

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 6-9-13 AM NOTES

“THE WALK OF FAITH”

HEBREWS 11:5-6

#2 in Series, “Faith, Hope, and Love: Three Distinctives of the Christian Life”

1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV) “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.”

Hope—The confident expectation that what God has _____ He will _____ in His perfect timing.

“Faith enables the believing soul to treat the future as present and the invisible as seen.” —Dr. Oswald J. Sanders

Genesis 5:21-24 (NKJV) “²¹ Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. ²² After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²³ So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”

I. Faith _____ God (v. 6a)

Faith is not one of the ways to _____ God; faith is the _____ way to please God.

2 Corinthians 5:9 (NASB) “Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.”

Our one ambition on the way to Heaven is to be _____ to Him.

Romans 14:23 (ESV) “But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.”

Proverbs 21:4 (NKJV) “*And* the plowing of the wicked [*is*] sin.”

John 6:28 (ESV) “Then they said to him, ‘What must we do, to be doing the works of God?’”

John 6:29 (ESV) “Jesus answered them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.’”

Faith is our response to the _____ of God.

Faith _____ God!

1 John 5:10 (NKJV) “...he who does not believe God has made Him a liar...”

II. Faith _____ God (v. 6b)

No man can know God by _____.

John 1:18a (NKJV) “No one has seen God at any time.”

John 14:9b (NKJV) “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

It is impossible to _____ prove that God is.

Romans 1:19 (NASB) “because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.”

Romans 1:20 (NASB) “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”

III. Faith _____ God’s Reward (v. 6c)

1 Chronicles 28:9 (NKJV) “If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.”

Jeremiah 29:13 (NKJV) “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”

“He who has God and everything has no more than he who has God alone.”

—C. S. Lewis

Faith believes that God in His _____ always wills what is best for us. Faith believes that God in His _____ always knows what is best for us. Faith believes that God is His _____ has the power to bring about what is best for us. Faith rests in the love, the omniscience, and the omnipotence of God.

God I Need You (GINY)

Corinthians 12:9b (NKJV) “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”

IV. Faith Is _____ (v. 5)

Genesis 5:24 (NKJV) “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”

Colossians 2:6 (NKJV) “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.”

Walking in Scripture is a metaphor for our _____, our way of life.

Genesis 5:22 (NKJV) “After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters.”

_____ is the hardest job in the world.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

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“THE WALK OF FAITH”

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#2 in Series, “Faith, Hope, and Love: Three Distinctives of the Christian Life”

This series has as its theme verse **1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV)** “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.” We are beginning by looking at faith – biblical faith.

Biblical faith is quite different from what the world often means by faith. Biblical faith is not positive thinking. There’s generally nothing wrong with positive thinking, but don’t make the mistake of thinking that it is true faith. I heard about a young boy who came to his Dad and said, “Dad, I think I flunked my math test today.” The father said, “Son, that is negative thinking; think positively.” The boy said, “OK Dad, I’m positive I flunked my math test”. We saw last week that understanding faith is tied up with understanding hope because we read in **Hebrews 11:1a (NKJV)** “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for...” Hope is not a wish or a desire; **hope is the confident expectation that what God has promised He will accomplish in His perfect timing.** Faith takes that promise, that hope that is future and brings it back into the now, and then bases our attitude and our actions on the fact that God is telling the truth. Faith is the solid foundation that brings our hope into the present and gives it something to stand on. Dr. Oswald J. Sanders said, “Faith enables the believing soul to treat the future as present and the invisible as seen.” [Quoted in Warren Weirsbe *Be Confident*, Page 122]. The greatest passage on faith in the entire Bible is Hebrews 11. This great chapter demonstrates faith through the lives of the heroes of the faith. Today, we are going to learn about the walk of faith, and we will see as our example the life of Enoch. We are going to take the text in reverse order. We will look at a key principle about faith in Hebrews 11:6 and then we will focus on how the principle is exemplified in the life of Enoch. I want to first introduce Enoch to you.

There is not a great deal of material in the Bible about Enoch. We read in **Genesis 5:21-24 (NKJV)** “²¹ Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. ²² After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²³ So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ And Enoch walked with God; and he *was* not, for God took him.” Genesis 5 reads like the obituary section of the newspaper. A person is named, a line or two is given about their life and who their son was and then it says “and he died”. Genesis 5:3 speaks of Adam and in verse 5 “and he died”. Genesis 5:7 speaks of Seth, and verse 8 says “and he died”. Genesis 5:9 introduces Enosh and verse 11 says “and he died”. Genesis 5:12 introduces Cainan and then verse 14 says “and he died”. Genesis 5:15 introduces Mahalalel, and then verse 17 says “and he died” (are you seeing a pattern here?). Genesis 5:18 introduces Jared and verse 20 says “and he died”. Genesis 5:21 introduces Enoch, but **Genesis 5:24 (NKJV)** says “And Enoch walked with God; and he *was* not, for God took him.” Here is what that means: God took Enoch to Heaven without dying. What was different about Enoch’s life? What separated Enoch from his ancestors? The only thing that the Bible tells us is that “Enoch walked with God”. What we will see in the message today is that walking with God is a walk of faith. From verse 6 and from Enoch’s example we are going to learn more about faith and what it means to walk in faith.

I. Faith Pleases God (V6a)

Faith is not one of the ways we please God; faith is the only way to please God. Why is it so important that we please God? We read in **2 Corinthians 5:9 (NASB)** “Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.” The word translated “ambition” in 2 Corinthians 5:9 is a word that carries the connotation of striving to bring something to pass. What is it that we are to have as our ambition? What is the ultimate thing on this earth that we aspire to and strive to attain? It is **to be pleasing to Him.** Our one ambition on the way to Heaven is to be pleasing to Him. That ambition ought to drive every decision we make. With that ambition, we are not always looking for a loophole. Our goal is to please Him. The question is not, “Where does it say in the Bible that I can’t do this?” The question is

“Lord, what pleases You in this situation?” When this is our consuming ambition, it takes care of the questionable, “gray areas”. Our attitude will be, “If it is questionable, I’m going to stay away from it because my one ambition is to please him”. This compelling desire to please Him should drive us and control us. This desire to please God should be our one ambition. The obvious question, given this truth is, “How then do I please God?” The answer comes so clearly in **Hebrews 11:6a (NKJV)** “But without faith *it is impossible to please Him...*” Don’t water down that word “impossible”. Nothing – sacrifice, service, sincerity – nothing pleases God apart from faith. In fact **Romans 14:23b (ESV)** says “For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.” That explains why we read in **Proverbs 21:4b (NKJV)** “...the plowing of the wicked [*is*] sin.” Why would plowing in an agricultural society be sin? It is because it is not from a life that walks in faith, and therefore it is not an activity that pleases God. A group of people asked Jesus a question in **John 6:28 (ESV)** “Then they said to him, ‘What must we do, to be doing the works of God?’” They were expecting an answer that involved some spiritual activity like fasting and praying or keeping the law or helping the poor. They were no doubt surprised by His answer in **John 6:29 (ESV)** “Jesus answered them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.’” The Greek word “believe” is the verbal form of the word translated “Faith”. Jesus was saying the exact thing the writer of Hebrews was saying – “without faith no work we can do will please Him”. Our one ambition is to please God and the one way to please Him is by a life characterized by faith.

Why is it that God is so pleased with faith? It is because faith is our response to the character of God. Faith glorifies God by saying God is going to keep His promises and I am so sure about it that I am going to base my life on it; I’m going to order my attitude and my actions like it is true because I believe it is true. Faith glorifies God! This also explains why unbelief is such a devastating sin. Unbelief strikes a blow at the trustworthiness of God. Unbelief says, “God I know what You promised, but I just don’t believe that You are going to do it. You are unworthy of my trust.” That is serious! Lest you think I am being melodramatic and overstating things, listen to **1 John 5:10b (NKJV)** “...he who does not believe God has made Him a liar...” What would you think if you were introduced to a group as a speaker by a Master of Ceremonies who says lots of nice things about you and then says, “Oh, and one other thing about our guest speaker; you cannot believe what He says”. It wouldn’t really matter how many positive things he said about you; he has taken away all credibility for whatever you might say. We must do whatever it takes to mortify the sin of unbelief. Faith pleases God; unbelief communicates that God is not even worthy of being trusted.

Our ambition, our aspiration, our aim in this life is to glorify God by pleasing Him. Without faith, it is impossible to please Him. From the moment of our salvation which was received by faith, God enrolls us in the school of faith. He allows us to be in situations where we are left with trusting Him as our only viable option. He knows that faith is like a muscle that grows as we use it. He puts us in a hemmed in place so that we will be have all other options taken away and we must trust Him, we must stand on His promises. As we look to Him in faith, He is pleased. Only when we look to Him in faith is He pleased. I have a friend who says “Most of us don’t trust God until we have to”. He is probably right. Therefore God puts us in a place where we have nowhere else to turn but to Him. Charles Spurgeon said, “Smooth roads make sleepy travelers”. Faith pleases God!

II. Faith Believes God Is (V6b)

Hebrews 11:6b (NKJV) “...for he who comes to God must believe that He is...” Let me make sure that we understand what the writer of Hebrews is saying. He is not saying that you must believe that there is a God. He is saying that you must believe that the God revealed in Scripture is. You must believe that Jehovah God – the one revealed in the Bible is the only true God. He is not talking about believing that the god of the Deist, the Muslim, the gods of Hinduism, or the god of spiritism is. He who would come to the God of Scripture must believe that He is. There is only one way that a person can know that God is and that is by faith. No man can know God by sight. **John 1:18a (NKJV)** “No one has seen God at any time.” Yes, Jesus said in **John 14:9 (NKJV)** “He who has seen Me has seen the Father”, but He was

speaking of essence, character, attributes – not the literal form of God the Father. Someone may say, “I want to see scientific proof that God is”. It is impossible to scientifically prove that God is. You can’t scientifically prove anyone in history is – Napoleon, Julius Caesar, or Genghis Kahn. The reason lies in the nature of history itself and the limitations of the scientific method. In order for something to be proved by science, it must be repeatable. But events of history by the very nature of history are unrepeatable. The fact that we cannot “scientifically prove” something does not disprove its reality. While there is no scientific proof that God exists, there is evidence – lots of evidence that God exists. There are two lines of evidence from the book of Romans. First, there is the evidence that there is an innate [inborn] knowledge of the fact that God is. **Romans 1:19 (NASB)** “because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.” Dr Olivera Petrovich told a University of Western Sydney conference on the psychology of religion that even preschool children constructed theological concepts as part of their understanding of the physical world. Psychologists have debated whether belief in God or atheism was the natural human state. According to Dr Petrovich, an expert in psychology of religion, belief in God is not taught but develops naturally. It was hard-wired into the human psyche, "It's the concept of God as creator, primarily," she said (see Romans 1:20!). Dr Petrovich said her findings were based on several studies, particularly one of Japanese children aged four to six, and another of 400 British children aged five to seven from seven different faiths. "Atheism is definitely an acquired position," she said. <http://blogs.theage.com.au/thereligiouswrite> Second, there is the evidence of creation. **Romans 1:20 (HCSB)** “From the creation of the world His invisible attributes, that is, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what He has made. As a result, people are without excuse.” We could go over the rational and logical evidence for the fact that God is, but this is not a message on apologetics. When it comes to a refusal to believe that God is, the obstacle is not normally intellectual. It is normally a moral obstacle. To put it another way, it is primarily a heart problem and not a head problem. If I believe that God, the God of Scripture is, then I must accept the fact that because I am His creation, I am accountable to Him. If I love my sin, I can just deny He exists and not deal with where I stand with the God who created me for Himself. Let me be crystal clear, believing from the witness of the innate knowledge of God and from creation is not saving faith. However, the first step in coming to God and knowing Him through Jesus Christ is to believe that God is.

III. Faith Seeks God’s Reward (V6c)

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) “...He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” It is not enough to simply know that God is. That is the starting point. Faith also believes that God is a rewarder. Who does He reward? He rewards those who diligently seek Him. Over and over in the Scripture we are told to seek God. A couple of examples are: **1 Chronicles 28:9b (NKJV)** “If you seek Him, He will be found by you...” **Jeremiah 29:13 (NKJV)** “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.” What is the reward for those who seek Him? The reward is God Himself! We know Him. Faith seeks God and a deepening walk with Him, a deepening love for Him is the reward that we seek. When we have Him, we have all that we need. He is our sufficiency. He is our supply. I love this quote by C. S. Lewis: “He who has God and everything has no more than he who has God alone.” Faith looks to God for every need. Faith believes that God in His love always wills what is best for us. Faith believes that God in His omniscience always knows what is best for us. Faith believes that God is His omnipotence has the power to bring about what is best for us. Faith rests in the love, the omniscience, and the omnipotence of God. That is what a life of faith looks like.

Faith goes beyond believing that God is. Faith leads us to God’s provision for our sin and separation from Him – the cross. When we repent of sin and trust in the payment that the Son of God made on the cross, we are adopted into God’s family and we have His Spirit dwelling in us and the promise His sufficient grace in **2 Corinthians 12:9b (NKJV)** "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

Only faith pleases God. Faith begins with believing that God is. Faith believes that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. The reward for diligently seeking Him is God Himself – His enabling

grace – the desire and power to do His will (Philippians 2:13). The walk of faith is a life that is constantly aware of our own inadequacies and constantly cries out to Him, “God I need You”. The desire to please Him leads us to diligently seek Him.

IV. Faith Is Exemplified (V5)

Let’s go back to Enoch. What separated Enoch from others? **Genesis 5:24 (NKJV)** “And Enoch walked with God; and he *was* not, for God took him.” When we put Genesis 5:24 and Hebrews 11:5 together, we see that Enoch walked with God and Enoch pleased God. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) the phrase “walked with God” is translated “pleased God”. The two phrases mean the same thing. What pleases God? Hebrews 11:6 says that only faith pleases God. To walk with God or to please God is to walk by Faith. We see the same truth in **Colossians 2:6 (NKJV)** “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him”. How did we receive Him? It was by grace through faith. How do we walk? We walk by faith in His enabling grace. Walking in Scripture is a metaphor for our lifestyle, our way of life. To walk by faith is a lifestyle of dependence on Him – “God, I need You”.

What motivated Enoch to walk with God? We get a hint when we look at the Genesis account of His life. Enoch seems to have been motivated to walk with God – to walk by faith because of His family. **Genesis 5:22 (NKJV)** “After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters.” The implication is that it was after his child was born that Enoch began walking with God. In my humble but correct opinion, parenting is the hardest job in the world. There are principles in God’s Word (lots of principles) about raising children, but the daily application of those principles in all sorts of circumstances is very difficult. You must have a walk of faith that regularly is crying out to God, “God I need You; how do I handle this situation?” Then there is the whole matter of setting an example for them of what it means to walk with God, how to handle disappointments, how to love God and our neighbor, and on and on. “God, I need You”. Enoch was motivated to walk with God by becoming a parent.

Let’s look at what happened to Enoch at the end of his time on earth. Genesis 5:24 says “and he was not, for God took him”. **Hebrews 11:5 (NKJV)** “By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, *and was not found, because God had taken him*”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” The phrase “taken away” means to transport or carry over. The Bible doesn’t give us the details, but God took Enoch to Heaven without dying. For Enoch, the change was mostly just geographic. He walked by faith here on this sin soaked planet and then he just continued the relationship in Heaven. I long to live such a life that the main change when I go to Heaven is geographic. I want to walk with God by faith here and then just continue the walk when He takes my home.

CONCLUSION

The Bible says in **2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)** “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” Oh the importance of faith. We are saved by faith and then we live by faith. How is your faith life? What promise of God are you standing on right now? There ought to continually be a sense of expectancy in our lives as we wait for God’s timing to fulfill the promises that we are standing on.