



8.3.25

11. Hebrews 11

continuity of his faith



V1.

Faith and **hope** are based on that which is not seen:

A.

Hebrew 11 lists those who have stood as witnesses for **faith**, for the efficacy and significance of **faith** shown through the ages in the G.T.

Faith is defined in vs. 1 as the substance of **things hoped for**, **of things not seen**, so it relates to something that is yet future. **Hope** is always oriented to something that is future, something that presently is not seen.

1 Corinthians 13:7 (NIV)
7 For we walk by **faith**, not by sight

Therefore, **faith** is not oriented towards immediate visual reality. **Faith is taking God at His Word.**

Faith means to trust God.

When we walk by sight when we are face-to-face with Him, we will be **believing the sight** and not by **faith** because it will be evident who we are believing. We will see things as they are.

But in the here-and-now, **IN TIME** we walk by **faith**.

Hope is eager confident expectation!

Hope is also based on that which is not seen according to:

Romans 8:20-25 (NIV)
20 For we were created in this **hope**, but **hope** that is seen is not **hope** for why does one with **hope** for what he sees?

22 But if we **hope** for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

So in both of these passages, **faith** and **hope** are future-oriented and they rely upon that **witness of the Scripture** that God has given to us, and the **authority of Scripture** that God has spoken to us.

We believe it because He has said it.

So vs. 11 is not a definition for faith, but a summary statement.

Hebrews 11:1-4 (NIV)
1 Now **faith** is the substance of things **hoped for**, the evidence of things **not seen**.

There is something we don't see, something that's invisible to us.

The only evidence that it exists is the **faith** of individual believers. It is their **belief** that that exists.

But it's not this sort of empty subjective faith in faith, a mystical faith-in faith kind of thing that you often hear referenced in the secular religious world. That's how both the unregenerate, and the carnally minded people think about **faith**. But Scripture defines **faith** as that which is based on **content** that God has made available.

So **faith** is not only used to refer to **the act of believing**, but it also implies **what is believed in**, the **content** of **faith**.

When we speak of the **content** of our **faith**, we are talking about **doctrine** (what the Bible teaches).

That is what **doctrine** means.

It's what the Bible teaches about **what to believe** — **how to live**.

Faith, then, becomes **the evidence of this unseen reality**, because when we **believe** something is true, we live on the basis of that as reality. We don't live a different way.

Hebrews 11:1-4 (NIV)
1 Now **faith** is the substance of things **hoped for**, the evidence of things **not seen**.

If you believe that it is raining outside, then that belief should change your behavior so that you are prepared to handle the weather. You do something to protect yourself.

In other words when you believe something to be **true**, it changes the way the way you make decisions and what you do. So there's a connection between **faith** and putting to practice **what you know to be true**.

That's what James is getting at:

James 1:21-25 (NIV)
21 Therefore lay aside all filthy words and actions, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to **save** your souls.

22 But he who **does** of the word and not **hearers** only, deceiving themselves.

23 For if anyone is a **hearer** of the word and not a **doer**, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror.

24 For the observer, himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a **hearer** but a **doer of the work**, this one will be blessed in what he does.

The hearer is the person who is doing what you're doing right now, listening to what the word of God is teaching.

Doing is then taking that which is taught and applying it to **the thinking** and **the lifestyle** of the individual who has listened.

Doing isn't Christian service. It may eventually result in Christian service, but doing is simply responding to the teaching of the Word of God.

For example if the Scripture says:

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 (NIV)
17 See that you **love one another**, and for all, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

18 Rejoice always,

19 **pray without ceasing**

20 in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

These passages are great for the children to learn when they're young and learn how to put them into practice, teaching them God's instruction how to love one another, and love one another.

We don't want to teach them just good human morality.

We want to give them God's word, they need to know that obeying God is why we do these things.

This is what faith is, it's listening the word of God so that we can obey it and please Him.

The response to that Biblical command "pray without ceasing" is, "Okay, I need to pray continuously and I need to make that a part of my life.

I'm not doing that real well right now so I need to make a plan and figure out how to pray more consistently.

When James begins to talk about **faith** and **works**, he's talking about **hearing** and **doing**. When you hear and believe it, that results in applying it, which is the same thing as **works**.

You are working out, just as Paul says in:

Philippians 2:12-14 (NIV)
12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always **obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out** your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 for **it is God who works** in you both to will and to do for **his good pleasure**.

14 Do all things without complaining and disputing.

15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom **you shine as lights in the world**.

16 **holding fast the word of life**

So the Scripture sets up **faith** not as something that operates in a vacuum. It's not just an intellectual procedure divorced from life. It is not just being able to talk a certain way.

It's moving everything towards a change in how one thinks, which leads to change in how one acts (a change in behavior).

So when you understand something in Scripture and **believe** it to be true, it changes the way you think and the way you live. That change in life is **evidence** of what you **believe**. It's evidence to those who observe your life.

Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV)
14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

15 How do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

so that it may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

James 2:14-16 (NIV)
14 What does it profit, my brothers, if someone says he has **faith** but does not have **works**? Can **faith** **save** him?

15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,

16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

17 Thus also **faith** by itself, it does not have **works**, is dead. **James is the**

The objection:
18 **But** someone will say, "You have **faith**, and I have **works**." Show me your **faith** without your **works**, and I will show you my **faith** by my **works**.

19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. **Even the demons believe**—and tremble!

James rebuttal to the objection
20 **But** do you want to know, O foolish man, that **faith** without **works** is dead, **James is the**

21 What use is Abraham our father **justified** by **works** when he offered Isaac his son as the altar?

22 Do you see that **faith** was working together with his **works**, and by **works** **faith** was made perfect?

23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.

24 You see that a man is **justified** by **works**, and not by **faith** only.

25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also **justified** by **works** when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so **faith** without **works** is dead also.

James illustrates his point:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.