

# FAITH

//

## THIS READING PLAN IS FOR YOU

As the readings will show us this week, we are saved through faith alone, the righteous shall live by faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. Clearly, faith is extremely important. But what is biblical faith? What is the difference between faith that saves and wishful thinking or mere passive intellectual agreement? The passages we will read will answer these questions and much, much more. The foundation for our study will be Hebrews 11. From this chapter's survey of the holy men of old, we will see that genuine faith is born from an inward response to revelation, which manifests itself in outward obedience. Therefore, biblical faith is not a groundless hope in the unknown; rather, it is belief in the evidence that has been revealed. And its genuineness is not proven by the amount that revelation is agreed with; rather, it is proven by the amount that revelation is obeyed. As we will see, saving faith gives us the courage to obey God even when the world considers us to be fools. Saving faith obeys God even when His commands do not make any sense. Saving faith trusts God even when He is asking us to go up against kings and armies, and oceans. Saving faith treasures Jesus more than life itself. Saving faith trusts in the cross of Christ for justification. And all of this faith is the righteous response to God's Word, who created the universe, wrote the Bible, dwelt among us, and abundantly proves that He is worthy of our faith. We pray that this week will help you run the race and look to Jesus, the founder, perfecter, and object of our faith.

//

## THE FORMAT OF THE READING PLAN WILL BE AS FOLLOWS—

### READ—

When we read the Bible, we are not just reading man's thoughts about God. Neither are we merely reading what God said (a few thousand years ago). Rather what we are reading is what God says in the present tense (Hebrews 3:7). For the Word of God is living and active, and when we read it God Himself is speaking to us (Hebrews 4:12). Therefore, read each passage slowly, carefully, and attentively to every word acting as if the most important being in the universe is speaking to you, because He is.

### REFLECT—

Simply reading the Word is like briskly walking by a warm fire on a cold night. But meditation is like sitting by the warm fire so that it lights up your face and warms your bones. (Don Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*). Therefore, pick a verse from each section to meditate on. What does it mean? What does it say about God? What does it say about you? You can pick any verse. But we will suggest a verse each time in case you have trouble picking one.

### RESPOND—

We do not want to just be passive readers of the Word and allow what God says to go "in one ear and out the other." Rather we want to be like the blessed man from psalm one who delights in God's word and meditates/chews on/murmurs to himself/thinks over what God has said day and night (Psalm 1:3). These discussion questions are designed to help us think over what the Lord has said, and as we think and discuss the Lord will give us understanding (2 Timothy 2:7).

### PRAY—

Pray to your Father that the Holy Spirit would empower the Word of Christ to become true in your hearts, your lives, this church, and this world as it is in heaven. Pray the Word back to God. For he always answers us when we pray according to his will (1 John 5:14). And the best way to pray according to his will is to pray His Word!

# DAY 01

//

## STUDY ON FAITH

### READ—

Hebrews 11:1-3 & Genesis 1:1-31

### REFLECT—

“By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.” — Hebrews 11:3

### RESPOND—

What is the difference between faith and wishful thinking?  
What is the relationship between faith and revelation? Why does your belief about where the world comes from so greatly impact the way you live your life today?

### PRAY—

Dear Father, thank you for creating a universe that is full of the evidence of your goodness, and thank you for enabling us to taste and see that which is invisible to a blind world. Help us to view every area of our lives through the lens of your world-shaping word. For if your word has the power to create universes, then surely it has the power to conform us into the image of your Son. We believe, Lord. Help our unbelief through the power of your Word. Amen.

# DAY 02

//

**STUDY ON  
FAITH**

## **READ—**

Hebrews 11:4-7 & Genesis 6:9-7:6

## **REFLECT—**

“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” — Hebrews 11:6

## **RESPOND—**

Why did it take faith for Noah to build an ark? What are some challenges or reasons for doubt that he would have faced? Since we also live in a day where there is only one hope for salvation from the inevitable worldwide judgement, what can we learn from Noah (See 2 Peter 3:1-13)?

## **PRAY—**

Dear Father, we believe that this world is rampant with sin. We believe that you are holy and will by no means clear the guilty. We believe that we are all guilty and that your wrath is coming. Therefore, help us to respond like Noah. Help us to withstand all of the pressures to only believe in what we can see, help us to overcome all the temptations to live like there is no tomorrow, and help us to cling to Jesus, who is our only hope for salvation. Thank you for the cross, for without it, we would surely drown in your wrath. Amen.

# DAY 03

//

## STUDY ON FAITH

### READ—

Hebrews 11:8-16 & Romans 4:1-25

### REFLECT—

“That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring.”

— Romans 4:16

### RESPOND—

Make a list of all the things you have earned from God. Then make a list of all of the things that God has promised to freely give you through the gospel. How do the lists compare? In what ways does this perspective enhance your understanding of the good news that God's promises depend on grace through faith and not works?

### PRAY—

Dear Father, forgive us for deceiving ourselves into thinking that we could earn something from you, for every second of life is a gift! And thank you for not giving us what we truly do deserve. Thank you for the gospel, through which you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing imaginable. Give us faith like Abraham. Help us to live in such a way that evidences a faith in the fact that you are God and heaven is our home. Amen.

# DAY 04

//

## STUDY ON FAITH

### READ—

Hebrews 11:17-20 & Genesis 22:1-18

### REFLECT—

“He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.”  
— Hebrews 11:19

### RESPOND—

What are some things God has asked you to do that do not make any sense? How have you responded?

### PRAY—

Dear Father, forgive us for so often only obeying you as far as it makes sense to us. For when that is the case, our faith is not really in you; rather, our trust is really in our own understanding. Help us to believe in you because of your unchanging character. You are worthy of our unconditional trust, for you are merciful, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. Help us to obey you, no matter how much we do or do not understand. Amen.

# DAY 05

//

**STUDY ON  
FAITH**

## **READ—**

Hebrews 11:21-31 & Exodus 14:10-31

## **REFLECT—**

“By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.” — Hebrews 11:27

## **RESPOND—**

Moses was trapped between the most powerful army in the world and a giant body of water. But his faith in the Lord overcame his fear of the surrounding circumstances. What are some things in your world that you fear, and how can you cultivate a heart of faith to overcome that fear?

## **PRAY—**

Dear Father, you have the power to create universes, you have the authority to send a worldwide flood, you have the ability to open the womb, and you have the strength to part the Red Sea. If you are for us, who can be against us?! Help us to consider your power and respond in fear of you and you alone. Even if we anger worldly kings, get chased by armies, get stuck in a wilderness, or pass through the valley of the shadow of death, we will have no fear because you are with us. Help us to endure and give us faith in your eternal power. Amen.

# DAY 06

//

**STUDY ON  
FAITH**

**READ—**

Hebrews 11:32-40 & Daniel 3:8-30

**REFLECT—**

“If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.” — Daniel 3:17-18

**RESPOND—**

Are you willing to die for what you believe about Jesus (this question has not been hypothetical for most Christians throughout history)? What does it take to cultivate a faith that believes that Jesus is more precious than life itself?

**PRAY—**

Dear Father, thank you for the men and women throughout history who have stared death in the face and declared to the watching world that Jesus is more precious than life itself. Help us to cherish Christ for who He is. For He is worthy of glory and honor and wisdom and power and blessing. Help us truly believe that to live is Christ and to die is gain. He is worthy. We believe Lord, help our unbelief. Amen.

# DAY 07

//

## STUDY ON FAITH

### READ—

Hebrews 12:1-2 & Galatians 2:15-3:14

### REFLECT—

“I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.”

— Galatians 2:21

### RESPOND—

Paul argues that anyone who attempts to be justified through works is cursed and nullifies the grace of God because we are justified by faith alone. But Hebrews 11 is a series of testimonies commending people for what they did, not just what they believed. So, what is faith? And what is the relationship between faith and works?

### PRAY—

Dear Father, help us to crucify our fleshly impulse that believes we can earn your grace. Help us to also crucify our fleshly understanding of the gospel, which confuses saving faith with passive intellectual agreement. Forgive us and bless us with the faith like the holy saints of old. Help us to believe that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. And through this faith produce in us a life full of works for your glory! For we know that we are saved through faith alone, but faith that saves is never alone. Amen.