



A Well-Defined
FAITH

[fāth] (noun)

Biblical words used in church...
Discover what they really mean.



Sunday
April 19, 2026

Example Teaching Rhythm

Welcome and Connect: 10 Minutes

This helps people feel connected and more comfortable participating in the study and discussion.

Look Forward: 5-10 Minutes

Share any important church events, service opportunities, or upcoming group plans. Keep this brief but clear.

Look at Scripture: 25-35 Minutes

This is the main focus of Community Groups. Read the selected scripture together and guide the group through discussion questions and observations.

Prayer: 10 Minutes

Invite members to share prayer requests and praises, then pray together as a group. This is a time to support one another.

Explaining the H.E.A.R Method

The acronym **HEAR** stands for **Highlight, Explain, Apply, and Respond**. Each of these four steps aims to cultivate an atmosphere to hear God speak.

Highlight - After praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance, read the passage of scripture, and highlight each verse that speaks to you.

Explain - Explain what the text means. Ask questions like:

- Who wrote this, to whom, and why? What does this reveal about God? What do the key words actually mean? What did this call the original audience to, and what does that reveal for me?

By asking questions, with the help of God's Spirit, and by using helpful study resources, you can understand the meaning of a passage or verse.

Apply - This application is the heart of the process. Everything you have done so far culminates under this heading. As you have done before, work to uncover the significance of these verses and the implications they have. Ask questions like:

- What does this passage reveal about God, yourself, or the world that you need to embrace or sit with? Does this passage challenge an attitude, assumption, or habit that needs to change? Is there something to do? Is there someone to love?

Respond - Your response to the passage may take on many forms. Ask: Is there something to pray? - Let the passage shape your prayer, not just inform it. Use the "Five Daily Prayer Prompts" to guide you in your response.

“Faith is not believing without proof – but rather trusting without reservation.”

Faith: Trust in the trustworthiness of God

Introduction

This morning we begin our newest series: A Well-Defined Faith. Throughout this series, we will define Biblical words that we use often in church but do not always stop to examine carefully. This week, we take on one of the most important words in the Christian vocabulary – Faith.

Faith is a word that Christians use constantly, but it is not always clearly understood. Some people think faith is wishful thinking. Others think it is blind belief, and still others think it is simply acknowledging that God exists.

However, the Bible presents faith as something far deeper and far more personal than any of those definitions. Faith shapes how a believer thinks, makes decisions, responds to difficulty, and relates to God at the most fundamental level.

Every person lives by faith in one way or another. People place faith in money, jobs, government, education, other people, or themselves. The question is never whether a person has faith – the question is where that faith is placed.

The Bible is clear that faith placed in God is the only foundation that can sustain a relationship with Him and the only foundation that can sustain the Christian life. Faith is not simply how a person begins their walk with God; it is how a person must continue to walk with God every single day.

Hebrews 11:1–6 introduces a defining theme that carries through the rest of the chapter and demands that every believer think seriously about what it truly means to trust God. This passage will show us what faith is, why faith matters, and what a life of faith actually looks like in practice. We must not only understand how faith is defined – we must wrestle with how faith is lived out in the real moments of everyday life.

As we begin, consider a few honest questions: What does it really mean to have faith? How does faith change the way you live each day? How can a person know if they are genuinely living by faith? And what does it mean to live in a way that truly pleases God?

These are exactly the questions Hebrews 11:1–6 was written to answer.

Discussion Questions + Illustration

Select a question or two below to open up discussion.

- What's a personal achievement that required a leap of faith on your part?
- Think of a time you waited on something you were sure would happen. How did you hold onto that confidence while you waited?
- Is there a difference between believing something is true and actually trusting it? Where have you felt that gap?
- "Walking by faith, not by sight" – does that feel like freedom or flying blind? What makes you answer the way you do?
- What's the most faith-demanding season you've been through – and what did you find out about God on the other side of it?

In 1915, Shackleton's ship *Endurance* was crushed by Antarctic pack ice. His 27-man crew were stranded – no radio, no rescue, no guarantee of survival. He had no map that showed a way out. So he acted as though the outcome he couldn't yet see was already certain. He organized routines, kept morale up, and hid his own fear from men who were watching him for a reason to hold on. Twenty-two months later, every single crew member survived.

- That posture – confident action grounded in unseen reality – is exactly the shape Hebrews 11 is trying to give the word faith.

Highlight | Read Hebrews 11:1-6

The author of Hebrews addresses readers struggling to maintain their commitment to Christ, urging them not to abandon their faith and to persevere. Chapter 11 defines faith and provides Old Testament examples that illustrate rather than directly command the readers' response.

The passage functions as a vantage point from which readers observe those who have gone before, discovering what lies ahead and what they will need – with faith itself serving as the essential resource for their journey. The writer opens with a two-part definition of faith: first, a "resolute confidence" in God's promises despite their unfulfilled status, and second, conviction regarding spiritual and future realities.

The opening verses establish faith's dual character. Some unseen realities belong to the spiritual realm while others lie in the future; in both cases, the faithful person lives with strong conviction in God's greater realities. The author then traces exemplars from Genesis—Abel, Enoch, and others—where each instance demonstrates both a concrete act accomplished through faith and spiritual orientation.

The life of faith comprises three components: approaching and earnestly seeking God, believing in God's existence, and trusting that God rewards those who exercise faith.

- Why does the definition of faith have to come before the ask – and where have you been asked to act on a faith you couldn't yet articulate?
- "Without faith it is impossible to please God" – does that feel liberating or crushing, and what does your reaction reveal?

Explain | Consider the Context

Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians facing persecution and discouragement. Because following Christ had become costly, some were tempted to abandon Christianity and return to Judaism, which was more socially accepted and legally protected. The writer responds by showing that Jesus is superior to everything in the Old Covenant – greater than the prophets, angels, and Moses, a better High Priest, and the mediator of a better covenant – and calls believers to persevere in faith and not fall away.

By chapter 11, the writer has already warned against unbelief and spiritual drift. Hebrews 10 urges believers to endure suffering and remain faithful, closing with a declaration that sets up everything that follows: "My righteous one will live by faith."

Hebrews 11:1–6 builds on that foundation, explaining what faith is, why it matters, and why it is necessary to please God. These verses open the "Hall of Faith" and establish that faith has always been the only way people truly relate to God – through salvation, obedience, worship, and perseverance.

- The original readers were tempted back toward something safer and more accepted – what's your modern version of that?
- Where do you still reach for old-covenant thinking – earning, performing, managing God's approval – instead of resting in something better?

Apply | Discuss as a Group

Faith means trusting God – believing His character, His Word, and His promises even when circumstances give no visible reason to do so. It means trusting and obeying Him now, whatever the struggle.

Faith is proven through action. Abel gave God his best, and that worship revealed what he truly believed. Our faith is the same – not what we claim, but what our obedience and submission actually demonstrate. Faith that never shows up in life is not the faith Hebrews describes.

Faith is a daily walk, not a single moment. Enoch walked with God every day. God is far more interested in steady obedience in ordinary moments than in dramatic experiences that fade.

Faith is what pleases God. Religion and good deeds alone are not enough. We must believe God exists and rewards those who seek Him. The Christian life is built on trust and pursuit of God – not merely doing the right things.

Hebrews 11:1–6 forces a direct question: Is your life marked by faith or by sight? Faith believes God's promises, obeys His commands, and seeks Him relentlessly. Faith is not simply what you believe – it is how you live.

- Trusting, worshiping, walking daily, seeking – which one do you perform without actually feeling it?
- Abel's faith showed in one act; Enoch's in decades of quiet consistency – which feels more spiritually legitimate to you, and what does that reveal?

Respond | How should I live/pray?

Hebrews 11:1-6 doesn't just define faith – it demands it. It calls us beyond intellectual agreement into confident, costly trust in God.

These weren't casual believers. They had lost social standing, safety, maybe family because of what they believed. So the writer gives them something solid to stand on: hypostasis – foundation, substance. Not optimism. A structural reality to build a life on even when everything visible is working against you. Faith is "the assurance of what is hoped for and the conviction of what is not seen" – and it must shape how we actually live.

That begins with honest examination. Where are you still white-knuckling control, obeying only as far as it's comfortable? Faith might mean trusting God in a painful circumstance, surrendering your plans, or obeying when it is genuinely costly. Faith becomes most visible under pressure, not before it.

Abel worshipped sincerely. Enoch walked with God – not in one defining moment, but every ordinary day. The invitation is the same: prayer, Scripture, obedience – not as performance, but as relationship with someone you actually trust.

You don't persevere by gritting your teeth. You persevere by trusting someone you believe is good. God exists, He is good, and He rewards those who seek Him.

Where are you still living by sight – and what would it cost you to stop?

- Where are you obeying God only as far as it's comfortable – and what would it look like to take the next step past that line?
- What would change about the way you live this week if you genuinely believed God is good and His promises are true?

Response Tool: Five Daily Prayer Prompts

As you leave today, let these five questions carry the weight of your response into the week ahead – not as a checklist, but as an ongoing conversation with God. Introduce the five daily questions as a simple spiritual practice that can help us intentionally live out our faith in our workplaces, homes, families, and communities.

- God, where do you want me to go?
- God, who do you want me to see?
- God, what do you want me to say?
- God, what do you want me to pray?
- God, how do you want me to serve?

After this time of reflection, transition into a time of prayer requests. Allow time for members to share and, if appropriate, allow others in the class to pray for each other.

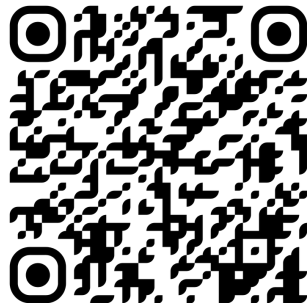
Additional Commentary

- On hypostasis (v.1) – "assurance" – Before Hebrews, some scholars have noted that hypostasis was a legal term – a title deed guaranteeing ownership of something not yet in hand. Faith isn't the feeling that something good might happen. It's the legally-grounded confidence that what God has promised is already secured. The believer holds the deed before taking possession.
- On elenchos (v.1) – "conviction" – Elenchos is courtroom language for evidence that compels a verdict. Faith isn't a vague sense that something is true – it's settled confidence in testimony the believer has found trustworthy. Not the absence of evidence. The presence of a reliable witness.
- On Enoch (v.5) – walking with God – Genesis gives Enoch four verses: he walked with God, and God took him. No dramatic act. No recorded command. Just sustained, daily fellowship – which Hebrews identifies as the defining expression of faith. The quietest life in Genesis may be the most faithful one.
- On Hebrews II:6 – two convictions – The writer identifies two distinct convictions: that God exists, and that He rewards those who seek Him. The first addresses His reality. The second addresses His character. Both are necessary. Affirm His existence while doubting His goodness – you get religion. Affirm His goodness while uncertain of His reality – you get sentiment. Hebrews insists on both as the irreducible core of coming to God.
- On the structure of Hebrews II – These six verses aren't an introduction – they're a thesis. The writer defines faith, then calls witnesses to prove it. Each figure is chosen not to inspire admiration but to demonstrate one point: across sacrifice, flood, migration, and barrenness, the same pattern holds. Trust in an unseen God, expressed in concrete action, sustained over time. Faith isn't situational. It's the invariant posture of everyone who has ever pleased God.

Community Group Resource Page

Visit our website to view our [leadership resources](#).

From Community Group training and resources to Discipleship Group starter guides, we want to equip you to make disciples.



Additional Study

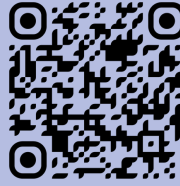
Watch

Bible Project - Hebrews



See a collection of videos, classes, and articles that dive into **Hebrews** and its themes.

Bible Project - Faithful



In this video, we look at why we can trust that God is full of **Faithfulness.**

Overview

Enduring Word - Hebrews 11



Text commentary, written materials, and audio/video recordings of **Hebrews 11.**

Got Questions - Faith



Biblical Q&A, articles, translations, audios, videos, apps, social media, podcasts, and more on "**Faith.**"

Expand

Bible Ref - Hebrews 11



Explore chapter and verse commentaries to deepen your understanding of **Hebrews.**

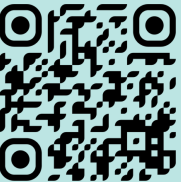
Bible Hub - Hebrews 11:1-6



Parallel translations, language tools, commentaries, and much more on **Hebrews 11:1-6.**

Deepen

Logos Factbook - Faith



Logos Factbook shares information resources and articles about **Faith.**

Blue Letter Bible - Hebrews 11



Original texts, Translations, Cross-Refs, Commentaries, Dictionaries + more on **Hebrews 11:1-6.**

