

# Faith Defined

(Hebrews 11:1-3)

Yearly Theme: *“Love Does...”*

Series Title: *Substance of Faith*

December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019

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## Something to think about:

As we come to the final month of 2019, and our theme of “LOVE” for the year, we look at the aspect of love from the New Living Testament translation in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 that describes a love that *“never loses faith.”*

The best way to describe this kind of faith requires us to look deeper into the Biblical definition of faith. So, in order to do that we will be focusing on Hebrews chapter 11, commonly known as the “Hall of Faith.” As we explore the type of love that never loses *faith*, we need to first understand what faith really is:

## **Hebrews 11:1-40 (NLT)**

***<sup>1</sup> Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see. <sup>2</sup> Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation.***

***<sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God’s command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen. (Continue reading in your Bible, or on the screen).***

Author and Biblical scholar, William Barclay, wrote,

“To the writer of Hebrews, faith is absolutely certain that what it believes is true and that what it expects will come. It is not the hope which looks forward with wistful longing [as in Hannah’s story]; it is the hope which looks forward with utter conviction.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible Series: The Letter to the Hebrews*, (Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, Kentucky; 1976) 128.

The key point this morning is this...

**Key Point:** *“Faith is confident assurance devoid of things seen.”*

1. Faith is the **hypostasis** of things hoped for (*substance, confidence, essence, or assurance*).

Faith is the “*substance, confidence, essence, or assurance*” that what we hope for will actually happen.

2. Faith is the **elenchos** of things not seen (*proof, conviction, or evidence*).

Faith is the “*proof, conviction, or evidence*” of the things that we cannot see.

## Something to take home:

The early 20<sup>th</sup> century evangelist, Oswald Chambers, wrote this about *faith*:

“Faith for my deliverance is not faith in God. Faith means, whether I am visibly delivered or not, I will stick to my belief that God is love. There are some things only learned in a fiery furnace.”<sup>2</sup>

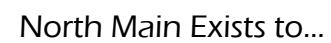
How is your faith? What is your faith rooted in? Does your faith have substance, confidence, and assurance that what you hope for will actually happen? Does your faith give witness through conviction and evidence of the things you cannot see?

We all have faith. The question is: *What do you have faith in?* We all love. The question is: *Who, or what, do you love?* When love and faith are rooted in the eternal, unchanging God of the Universe, there is nothing that can shake us. However, when our faith is rooted in the temporal and imperfect, we find ourselves sinking amidst the toils and turmoils of this life.

Again, it’s important to remember...

**Key Point:** *“Faith is confident assurance devoid of things seen.”*

<sup>2</sup> Oswald Chambers, *Run Today’s Race*, (Discovery House Publishers; Discovery House Publishers; 2015).

[illegible]

**Know** Christ intimately,  
**Grow** in Christ continually, and,  
**Go** for Christ daily;

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... evidence of things not seen.

(HEBREWS 11)

Faith Defined
(Hebrews 11:1-3)
Series Title: "Substance of Faith"

KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ Define "faith."
- ⇒ Describe a time when you're faith was tested...

SCRIPTURE: (Before studying this material, consider listening to the corresponding message online at: http://www.northmaincog.org/media/sermon-media)

Hebrews 11:1-3 (NLT)

1 Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see. 2 Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation. 3 By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen. (Go ahead and read the whole chapter as an individual, or a group.)

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- 1. In a couple sentences, describe this passage of Scripture:
- 2. Everyone has faith in something or someone. The atheist has faith in himself and science, the athlete has faith in their abilities to perform, the patient has faith in their doctor/surgeon, a Christian has faith in God. What, or who, do you have faith in? Give some examples:
- 3. The word for "confidence" in verse one is the Greek word "hypostasis," which can mean: substance, essence, or assurance. If faith is the "confidence, substance, essence, or assurance of what we hope for, what do you hope for?

- 4. Is it easy or hard to have faith? Explain...
- 5. The writer of Hebrews goes on to describe faith as the "assurance" about things we cannot see. The Greek word for "assurance" also means: proof, conviction, or evidence. If faith gives us "assurance, proof, conviction, or evidence" of things we cannot see, what evidence do you have for faith in God whom you cannot see (examples: the details and design within creation, evidence from the Bible and archaeology, etc.)?
- 6. The Old Testament is replete with examples of people who believed in God and who looked forward to the day when He would send a Messiah to save them; however, they would not be able to see with their own eyes the fulfillment of that day. It's because of this that the writer of Hebrews reminds us that they kept the faith in spite of seeing what they hoped for. What does it take to have that kind of faith?
- 6. Verse 2 tells us that through their faith, "the people in the days of old earned a good reputation." How did they earn a good reputation?
- 7. In verse 3 the writer of Hebrews tells us that, "what we now see did not come from anything we can see." How does it requires faith to believe this?
- 8. Is faith hard or easy to have? After reading Hebrews 11, what does faith require of us?

SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ HOW IS YOUR FAITH? What is your faith rooted in? Does your faith have substance, confidence, and assurance that what you hope for will actually happen? Does your faith give witness through conviction and evidence of the things you cannot see?
- ⇒ WE ALL HAVE FAITH. The question is: What do you have faith in? We all love. The question is: Who, or what, do you love? When love and faith are rooted in the eternal, unchanging God of the Universe, there is nothing that can shake us. However, when our faith is rooted in the temporal and imperfect, we find ourselves sinking amidst the toils and turmoil of this life.
- ⇒ MEMORY VERSES: Hebrews 11:1 and Ephesians 2:8-10