

Faith That Matters
Hebrews 11:6
9/20/09
Pastor Jay P Henderson
BFBC

Intro:

The Prodigal God

Chapter 3 Notes:

Free to pursue / strict obedience

Alienated from God By breaking the laws

By Keeping the laws

(“everyone assumes it is one or the other”)

The Gospel, as Keller points out is something entirely different

Not about our Independence / dependence

Sin / pride (to get control)

- Interdependence (to yield control)

Not about being very bad / very good

- Humble: To know you need grace

When you boil down this religion / irreligion, morality / immorality

The good, the bad, the sin, the pride.

All these things add up to Idolatry

(TPG Discussion book, page 75)

The issue becomes Idolatry -

David Powlison “Idolatry is the concept of inordinate life-ruling desires ... a metaphor for human lust, craving, yearning, and greedy demand”

Basically Idolatry is our drift from God.

What you value?

Richard Keyes is quoted “ All sorts of things are potential idols ... If this is so, how do we determine when something is becoming or has become an idol? ... As soon as our loyalty to anything leads us to disobey God we are in danger of makin it an idol ... An idol can be a physical object, a property, a person, an activity, a role, an institution, a hope, an image, a pleasure, a hero ...

Work, a commandment of God, can become an idol if it is pursued so exclusively that responsibilities to one’s family are ignored.

Family, an institution of God Himself, can become an idol if one is so preoccupied with the family that no one outside of one’s own family is cared for.

Being well-liked, a perfectly legitimate hope, becomes an idol if the attachment to it means that one never risks disapproval.“

Questions to help identify your idols

- What’s my greatest nightmare? What do I worry about most?

- What, if I failed or lost it, would cause me to feel that I did not even want to live? What keeps me going?

- What do I rely on or comfort myself with when things go badly or become difficult?

- What do I think easily about? What does my mind go to when I am free? What preoccupies me?

- What makes me feel the most self-worth? What am I the proudest of?

- What do I really want and expect out of life? What would really make me happy?

We could define Idolatry, then as the faith in my ability to meet my designed standard!

So, How can we know we have it right?

How do I know I have the right kind of Faith? "Fear is faith in the enemy"

What is true faith?

How does true faith express itself?

Am I living a saving faith, a faith that makes a difference, A Faith That Matters?

Hebrews 11: 6 gives us the ingredients for faith that guides us on our journey.

Let's hear Hebrews chapter 11.

We have all been challenged by Keller's statement "Jesus is saying, everything you have ever been taught, everything you have thought about coming to God -- Is Wrong!"

The writer of Hebrews gives us an explanation of Faith - Biblical faith - Faith that matters that we can our minds, our hearts, and our lives around.

Verse 1 says that faith is "the evidence of things Not Seen"

Brother Hugh Thomas said this week that we, the church "are the lovers of God, visible members of an invisible Body."

Romans 1: "God's Invisible attributes have been Clearly Seen since the creation of the world."

We Are talking about something entirely different.

Let's look Hebrews 11/6 at Expressions of Faith that Matters

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6 (New King James Version)

Now, you can spend your life living:

By trying to get the ducks to line up in a row --

By designing a set of standards for yourself, and everyone around you and declare 'I'm a good person, I don't hurt anybody, I treat my neighbor fairly, I'm happy, why can't you just leave us alone!

By setting your sights on God's things, and the things you think He should do for you

And miss the boat entirely

Or

You can turn to God by Faith

"The Just Shall Live By Faith"

The text tells us there are two Expressions of True, Biblical Faith, of faith that matters that we must:

Sink our teeth into

Settle our minds on

& wrap our lives around.

Hebrews 11:6 says

That it's to believe that God IS

& To believe that God rewards those who diligently seek HIM.

First, to believe, does not mean To Know About. You can know about God, His Word, Jesus, The

Cross, and not know Him
Or the question may be “Does He know You?”
Jesus said in Matt 7, “Depart from Me, I never knew you.”
To believe is to trust

Have you transferred your trust to the finished work of Christ on the cross.

SO,

1 Expression of Faith that Matters

The belief that God Is.

When we come to God (first, He draws us, “It’s not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” He sent Jesus, “while we were still His enemies.” Without Christ, you are the enemy of God.

Therefore the first expression of faith is a
Definite Experience with Jesus Christ.

Faith, true faith, biblical faith encounters the reality of the One, True, Living God.

You cannot have a relationship with someone without encountering that person.

If you have a relationship with someone, a friend, a relative, (a finance’)

you have conversation with that person

You share ideas, exchange insights

You have a definite experience with that person.

To have faith in God,

To believe that God exists

Is to have a definite experience

Is to have a relationship with Him

Do you know Him, today?

Have you transferred your trust to Jesus?

Come to the Cross!

How do we know that we are in this for the right reasons

How can we trust that we are not in this for the cool stuff God will do for us.

How do we know that we are not just going through the motions

Oswald Chambers wrote: “To be under grace does not mean we can do what we like. It is surprising how easily we can juggle ourselves out of Jesus Christ’s principles with one or two pious sayings repeated sufficiently often. The only safeguard is to keep personally related to God. The secret of all spiritual understanding is to walk in the light - not the light of our convictions, or of our theories, but in the light of God. (The Sermon on the Mount, page 22)

The first expression of faith is a Definite Experience with God

The Second expression of true, biblical faith, a Faith that Matters is a

Devotional Experience with God.

Again the text, “we must believe that He rewards those who diligently Seek Him.”

The key operative word here is diligently, diligently Seek Him.

To know that we get this faith thing right is to pursue God.

Knowing all the while that He is pursuing us.

To set our affection, our thoughts on Him

Knowing that His thoughts toward us number the sand of the sea.

(North Carolina Beach)

sand on the Beach

God thoughts # the sand in the sea

To diligently seek Him is to line up the activity of our lives up with the things (not to get His approval, attention or things) that will cause us to grow in our relationship with Him. Growing a relationship through:

- Spending time in His Word - To get to know Him (NT IN 90 days)
- Serving in our own ministry His Way - As He has designed it.
- Sacrificing our resources to His Will - Giving Extravagantly to His cause

Cooperating with God in Conforming:

Our word to His Word

Our way to His Way

Our will to His Will

Transforming us into the image of Christ.

To have a Devotional Experience with God is to be Living Transformed Lives

It's not about our word, our opinion > It's about His Word

It's not about our will, our design > It's about His Will

It's not about our way, our ambition > It's about His Way

His principles

His guidelines

His His plan for our lives

It is not a legalistic, external conformity, a mindless following of a set of rules or standards

This is a relational experience

A Definite experience

A Devotional experience with the One True God

To conclude

The Reward verse six talks about is

Not God's things

Not prosperity

Not even good health

Not getting our way, our expectations,

Not a rose garden

God Says "I AM YOUR REWARD"

We get God

All that He Is

All that He Knows

All that He Promises

All that He Gives

All that He has reserved for us!

If you have not had a Definite Experience with God

Come Today - He is pursuing you

Come right now

The excuses are the worth It

The pride has condemned you to destruction

God is searching, waiting patiently as our Heavenly Father for you to come home

All your dreadful sinfulness is paid for,

The ugliness of the stains left by your sin is washed clean.

All the barriers keeping you from Him are destroyed by the Cross of Jesus Christ

If you turn

If you repent - change your mind and your direction

Come sit at the table, in seat reserved for you.

Do It

Do It Now

Beloved,

Biblical Faith demonstrates itself in our Actions

Do your actions reflect your faith

Does your activity bring you closer in your relationship with God

Does your attitudes draw others to want to know your Jesus

To know and Trust our Great God