in his own power?
ADUNATOS – Without faith in God
ADUNATOS. You are powerless to please God. You must have faith in Him!

Atheism says “we dance to our DNA”. **Humanism and other human based religions** say “we're all God's children”. **Christianity** says “faith alone in God alone”.

The Bible says:

Romans 3:23 For **all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;**

WORD STUDY “Come short” is the Greek HOUSTEREO (υστερεω pronounced *hoos-ter-eh'-o*), which means “**to be left behind, to fall short of the goal, to be inferior in power or unable to do**”. We “**come short**” of the glory of God because *we are unable to attain His glory*. We are all inherent sinners, spiritually dead.

This is why the Bible says “**without faith you have no ability to please God**”. We are not inherently God's children. We are not, as much as Michael Jackson and humanism would like to say “**all a part of God's great big family, And the truth, you know love is all we need**”. God says “No, you're unable. You must **come to Me, believing that I am, and that I am a rewarder of those who diligently seek Me!**”

Is Your Faith In Christ Alone?

In Christianity we are taught that to be saved you **must come to the God of Scripture, believing in Him**. Jesus said:

John 6:29 ... This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him {Jesus} whom He {God} hath sent.

What must you do to be saved? You must **believe on Jesus**. The Bible tells us – over and over again -

FOCAL Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for **he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**

God is. We come to God knowing that we are sinners, unable to do that which would make us fit for Heaven. What do we do? **We diligently seek God**. This is genuine faith, the faith that saves. We come to God believing what He has said:

Ephesians 2:8-14 For **by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast. (10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (11) Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; (12) That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and**

strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (13) **But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. (14) For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;**

What Jesus Christ did on that Cross was take the penalty of our sin upon Himself. He died for us! He gave His life for us! The Holy Spirit is watching you now. He is looking, not at the outside of you, but at your hearts. He knows for, being God, **he looketh at the innermost parts.** God is telling you that **you must repent.** Jesus preached:

Mark 1:15 And saying, **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.**

WORD STUDY Repent is the Greek METANOEO (μετανοεω pronounced *met-an-o-eh'-o*), which means **“to change the mind”**. Stop trying to follow the systems of humanistic and atheistic belief and come to God alone by Christ alone!

ILLUSTRATE When a man says **“Yes, I do”** to the woman he is going to marry he is saying **”No, I won't”** to every other woman. You can't say to the wife at the altar **“I just believed, I didn't repent!”** It don't work that way. Salvation can only come when God the Holy Spirit opens your eyes to the choice set before you. You can continue on in the same way you have been and *be divorced from Christ and wed to the world.* Or you can

say **“I Do”** to Jesus and God will save you, *divorcing you from the world and wedding you to Him.* It's one way or the other.

ILLUSTRATE Deion Sanders is one of the most versatile athletes in sports history. In the National Football League he played for the Atlanta Falcons, the San Francisco 49ers, the Dallas Cowboys, the Washington Redskins and the Baltimore Ravens, winning the Super Bowl with the 49ers (Super Bowl XXIX) and the Dallas Cowboys (Super Bowl XXX). Sanders is the only man who has ever played in both the Super Bowl as well as Baseball's World Series (1992).

Sanders said, **“that night after the {Super Bowl} game I was the first one out of the locker room, the first one to the press conference, and the first one to go home. ... That was the same week I bought myself a brand new \$275,000 Lamborghini, and I haven't even driven a mile before I realized, “No, that's not it. That's not what I'm looking for. It's got to be something else, I'm so hungry.”**

God was speaking to Deion Sander's heart. Faith in things do not satisfy. Faith in human achievement does not satisfy. Faith in ME doesn't satisfy. What satisfies is **faith in the God of the Universe, the God Who came to this earth and gave Himself for our sins.**

Deion Sanders went on to say,

“I was lying there in bed about four o'clock in the

morning when I was awakened I remember opening my eyes just the slightest bit and saying, “**God, if that's You, take me! Take me, Lord,**” and I was trembling all over. Before long it was silent and the lights disappeared, and later that night I got up and opened my Bible to a passage that said, “**If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation**” (Romans 10:9-10). The words hit me like a ton of bricks. I knew they were meant for me and at that precise moment I was delivered.”

Dear friends, salvation can only come when you heed the Gospel of Christ. **Repent.** Turn from your old way of life and come surrendered to God. **Believe.** Believe that Jesus Christ came and gave Himself for your sins. You can be bound to God as a child of God – but *only by faith*. You have no ability other than to believe on Him.

What Do I Do After I Am Saved?

FOCAL Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that **he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**

WORD STUDY The Bible says that **God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.** The words translated “**diligently seek**” is the *Present Active Participle* of EKZETEO (εκζητεω pronounced *ek-zay-teh'-o*). Kenneth Wuest says “The words “diligently seek” are literally “**seek Him out**”.

The Christian's grand design is that he or she is a **new creature, a newborn Child of God.** The Bible says that:

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore **if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

Life is new for the Believer. We are **children of the King, the Creator of Heaven and earth.** We do not come to the Scripture because we feel that we need to retain our salvation. A Christian saved is a Christian born into the Kingdom. He or she is a *supernatural being*. We are **not kept by the Law, but by the power of God within us.** The Apostle wrote:

Galatians 3:22-26 But **the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. (23) But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. (24) Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (25) But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (26) For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.**

Salvation is not of humanism or – after salvation – by human power! Salvation is a work of God. **We come to God believing that He is, and He is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him out”.**

What does the Christian who is saved by faith do after

his salvation? He continues to **diligently seek God out** in prayer and through the Holy Scripture.

Hebrews 11 gives us a wonderful roll call of faith, a list of people who **came to God believing that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him out**. Hebrews speaks:

CONTEXT Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

Of Abel, the **first martyr of faith**. He offered a sacrifice of a lamb without spot or blemish, believing that God would one day send Jesus Christ, **“the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29)**. Cain thought that his *good works* would make him acceptable to God, and killed Abel out of a jealous rage.

The reason we have so many Christians living to die and not dying to live is because they are not **seeking out God**. The reason we have so many Christians afraid of physical death is because they are not **seeking out God in prayer and through His Word**.

The Christian, saved by faith in God, has always been persecuted by the atheist and the humanist, the Armenian and the Pelagian. We also read of:

CONTEXT Hebrews 11:5 By faith **Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not**

found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Enoch. What did Enoch do that **pleased God? He walked with God. He came to God by faith**. Oh Beloved, there is nothing we cannot do if we would but diligently seek out God. **Noah diligently sought out God:**

CONTEXT Hebrews 11:7 By faith **Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.**

Saved by faith the believer in Christ **continues to seek out God**. If Noah, saved by faith, hid himself at home on Sundays and Wednesdays waiting for the preacher to come and drag him out of bed, Noah would have drowned along with the rest of creation.

The believer, saved by faith, **keeps on diligently seeking out God**. Great doors of opportunity swing on tiny hinges of obedience! Seek Him. Obey God!

CONTEXT Hebrews 11:8 By faith **Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.**

The believer, like Abraham, **goes out where God says, not knowing whither he went**. Faith moves, and saving

faith works.

Those who are saved by faith were not saved by their works, but once saved the faith that saves works. Always! Even when what God says is the hardest thing in the world we who love Him obey. Always!

CONTEXT Hebrews 11:17-19 By faith **Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac:** and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, **(18)** Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: **(19)** **Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.**

After waiting his whole lifetime for a son, God told **Abraham to go and offer up Isaac as a sacrifice.** Abraham would not put Isaac before his God. He did as the Lord said. And as the Scripture promises, when we who believe do as God says **“He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him out”**.

God never lets His people down. There may be times in our lives when we don't understand what God is doing, but **“God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar”** (Romans 3:4).

1 Corinthians 1:9 **God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.**

God is faithful. Seek Him out. Follow Him with all your hearts. The greatest thing you can do in life is to worship

and obey God your Father, and He will surely bless and keep you!

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

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Where Is Your Faith Placed?

Psalms 14:1; Jeremiah 17:5-8

WORD STUDY “Faith” (the Greek πιστις pronounced pis'-tis) means _____

Malcolm Muggeridge said “God is like the sun. You cannot look at it, but without it you can't look at anything else. To the modern skeptic, their god is like the moon, scrutable under a telescope. Maybe that's why the moon is the patron body of all lunatics.”

**Misplaced Faith Will Not Save You
For It Will Not Satisfy God**

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:3; John 3:5-7; Romans 5:12; Romans 3:23

WORD STUDY The word translated “impossible” is a very interesting word in the Greek. ADUNATOS is _____

WORD STUDY “Come short” is the Greek

HOUSTEREO (υστερεω pronounced hoos-ter-eh'-o),

Is Your Faith In Christ Alone?

John 6:29; Hebrews 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-14; Mark 1:15; Romans 10:9-10

WORD STUDY Repent is the Greek METANOEO

What Do I Do After I Am Saved?

Hebrews 11:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 3:22-26; Hebrews 11:4; Hebrews 11:5; Hebrews 11:7; Hebrews 11:8; Hebrews 11:17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:9

WORD STUDY The Bible says that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. The words translated “diligently seek” is the *Present Active Participle* of EKZETEO _____

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