

People of Faith

(Lesson 1)

Introduction:

1. To receive *"a crown of life,"* God's people must be *"faithful unto death"* (Revelation 2:10).
2. The book of Hebrews is especially designed to help Christians accomplish this goal -- it was written for the purpose of encouraging the Lord's people to remain faithful to Him.
 - a. This letter contains a number of admonitions that involve faith.
 - 1) (6:11-12) We must follow the example of those who received God's promises through faith and patience.
 - 2) (10:22) We are to *"draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."*
 - 3) (10:23) We are to *"hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."*
 - 4) (10:35-39) We are to *"live by faith."*
 - b. The 11th chapter is a detailed study of faith that we will cover in a series of lessons.
3. Before we examine the faith that was demonstrated by a number of great men and women in the Old Testament, we are considering several fundamental principles addressed in Hebrews 11:1-3, 6.

Discussion:

I. (vs.1) FAITH IS DESCRIBED

- A. In general, faith may be defined as "believing what God tells us in the Bible and following His instructions so we can receive His promises."
- B. Faith is described in Hebrews 11:1 as *"the 'substance' [assurance] of things hoped for, the 'evidence' [conviction] of things not seen."*
 1. Our faith is to be based on God's Word (Romans 10:17).
 2. With our faith based on God's Word, we can understand:
 - a. things from the past that we have not seen (vs.3; Genesis 1)
 - b. things in the future that we have not seen (vs.13-16; John 14:2-3).

II. (vs.6) FAITH IS ESSENTIAL

- A. Faith is essential in that we cannot please God without it.
 1. It is possible to possess various degrees of faith, including *"no faith"* (Mark 4:40), *"little faith"* (Matthew 6:30), *"dead"* faith (James 2:17), and *"great faith"* (Matthew 8:10; 15:28).
 2. Faith that pleases God includes:
 - a. believing that He is
 - b. believing that He will reward those who diligently seek Him
 - c. obeying His will (James 2:18-24).
- B. Faith is also essential in that it will enable a person to obtain *"a good report"* (vs.2).