**March 22, 2020 FAITH – Bible Studies for Life – Senior Adults**

What a perfect topic to study at this time.

What are some things you’ve never seen but still believe exist?

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| * Sharks | * A beating heart | * Giant Sequoias trees |
| * A rainforest | * The North Pole | * A moose |
| * Surface of the moon | * The Hope Diamond |  |

We are told by others that these things exist. We have seen pictures of them, but we may not have ever touched them. We may struggle with the reality of some things we’ve been told or shown, but… we can confidently trust in what God says and does.

During the last few weeks, we have been experiencing a pandemic in the USA. The Coronavirus has brought challenges to us that we have never experienced. What a great time to put our faith in Jesus Christ who has already done so much for us.

As we read and study Hebrews 11, let us be reminded that as we are being challenged, we need to use our faith to grow us. God doesn’t promise to fix everything, but during these times, He challenges us to grow and become stronger in our beliefs.

Hebrew 11:1 – 3 (NIV) Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

What are the key words in the writer’s explanation of faith?

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| * being sure | * proof | * assurance |
| * reality | * evidence | * confirmation |
| * hope | * understand | * comprehend |
| * certain | * conviction | * guarantee |

Faith is what is hope for and what is not seen. We can enjoy the certainty of the future. Faith gives us confidence in the unseen things. It is an assurance based on the reality of what God has done and said. We trust God and know He will do what He says He will do.

The universe was created by the Word of God. God spoke the Word and the universe sprang into existence. God made everything out of nothing: “what is seen was made from things that are not visible.” Scientists cannot explain the beginning of creation. God spoke! As Christians, we know by faith that the universe was created by God. He did it to provide a place where we could enjoy a relationship with Him. As God was faithful in the beginning, He will be faithful to the future of His creation.

Why does believing God as Creator require faith on our part?

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| * No one was there to see it happen |
| * We have the account from the book of Genesis to tell us the events of creation |
| * General opinion is that Moses actually wrote the words – probably it was orally passed down through generations |

What are some “invisible realities” faith helps us to see?

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| * Creation was the work of God, not a series of totally natural and/or random events |
| * Jesus the Messiah was/is God, come to earth as totally human and yet totally God |
| * God’s provision for our physical and emotional needs |
| * Wisdom from God |
| * Peace in the midst of turmoil and distress |
| * God is interested personally in us |
| * Our needs are neither too small nor too large for Him to supply |

What do you think the writer of Hebrews meant when he described people as “approved” because of their faith?

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| * They pleased God | * They received God’s consent |
| * They believed what God said | * They acted on their belief |
| * They were in good standing with God |  |

This is still true today…we are approved by God by our faith, our personal acceptance of the redemptive work of Jesus when He died on the cross for our sins.

The Bible gives us a list of people who responded in faith to God’s Word and work in their lives.

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| Abel – First Martyr in the Bible | Joshua – Successful Leader, Faithful Follower |
| Enoch – The Man Who Walked with God | Rahab – Spy for the Israelites |
| Noah – A Righteous Man | Gideon – The Reluctant Warrior |
| Abraham – Father of the Jewish Nation | Barak – The Obedient Warrior |
| Sarah – Mother of the Jewish Nation | Samson – Judge and Nazirite |
| Isaac – Father of Esau and Jacob | Jephthah – Warrior and Judge |
| Jacob – Father of 12 Tribes of Israel | David – A Man After God’s Own Heart |
| Joseph – Interpreter of Dreams | Samuel – Prophet and Last of the Judges |
| Moses – Giver of the Law |  |

Hebrews 11:4 (NIV) By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings.

Abel is the first hero mentioned in Hebrews 11, (Genesis 4:1 – 10) 2nd son of Adam and Eve, 4th human to live, shepherd, no spoken word recorded in the Bible – Even though he is dead , he still speaks through his faith,” (Hebrews 11:4)

How did Abel demonstrate faith? (Hebrews 11:4)

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| * He offered God the best of his flock as a sacrifice |
| * Offered an “unblemished” lamb. (Read Isaiah 53:5 – 6) |
| * “By faith he was commended as a righteous man.” |
| * Abel believed that through his offering God had accepted him and had justified him |
| * He expressed confidence and trust through his worship |
| * He had an attitude of faith and worship and submission to God when he made the sacrifice |

How did God commend him?

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| * He was commended as righteous | * God spoke well of his offering |
| * He acted in faith | * Declared that his faith is a model for us |
| * Still speaks to us today |  |

How does our influence as people of faith live long past us and affect those who follow us?

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| * The life we live before family, friends, people we work with |
| * What we teach our children |
| * Our participation in the Great Commission (giving, going, praying) |
| * Things we may write that others will read |
| * How we model a life of faith and obedience to God |

What are some daily practices that strengthen your faith?

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| * Communicating with God | * Reading the Scriptures | |
| * Talk to Him in prayer | * Worship Him | |
| * Praise Him for what He does | * Fellowship with other believers | |
| * Participate in Christian ministries, declare His love to others who do not know Him | |  |

Another man who is a Hero of Faith is Enoch.

Hebrews 11 :5 – 6 (NIV) By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Enoch walked with God – lived his life in a close relationship to God, he trusted God, did not experience death – God took him. Lived 365 years.

Enoch would not see death. He was taken away, there were no remains. He pleased God, lived by faith, walked with God.

5 truths that pleased God

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| 1. Enoch believed in God – Now without faith it is impossible to please God – you must believe by faith that God is |
| 1. He sought God’s reward – God rewards those who seek Him – Everything God can give you is yours. God gives us forgiveness, a new heart, the Holy Spirit, eternal life, blessing, mercy, grace, peace, joy, love, heaven. |
| 1. He walked with God – He moved daily in the presence of the Lord. Enoch conformed to God’s standards. He had a steady unbroken communion with God for 300 years. |
| 1. He preached for God – Jude verse 14 says he preached to the false teachers “God is going to judge the ungodly for their ungodly ways” |
| 1. He entered God’s presence – He pleased God so much that he entered into His presence, an example of the rapture – believers alive on the earth when the Lord descends in the air will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4) |

What is required if we are to please God?

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| * Believe God exists |
| * Believe He rewards those who earnestly seek Him |
| * Trust what God says to us in His Word |
| * Our faith is in the redemptive work of Jesus – His perfect life, substitutionary death, and victorious resurrection, His eventual return |

What do you think it means to earnestly seek God?

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| * Read what God says – apply it to your life, Talk to God…pray |
| * Tell God of your awe of who He is |
| * Confess to God, agree with Him concerning your sinful attitudes and actions |
| * Tell Him you are trusting Him to meet those needs, solve those problems |

The passage says God rewards those who earnestly seek Him. What “rewards” do we receive from the Lord?

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| * Eternal life | * Abundant life now |

**Application**

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| Thank God for faith. |
| * Thank God for bringing you to faith in Christ. |
| * Acknowledge your belief in Him and seek to please Him in how you live out your faith. |

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| Walk in faith. |
| * Choose to walk in obedience to Christ. |
| * Daily read God’s Word, and identify areas in which you need to walk in faith and obedience.  |  | | --- | | Express your faith. | | * As you live in obedient faith, ask God for opportunities to tell someone else why you believe in Him and choose to live by faith in Christ. | |