

CHARACTERISTIC ONE: FAITH

Lesson 3: Our Faith in Action: Part 2

How do we respond when things aren't going our way? Maybe it's a sudden health issue, a financial crisis, or a dream the Lord has spoken to you that seems impossible. The question is, are we going to believe God and His Word when we face those seemingly insurmountable mountains or are we going to succumb to the doubtful voices around us or even in our own mind?

This is where our faith comes into play, because the fact is, our faith isn't even necessary unless there is something pressing it into action. Think about it, unless we are faced with a problem then our faith is unnecessary. Even the foundation of our faith, belief in Christ, first had to start with a problem. The problem was our sin, which separated us from a relationship with the Father. But, by repenting and having faith in Jesus and what He did for us on the cross, we were saved.

This same concept applies when we are facing tribulations in our own life as believers, there will be problems, but with God there is always a solution if we act in faith. I am not suggesting that God's solution is whatever you want it to be or even speak it to be. But you can be sure of this, nothing will happen if we don't at least have faith that believes that the God of the impossible can come through. Jesus put it this way when addressing the father whose young boy was possessed by a demon in Mark 9:23, "...If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."¹ We must believe! Believing is our faith put into action.

The writer of Hebrews says in Hebrews 11:1-3, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."² In other words, he starts by showing us that even though we can't see faith, it is real because of belief.

He continues by saying in verses 4-6:

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

He states that, "without faith it is *impossible to please*" God, then throughout the rest of chapter 11, he tells of the testimonies of the patriarchs of faith that preceded us in the Hall of Faith. Before we go any further in this lesson, read Hebrews 11:7-39:

⁷ By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

¹¹ By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born *as many* as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵ And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, “*In Isaac your seed shall be called*,” ¹⁹ concluding that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

²¹ By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff.

²² By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s command.

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶ esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

²⁷ By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

²⁹ By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land*, *whereas* the Egyptians, attempting *to do* so, were drowned. ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

³² And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also *of* David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped

the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in dens* and caves of the earth.

³⁹ And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.⁴

Every one of these testimonies is an example to us of faith in action, believing God before we see the results of our faith. I remember one personal story from my own life that I have shared many times. Over 20 Years ago, about 3 years into pastoring FaithHouse Church I wasn't making very much of a salary while pastoring full time. My wife was running our small Christian school and was making less than anyone else on staff even though she was their leader, but it's what we felt the Lord called us to do, so things were very tight on our budget. One month there was too much month at the end of the money, and we didn't know how we were going to pay our rent and another bill that was due the very next day. My wife and I were pretty stressed out about it, because we believe in paying our bills, but we were at a crossroad, were we going to believe the situation or have faith and trust God? Also, we never even hinted to anyone else about our situation, only God knew.

About seven o'clock that evening I told my wife I was going out to the church to pray about our situation, so I did. I went back home almost three hours later, and she was sitting on the coach with our youngest son who was still a baby. I told her that I had peace about the situation and that we just needed to believe God for a miracle, so we prayed a simple prayer of trust. We finished praying and I told her to I would put Aaron in his crib. As soon as I stood up and started across the living room our doorbell rang. It was 10 o'clock in the evening on a Tuesday night and I wondered, "Who in the world would be ringing our doorbell at this time in the evening?" I looked through the window, and it was a couple from our church. I immediately thought, "Oh know, what's wrong?" I preceded to open the door and asked if everything was okay and they reassured me that everything was fine and asked if they could come in. When they came in, they looked at both of us and said, "The Lord has been speaking to us to do something for a couple days, and we want to be obedient. Here this is for you all." As they handed me an envelope.

Mary and I just looked at each other, then back at them and started to cry as we explained to them that we had just finished praying about this situation just one minute before they rang the doorbell. After we thanked them and talked for a few minutes, and cried some more, we hugged them, and they left. When I opened the envelope, they

had given us \$1,000, almost exactly what we needed to pay our rent and another bill that was due the next day. God is so faithful, we just need to have faith and believe.

Maybe there's a mountain that you're facing today. It doesn't matter what it is, God sees it. He is the God of the impossible. No matter what the enemy or anyone else says to the contrary, have faith and believe God and His Word!! Remember, "all things are possible to him who believes."⁵

Lesson 3 Questions

1. Do we even need an active faith if everything is going well? What do problems present us with?
2. What is "faith in action" as described in Hebrews 11:1-3?
3. Does having faith guarantee that you'll have exactly what you pray for?
4. What is a situation you're going through now that looks impossible that you need to have faith for?

¹ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mk 9:23.

² Heb 11:1–3.

³ Heb 11:4–6.

⁴ Heb 11:7–40.

⁵ Mk 9:23.