



June 19, 2022
The 'Impossible' Reality
Hebrews 11:4-6

I love and am intrigued by the subject of faith.

For we live by faith, not by sight. - 2 Corinthians 5:7

“And the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.” So the Lord said, “If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.” - Luke 17

He replied, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” - Matthew 17:20

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” - Ephesians 3:20

⁴ “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. ⁵ 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. 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.”

3 Implications of faith in the life of a Christian

Swindoll - To illustrate his profound definition of faith with practical lives of faithfulness, the author of Hebrews begins with a shepherd, a preacher, and a builder—three common men with uncommon faith. (Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary – Hebrews)

➤ Faith is demonstrated in the way we live in this world

Abel- Genesis 4 “Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.” ² Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the

ground. ³ And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. ⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, ⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell."

- **We all have a testimony and we all build reputations as we live life.**

Scholars have suggested a number of reasons why Abel's sacrifice was better than Cain's: "Abel's sacrifice was living, whereas Cain's was lifeless; it was stronger, Cain's weaker; it grew spontaneously, Cain's by human ingenuity; it involved blood, Cain's did not" (Leon Morris, *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. by Frank Gaebelin [Zondervan], 12:115, summarizing F. F. Bruce).

Though Abel is dead, yet "by it" (the sacrifice) he yet speaks, telling to all that live after, that salvation is through sacrificial blood. In [Hebrews 12:24](#), the statement is made that Jesus' blood speaks better things than the blood of Abel. It is not Abel's own blood which is in view here, but the blood of the offering Abel presented to God. This is shown by the historical background and analysis of the epistle, the argument of which is that "The New Testament in Jesus' blood is superior to and takes the place of the First Testament in animal blood." The blood of Abel's offering spoke symbolically of a Sacrifice for sin that God would one day offer. But Jesus' blood is the actual sacrifice, and speaks of the salvation which He procured for us on the Cross. It was the blood offering which Abel presented to God through which he was declared righteous. This is in accord with Pauline doctrine where the great apostle speaks of "being now justified by his blood"

Faith is *believing* that God will keep His promises, *despite* circumstances that seem to be to the contrary! **True faith that saves one's soul** includes at least three main elements - (1) firm persuasion or firm conviction, (2) a surrender to that truth and (3) a conduct emanating from that surrender. In sum, faith shows itself genuine by a changed life.

Abel taught the need of approaching the Lord with **sacrifice**, the need of atonement by blood. He laid the lamb upon the altar and sealed his testimony with his own blood. Atonement is so precious a truth that to die for its defense is a worthy deed, and from the very first it is a doctrine that has secured its martyrs, who being dead yet speak.

In the Old Testament sacrificial system, every sacrifice was to provide a **fragrant aroma** and be **acceptable** to God. Only if the individual offered it up with the correct heart attitude would it be pleasing to God. And so we read that after the flood and their arrival on dry land...

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar and the LORD **smelled the soothing aroma**; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account

of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done." ([Genesis 8:20-21](#)) (compare [Leviticus 1:9,13,17](#)).

For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; not as **Cain**, who was of the evil one and slew **his** brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because **his** deeds were evil, and **his** brother's were righteous. ([1 John 3:11, 12](#))

Enoch Genesis 5 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.

Jude ¹⁴ Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Spurgeon - Then came Enoch, whose life went beyond the reception and confession of the atonement, for he set before men the great truth of communion with God. He displayed in his life the relation of the believer to the Most High, and showed how near the living God condescends to be to His own children.

Enoch "Walked With God"

He "walked with God!" Could grander words be written?
Not much of what he thought or said is told;
Not where or what he wrought is even mentioned;
He "walked with God"—brief words of fadeless gold!

How many souls were succored on his journey—
Helped by his words, or prayers, we may not know;
Still, this we read—words of excelling grandeur—
He "walked with God," while yet he walked below.

And, after years, long years, of such blest walking,
One day he walked, then was not, God said "Come!
Come from the scene of weary sin-stained sadness!
Come to the fuller fellowship of home!"

Such be the tribute of thy pilgrim journey
When life's last mile thy feet hath bravely trod—
When thou hast gone to all that there awaits thee,

This simple epitaph—"He walked with God!" (Ge 5:24)
—Poems for Sunshine and Shadow
(Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations)

Faith brings a person through all of life. Every day, every circumstance.

2 Timothy 3:10-15 "But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus".

➤ **Without faith it is impossible to please God**

These are the days for an earthshaking, mountain-moving, devil-defying faith in Almighty God. And, as to the degree that we trust this great God, God is pleased and God will bless us.

The first two examples of faith were men who pleased God!

➤ **Faith is demonstrated by what we believe**

Adrian Rogers - How are we going to have this kind of faith—

- A. Make a Full Surrender to God**
- B. Saturate Your Soul with the Word of God**
- C. Pray**
- D. Use the Faith That You Already Have**
- E. Keep Your Eyes upon Christ**

He is

"Genuine faith does not simply believe that a divine being exists ([James 2:19](#)), but that the God of Scripture is the only real and true God Who exists."

To believe that "God is" is to exercise faith upon Him as such a Being as His Word declares Him to be: supreme sovereign, indescribably holy, almighty, inflexibly just, yet abounding in mercy and grace toward poor sinners through Christ.

What does this look like in our lives?

- Confidence in who we are in Christ **accepted, with access**
- A desire to live in His purpose for our lives **His plan not ours**
- The way we treat others “It is relatively easy to honor people we deem worthy of honor. This may be a beloved public figure or faith leader, or it can be as intimate as a parent, sibling, or spouse. We tie their worthiness of honor to their beliefs, accomplishments, or intimate proximity. Yet, and this is key, how do we honor the humanity of those with whom we profoundly disagree, or those who have wounded and betrayed our confidence and trust? Honor in these cases does not mean we ignore or dismiss the disagreements or betrayals. However, as forgiven and reconciled sinners, we too must view others through this lens, refusing to say that any person is fully defined by their faults, but is instead a human being made in God’s image, and therefore worthy of honor and a belief that even their greatest shortcomings can be healed and transformed by the all-consuming fire of God.”
- The place of fear in our lives

III.

Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.- ESV

Proverbs 31-She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future. NLT

He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him

Diligently- to search out, i.e. (figuratively)investigate, crave, demand, (by Hebraism) worship

Rewarder (**misthapodotes** from **misthos** = reward + **apodídomi** = render, cp **misthapodosia**) is the only NT example of this word which means "recompenser." It means properly, someone "paying what is due; a rewarder" (Abbott-Smith); a

paymaster (A. T. Robertson), giving rewards in keeping with his own values. It refers to God compensating believers for living in faith (4102/pístis).

How does God "reward" the diligent seeker?

- ✓ By offering Himself graciously to be found of them who penitently, earnestly, trustfully approach Him through the appointed Mediator. By granting them access into His favor:
- ✓ By actually bestowing His favor upon them, as He did upon the prodigal. By forgiving their sins and blotting out their iniquities ([Is 55:7](#)).
- ✓ By writing His laws in their hearts, so that they now desire and determine to forsake all idols and serve Him only.
- ✓ By giving them assurance of their acceptance in the Beloved, and granting them sweet foretastes of the rest and bliss which awaits them on High.
- ✓ By ministering to their every need, both spiritual and temporal.
- ✓ By taking them to heaven, where they shall spend eternity in the unclouded enjoyment of the wondrous riches of His grace.

****How do I live in light of this promise?**

****How much do you think a person misses out of, who does not diligently seek the Lord?**

Inward peace and joy, contentment, material blessings, etc.

Donald Barnhouse observed, God's method of supplying our need is to give us fresh knowledge of Himself, for every need can be met by seeing Him

Psalm 18 ²⁰ The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;
According to the cleanness of my hands
He has recompensed me.

²¹ For I have kept the ways of the LORD,
And have not wickedly departed from my God.

²² For all His judgments *were* before me,
And I did not put away His statutes from me.

²³ I was also blameless before Him,
And I kept myself from my iniquity.

²⁴ Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.

Would my name have been included in this chapter if you had been living in that time?

