

Summit Sermon 7.15.12

JESUS: The Truer And Better Object of Faith

(read aloud, standing)

Hebrews 11

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

The Triumphs of Faith

11 Now faith is the [a] assurance of *things* [b] hoped for, the [c] conviction of things not seen. **2** For by it the men of old [d] gained approval.

3 By faith we understand that the [e] worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible. **4** By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying [f] about his gifts, and through [g] faith, though he is dead, he still speaks. **5** By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. **6** And 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 seek Him.

**And without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.
-Heb 11:6 (NASB)**

INTRO:

It is such an honor to open God's Word with you and worship to Him!

for those of you who are into titles this is JESUS: The Truer And Better Object of Faith

today We are going to be looking at one verse. HEB 11:6

& as a way of introduction, I want for us to dive right into the text.

And without faith it is *impossible to please God...*

The writer here is appealing to this desire that we were all created with, every human being was made with a desire to please God, a desire to seek God, a delight in being pleasing to GOD

Col 1 says we were made by Him and for Him....Gen 1 tells us we were made to worship and obey

But this direction and this desire has been, as ROM 1 tells us, marred, broken, and suppressed by unrighteousness, idolatry, sin

and so though we all know God exists, and that we should please Him and seek Him, we do Not. (rom 3)

Rather, we please and seek ourselves, and create for ourselves an image of GOD that is best suited to our liking.

we know just enough about God to condemn us to hell

and the writing here in hebrews is telling us

without faith it is *impossible to please God...*

so the tension, or the problem, set up for us here in this verse is "the impossibility of pleasing God"

and the resolution, or the answer is FAITH

it is *impossible to please God...without faith*

Have you ever known someone who was "impossible to please"?

This is the moment where instead of raising your hand you elbow your spouse :)

i mean it's like whatever you do it's never good enough...

Mine was my middle school baseball coach.....coach DUNAGAN....tell the story
we all know what that's like

Many of us see God this way....as a deity who is impossible to please.....

that's because we don't know Him. we don't know His character, His heart, apart
from hearing the gospel and responding in FAITH.

so many do not know Him. think about this

right now somewhere in the world a muslim is bowing during the islamic call to
prayer

right now somewhere in the world a hindu is burning incense

right now somewhere in the world a businessman is working tirelessly on a new
deal...throwing his hope on the fleeting vapor of success....dying to hear some
"congratulations" or "well done"

right now somewhere in the world a college student is burning the candle, trying
to finish tops in her class, so she can land the job, and actually find some
security

right now somewhere in the world, maybe even here, a regular church goer is
singing the songs, listening to a talk, giving their money, in order to cover up,
make up for, the failures of last week.

but i'm here to tell you today that religion does not please God, piety does not
please God, hard work does not please God.

Faith pleases God. and the right kind of faith.

so it's hard to overstate the importance of faith...of understanding what it is...of
preaching on it.

heaven and hell are in the balance

Rom 4:3\ "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Rom 14:23b "Everything that does not come from faith is sin."

so let's ask God to show us what it is. Pray with me.

pray

Faith: so we're going to ask 3 questions today. Faith:

1. what is it?
2. what does the God-pleasing kind look like?
3. do you have it?

1. what is it?
2. what does the God-pleasing kind look like?
3. do you have it?

1. What is it?

And *without faith* it is impossible to please God....

people teaching on the subject of faith often come at it from an apologetic angle

giving you reasons to believe in God, etc. why you should have faith

there is nothing wrong with that,

or sometimes people preach a sermon on faith and try to tell you that if you pray hard enough God will make all your wildest dreams come true.

I'm not here today to convince you to have faith,

I'm here to tell you that you already have it.....everyone has it.

the question that becomes us today is, where is yours? let me try to explain.

RUDY (1993)

that is the essence of faith. you look around the world for something that you believe will make you happy, and then you go for it.

and everyone does this.

now....i realize that Hebrews 11 is speaking of faith as it relates to it's proper object....i.e. "Christian Faith"

however I do think it is helpful to go up to 30,000 ft

and ask WHAT IS FAITH (essentially) and WHERE IS MINE?

AND a question that will come up several times today.....

can the object of my faith withstand the weight of faith?

so what is it? let's move towards a definition....which is a little daunting, because many smarter christians have opted out of trying

but I think will prove to be helpful

.....

My definition of faith mostly derived from Heb 11:6, but is a combination of Heb 11:1, Heb 11:6

a quote by A.W. Tozer

Faith is the gaze of a soul upon a saving God - A.W. Tozer

and I have also unchristianized it....which I think is extremely helpful....

for example, you think about the idea of "worship"

it is good and helpful to speak of worship in a Christian sense.....giving specifics of how, why, etc.

HOWEVER since we are raging idolators, it is most exposing of the heart to speak of worship in a general sense, an "unchristian" sense

for example, if i want to talk to someone about worship

i'm probably not going to ask them what kind of songs they like to sing, or analyze whether they lift their hands or not, or ask them how often they read their bibles

rather, I would ask them things like:

where does your money flow, effortlessly? that's what you worship

what have you worked the hardest for?

What's that thing in your life that if you lost it, you wouldn't want to

go on living anymore?

so that's what I aim to do with faith today.....so here's a definition

Faith is the gaze of the soul toward that which is the hope of happiness, leading to demonstrations of commitment and trust.

Faith is the gaze of the soul toward that which is the hope of happiness, leading to demonstrations of commitment and trust.

it could be GOD, it could be anything.

RUDY example

everyone, in a real sense, lives by faith

the question is IN WHAT? the business man, the retired couple, the atheist scientist, the christian....

can the object of your faith withstand the weight of faith?

so how does this work. day to day, in real life.

The 3 A's of FAITH

1. apprehend
2. accept
3. act (the most important)

for example.....the over-used, but helpful summit chair example.....

another example.....a beer commercial.....

and let me tell you why this is important today

the range of this is massive

this little three step process will play itself out hundreds of times in your life today, and perhaps millions of times throughout the span of your life.

but the scope of it will range anywhere from you deciding to sit down in a chair

to you deciding to sit down in a chair on wall street, giving your life to collecting

green pieces of paper and in the end losing your soul.

becoming a steve jobs

and that's why I love tozer's wording here...."the gaze of the soul"

because we need to think about those things that you tend to throw the full weight of our faith upon.

people's attention, success, money, religion, your reputation, having the highest IQ, having the nicest body, sex, etc. where do you go for happiness? what do you want more than anything? towards what is your heart moving today? what is the gaze of your soul set upon?

Faith varies in it's measure according to the perceived greatness, importance, truthfulness or delightfulness of it's object.

so if you think winning in sports is REALLY important, then.....

if you think being married is REALLY great, then....

if you think being famous is REALLY important, then.....

But I'm here to tell you today, the only thing strong enough, great enough, wise enough, good enough, interesting enough, True enough, or satisfying enough to throw the full weight of your faith upon is the ALMiGHTY GOD. THE TRIUNE GOD.

faith is HEAVY. how do i know that?

Place it on anything but God and it's like a boulder on a toothpick.

we have all seen this. you throw the weight of your expectation & hope (faith) on something and it breaks.

PERSONAL STORY?

disappointment and despair are the fruits of idolatry. the god you thought was so strong, so good, so interesting, got it's back broken under the weight of your faith.

so you don't get the promotion....you don't get the girl
or....you get the promotion, you get the girl.....and you realize it's not enough

by the way this is where cynicism comes from. why we can't trust like children anymore. this is how our hope and our faith got so shriveled up that we can

hardly trust anybody anymore.

cynicism is born of throwing the weight of your faith upon the idol that just betrayed you.

throw your faith on God today.

Faith

you apprehend, you accept, then you act

It's the gaze of the soul toward that which is the hope of happiness, leading to demonstrations of commitment and trust.

2. What does the God-pleasing kind look like?

Faith is not in itself a meritorious act; the merit is in the One toward Whom it is directed. - TOZER

So here's what we're going to do

we are going to let Heb 11:6 show us what God-pleasing faith looks like

and, at the same time i hope, experience together this three step process of faith with God as our object

i want the gaze of our souls to be lifted to the great object, and I want us to worship together

again, these arguments will not be philosophical in nature

I'm going to read from the Bible....

faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ....

so believer in the room, let's worship together and add fuel to the fire of faith

and skeptic / doubter in the room, give these words a chance today, knowing that you are already putting your faith in something

What does God-pleasing faith look like?

1. You must believe that He is (**Apprehend**)

for he who comes to God *must believe that He is...*

In order to please God, you must believe that He exists

now this seems kind of obvious doesn't it.

so it's like after a long day of work....you're watching TV....and your wife is talking to you (which is never good)

you better believe that she exists pretty soon or else you are GOING TO believe the hard way when she slaps you

God is a person (3 persons) and through faith we apprehend His existence

we don't turn our minds off when we come to God....or anything else for that matter.

We must believe He is...so let's look at God's Word and see who He is!

a quick word? (if there's time)

let's worship together

We must believe He is I AM

one of the first places you might go in knowing if someone exists is figuring out their name

exodus 3 13 Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

14 God said to Moses, "I am who I am.[c] This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'"

HE IS I AM....HE IS ETERNAL

Psalm 90

A prayer of Moses the man of God.

Before the mountains were born
or you brought forth the whole world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

REV 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

God never had a beginning. He has no mommy or daddy. he is simply there.

28

Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,

the Creator of the ends of the earth. (isaiah 40:28)

We must believe He is the ALL-POWERFUL creator

No philosophical theory which I have yet come across is a radical improvement on the words of Genesis, that 'In the beginning God made Heaven and Earth'.

C.S. Lewis

6

psalm 33:6-9

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
their starry host by the breath of his mouth.

7

8

8

Let all the earth fear the Lord;
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

9

For He spoke, and it was done;
He commanded, and it [b]stood fast.

"Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you." [Jeremiah 32:17](#)

songwriter...

We must believe that He is sovereign

3

psalm 115: 3

Our God is in the heavens;
He does whatever He pleases.

Col 1

The Supremacy of the Son of God

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

he sets up and he tears down kings and kingdoms

1 Chronicles 29:11

New International Version (NIV)

11

Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power
and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in heaven and earth is yours.

Yours, Lord, is the kingdom;
you are exalted as head over all.

We must believe that He is Holy

There is no one like our God, there is no one so unique, nothing so valuable, NO

ONE so perfect

one sin against him demands eternal punishment

the angelsthese perfect beings, even they must veil their eyes before this
GOD

heaven is His throne, the earth is his footstool

He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?" daniel 4

for from him and through him and to Him are all things, TO HIM BE THE GLORY
FOREVER AMEN

"I think it would be a wonderful thing if every preacher in America would begin to preach about God and nothing else for one solid year. Just one solid year to preach about God. Who He is, His attributes, His perfections, His being, the kind of God He is, why we dare to trust Him, why we can trust Him, why we should trust Him, why we can love Him, why we should love Him, why we dare not fall short. And keep on preaching on God, the triune God, and keep on until God fills the whole horizon and the whole world. Faith would spring up like grass by the watercourses. Then let a man get up and preach a promise and the whole congregation would say, 'I can trust that promise; look who made it.'"

we must believe, we must apprehend that HE IS.

but the mind will not accept what the heart has already rejected.....

2. You must believe that He is good (Accept)

for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and **that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.**

-Heb 11:6 (NASB)

This is where the heart is won. it's not only when you (1) apprehend, but it's when you realize that the thing you have set your gaze on will be your happiness.

this is where the heart is won to GOD. not just when we see that HE IS, but when we see that HE IS GOOD

and I'm here to tell you today that He is GOOD, and the greatest and most rock solid way we know that is because

HE CAME FOR US

we had all sinned and fallen short of his glory rom 3:23

dead in our transgressions and sins.....eph 2

without hope and without God in the world.

ROM 5:6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will hardly die for a righteous man; [d]though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. **8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

he was wounded for our transgressions

eph 2 but God being rich in mercy.....

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

103 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name.

2

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget none of His benefits;

3

Who pardons all your iniquities,

Who heals all your diseases;

4

Who redeems your life from the pit,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and
compassion;

5

Who satisfies your [a]years with good things,

8

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.

10

He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
So great is His lovingkindness toward those
who [c]fear Him.

12

As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

13

Just as a father has compassion on *his* children,
So the Lord has compassion on those who [d]fear
Him.

ROM 8 :28 And we know that in all things God works
for the good of those who love him, who [i] have been
called according to his purpose.

If God is for us, who can be against us? **32** He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[k] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,**39** neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

even in the midst of suffering

even in the difficult things to understand

THE CROSS FOREVER DECLARES TO A WORLD GONE BAD THAT GOD IS GOOD.

GOD IS GOOD.

one of the things that HAS HELPED ME TO SEE THIS MORE is being a father myself.

paisley & stella

I long for their happiness. their deep happiness.

so that's why we spank them....that's why we change their diapers....that's why we let them watch movies sometimes....that's why we'll help them go through school

but I am not perfect

Matthew 7:9 "Which of you, if your son asks for bread,

will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? **11** If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him?!

even in the midst of suffering

some of you might be here today.....

even in the difficult commands

some of you might be here today.....

that command in that bible is for my happiness.

all of God's commands are for our freedom

paisley at the why stage.....

God is good. He is a *rewarder* of those who seek Him.

but it's not enough to just apprehend, or to just believe,

kirkegard said....to believe is to obey

3. You must come to Him (ACT)

for he who *comes to God...*

you've got to come. you must act. you must prove your faith.

no one would have ever heard of rudy if he simply learned about notre dame and watched them on TV

i would not be married right now if I had told my wife when we were engaged.....you know...getting to know you has been amazing, and I really love you, but.....

this step is the culmination of faith.

in light of knowing the greatness of GOD....in light of tasting the GOODNESS of GOD....

you cross the line. you give your life to Jesus. have the difficult conversation. write the letter. make the phone call. sign up for the mission trip. make the move overseas. you adopt. sell the house. leave the job. get rid of the porn. choose a new group friends. change your eating habits. get in a small group. you take the step of faith that GOD has been asking you to take.

because you know and trust that it is for your ultimate happiness

james 2:

14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? **15** Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. **16** If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? **17** In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. **19** You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that —

and tremble.

20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless^[d]? **21** Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? **22** You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.

Do you have it?

the kind of faith that pleases God. do you have it?

where is your faith?

are you placing the weight of your hope onto created things....things that will disappoint you....money, success, etc.

christian in the room....you say you have faith in God but you have all these other functional saviors in your life

where is your faith?

He is a rewarder of those who seek HIM.

some of you are seeking things from God, the gaze of your soul is set on things God can give you.....and you think that's faith, but it's not.

He is a rewarder of those who seek HIM.

how could it be good for God to give you that thing you have always wanted if what you have always wanted isn't Him?

Where is your faith?

I close with a quote

“The enjoyment of God is the only happiness with which our souls can be

satisfied. To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of earthly friends, are but shadows; but God is the substance. These are but scattered beams, but God is the sun. These are but streams. But God is the ocean.

thirsty sinners....you have drank so deep from the empty wells of this world
Come to Jesus today....He is the Ocean.