

Guest Preacher - Rev. George Macaskill

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Preacher: Rev. George Macaskill

[0 : 00] Now let's turn in our Bibles to the passage of Scripture which we read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 11. And what I want to refer to much in the whole chapter, actually, we'll just read again and concentrate on verse 1.

Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 1. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. The word faith, the word faith is only twice in the whole of the Old Testament.

From Genesis to Malachi, the word faith is only two times written. But if the word faith is only twice in the Old Testament, the concept, the idea of faith pervades, permeates the whole of the Old Testament.

That's precisely what Hebrews 11 is teaching us. What did we read? How many times did we read, by faith, these Old Testament saints?

[1 : 45] Abel, Noah, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and so on. How often did we read it? How many times did we, how many did we leave out?

By faith, the Old Testament saints lived as they did. The chapter gives us many examples of what living by faith looks like in real terms.

Living by faith. Living by faith. You see, sadly, faith can lie dormant in some people, some believers.

Faith can lie dormant. That is not good. That is not right. Our text is telling us, really, chapter, the verse 1, is not technically a definition of what faith is.

Technically, it's more a description of what faith looks like when it's working. When it's working.

[3 : 06] It can lie dormant. You remember the example of the boat when the disciples were frightened, they were sinking, and they went and woke up Jesus.

You remember what Jesus said to them? Where's your faith? You've got faith. Why didn't you use it? Faith can lie dormant.

But what Hebrews 11 is showing us is what faith looks like when it's not lying dormant. When it's working.

So, by the grace of God, let's see what we can learn by faith when it is at work. And I want to do so under the word worship.

We're going to look at it under each letter in the word worship. First of all, the first letter, W. Faith worships.

[4 : 08] You don't have faith in Christ if you don't worship Christ. Now, worship is what we were born for.

That's why we were made. That's why we were created. To worship God. The English word worship is really derived from the Anglo-Saxon word meaning value.

It's really a contraction of the word worth and the word ship. Worth ship being contracted to worship.

Worship. Worship involves what you think of the object of worship. What is that person you're worshipping worth?

Now, in a sense, in one sense, the whole of life is worship. Everything we're doing is worship in one sense. The question is, what are we worshipping?

[5 : 20] Or even to be more precise, who are we worshipping? Romans 1.25 tells us about people who exchange the truth about God for a lie.

And what did they do? Instead of worshipping God, what did they do? Did they stop worshipping? Not according to Romans 1.25.

They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator.

My friend, you are worshipping someone. Probably, if you're not a Christian, probably yourself.

No one is not worshipping. We're worshipping someone or something instead of why we were made to worship God.

[6 : 35] Worship means giving what we think someone is worth.

We tend to think worship is receiving. Oh, I need to go to church to get something. Well, that's proper, of course. But technically, worship is giving.

Giving honor to who you worship. Wishing to please who you worship. Adoring the object of worship.

Worship is giving adoration. Giving praise, honor to whom you worship. True worship should fascinate us.

There should be awe of whom we worship. We have to worship someone greater than we are. We have to. That's just logic. There's no worship if there's no love.

[7 : 40] Am I right? We can be made to worship. Am I right? You can be made to go to church.

There's no true worship unless you love the object of worship. There's no real worship unless you have confidence in the person you're worshipping.

Faith. Another word for faith is confidence. Have you confidence in God? What do you think of God? What's he worth? Worship involves faith.

It involves confidence. And there's no worship unless you engage with the object of worship. Are you engaging with God?

Do you have to do business with God? Is there something you have to put before God and get right with God? Worship.

[8 : 51] W. W. Second letter. Oh. We're looking at faith when it works. Not lying dormant, but working.

Worship. Obeys. Verse 8. Reading about Abraham. Isn't it amazing what we read there?

God told Abraham, Abraham, leave your father's house and go to a place which I'll tell you of later. Abraham left his house, his home, his family to worship God when he didn't know where he was going.

That's faith. That's faith. Eh? That's obedience. Eh? I mean, I would say, well, wait a minute. Okay, God, you're telling me to go. That's fine. But tell me where I'm going.

Are you sending me out on a journey? I don't know where I'm going. Tell me where I'm going. I mean, Abraham obeyed God by faith. He went out not knowing where he was going.

[10 : 03] But not only did he not know where he was going, he didn't know when he'd arrive. Can you think of him?

I don't know how long he took to get there. It was on foot with his animals. Long time. The days and the nights have passed. And he says, Lord, when am I going to arrive?

You're not telling me where I'm going. How long have I kept this up? When will I arrive? He went out not knowing where he was going. Not knowing when, how long he was to be on the road.

He went out not knowing where, not knowing when, not knowing how. All through his life, of course, he was challenged.

How could God keep his promise? For example, we're moving on in Abraham's life. How could God keep his promise that nations will be born from his womb?

[11 : 09] When he was 100 years old and his wife was 99 and he hadn't got a child. God said, many nations will come out of your womb.

And he hadn't a child. And he was 99. He didn't know how. Didn't know where.

Didn't know when. Didn't know how. Just obeyed. That's faith. Faith worships. Faith obeys. And he didn't know.

100 years old, he gets a child. He gets Isaac. And the years pass. He's 12. I'm sorry. I'm not sure is it 12.

Some have worked it out 12. He's to go and sacrifice Isaac. What's his problem? I don't think it was really the fact.

[12 : 10] Well, it couldn't really have been the fact. Hey, wait a minute, Lord. You're telling me to break the sixth commandment. The commandments weren't given then, remember. There were no commandments when Abraham was asked to go and sacrifice his son.

But he knew it wasn't normal. He knew it wasn't right. What was going through his mind? Going up that hill. With a knife.

The rope. The wood. What do you think was going up his mind? I think it was this. In fact. We're more or less told it was. How is God going to bring nations out of the one child I've got if I have to sacrifice him?

If he's going to be killed? You know what's a huge encouragement to me? I try to live by faith like all you other Christians.

But oh boy, I get it wrong so often. I get it wrong so often. And if I was... I get great encouragement from Abraham here in verse 19.

[13 : 18] Going up that hill. How is God going to bring a nation, children, from me when my only son is to be sacrificed?

How is God going? Oh, he says, I've got it. I've got it. It's in verse 19. Let's read it. He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead.

Oh, he says, I know how. Isaac will die, but then God will raise him up from the dead. He got it wrong. And I find that encouraging.

Because I get it wrong so often. Lord, how are you going to do this? You made this promise and it's not happening. And then I think, oh, it must be this.

And I'm wrong. But that was Abraham. And what's the lesson you and I have to learn from that? Don't try and solve God's problems for him. Just do what Abraham did.

[14 : 20] Obey. Faith worships. Faith obeys. Third, faith refuses. Verse 24.

By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Got that? I think that's, that's, I never realized though. Oh. Just a few years ago, actually. All that was involved in that. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

That was a tremendous act of faith. Do you know what it meant? Do you know what, do you know what, what, what, what, he was, Moses was refusing?

He was refusing to be the next Pharaoh. When he refused to be the son, called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he was refusing Pharaoh to be his successor.

[15 : 33] You see, Pharaoh had no sons. He had no sons to follow on the throne. He had only one daughter. And that one daughter was childless.

So he adopts Moses. And says, Moses, you're going to be the next Pharaoh. And Moses said, no.

No. You know what worries me? If I was Moses in that situation. I think I'd be very inclined to say, Lord, what a wonderful way.

What a wonderful thing to do. You're going to make me the next Pharaoh. I can make the next, the Ten Commandments, the laws of Egypt. I can make it a Christian nation.

So why did Moses say, no. There's nothing wrong with being a king on a throne. Why did he say no?

[16 : 43] Because he knew it wasn't God's way. He knew it wasn't what God raised him up for. And you know, the lesson you and I have to learn is this. Faith sometimes has to say no to what is perfectly legitimate in itself.

Nothing wrong with that. David was on the throne. Solomon was on the throne. Nothing wrong with being a king.

In charge of a country. Being a Christian. Being a follower of God. Nothing wrong with that in itself. But sometimes, faith will require us to say no to what's perfectly legitimate in itself.

It has to be willing to receive reproaches. Faith worships.

Faith obeys. Our faith has to refuse some things. Next letter, S.

[17 : 52] Faith suffers. Not all the time. But from time to time. Faith suffers. Verses 35 and 37.

By faith. Women. 35 or 37. Is that right? Yeah. Not by faith. They're 35. By faith.

Women receive back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured. Refusing to accept release. So that they might rise again to a better life.

They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with a sword. They went about. The skins of sheep and goats.

Destitute. Afflicted. Tormented. Sometimes we're called to suffer. You must be willing to suffer.

[18 : 52] Don't walk into suffering. Don't walk into trouble. But sometimes we're called. Faith is called to do that. You know. Faith suffers.

They were not accepting deliverance. Refusing to accept release when they had the opportunity. Because they knew it was God's will. So. I always feel.

I always remember. Getting an email. From the suffering church. Persecuted church. Asking for prayer. And I must have replied to them.

But I got another one back. From them. Saying. Please don't pray. For our deliverance. Pray instead.

That we'll be kept faithful. Wow. I felt ashamed. I felt ashamed. But God can give you that grace.

- [19 : 56] Sometimes we're called to suffer. So the next time. You have to suffer. For being a Christian.
- For doing what's right. And you feel like saying. Lord. Why me? Instead. Say. Why not me? I always remember.
- Being told. It's a very dangerous thing. To ask for more faith. Very dangerous thing. Because you know what you're doing?
- You're asking for more problems. You're asking for more trouble. Faith. Grows.
- Through. Putting up. With hard times. Now there's great times. In the Christian faith. That. Jesus. One of the things.
- [20 : 54] Jesus said to his disciples. Before he went. To the crosses. Remember. Remember. In this world. You'll have problems. You'll have trouble.
- But be of good cheer. I've overcome them all. It'll all be worth it. In the end. But down here. Down here. Problems.
- Trouble. Faith. Suffers. From time to time. Next letter.
- H. Faith. Is holy. There's no faith. Without holiness. Verse. Well. In fact.
- In the very next chapter. You've got that. You've got that. Well known. Verse. Without holiness. No one. Will see the Lord. Now listen.
- [21 : 53] Without holiness. You can be converted. That's got to be true. Well there's no hope for any of us. Without holiness. You could be forgiven.
- In an instant. But you'll not arrive. In glory. In glory. Until. Until. You're made. Sanctified.
- Fit for heaven. I've maybe said. Forgive me if I've given you this illustration before. I've got. I bought.
- I buy a ticket. For the world cup. Olympic games. Some great exhibition. I've got. I've got. A ticket. I've paid for it. You can't stop me getting in.
- Okay. I go along to the stadium. You get a style. And you have to. Put your ticket in. The style open. I've got a ticket. It works. I put the ticket in.
- [22 : 50] Style opens. But wait a minute. The style's only 12 inches wide. I'm 18 inches wide. I can't get in.
- But I've got a right to go in. I've got the ticket. I've got a right. The moment you believe in Christ. However sinful you are.
- You have a right. You have a title to go to heaven. And no one can take it from you. But there's a lot of baggage to get rid of.
- Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. You have a title for heaven. You're forgiven instantly all your sins. You have a title to heaven. But you'll not get into it.
- Until you're made fit for heaven. There's things to shed. There's baggage to get rid of. You can't separate faith from a holy lifestyle.
- [23 : 59] Doing what's right. The popular word recently. I mean the last 10, 15 years.
- Is spirituality. Since post-modernism. The post-modern movement. Spirituality. As long as you're spiritual. Listen.
- As long as you're righteous. As long as you live. We need to be righteous. That's what the commandments are about. You hear people saying.
- Oh. Very spiritual person that. Very spiritual person. But you might have to say. A great pity.

They can't keep a job. A great pity. They can't get on with their spouse. Righteousness. We can all be spiritual at times.

[24 : 59] But can we live the righteous life? Can we keep the commandments? No heaven without holiness. No.

Holiness. Moses chose mistreatment. Rather than enjoying a night out with the boys. Now there's nothing wrong with enjoying yourself.

But there are occasions. When you have to choose. There are occasions. When it would be wrong to do that. When righteousness requires.

That you don't do it. Then you do something else. Verse 25. Well I think we read it already. By faith. Moses when he was grown. Refused to be called the son.

Choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God. Than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. Choosing mistreatment.

[26 : 00] Instead of a night out. How did he do it? The answer is in verse 27. Seeing him who is invisible.

Oh. There's something. Tell me. Isn't that something? Seeing him who is invisible. Eh?

That's amazing. Tell me. Can you see the invisible God? Can you see the invisible God?

Living by faith. Settles for heaven. Later. The world want their heaven. Now.

Here. Listen. It's worth waiting for. The pleasure. Of heaven.

[27 : 02] Is well. Well. Worth. Waiting for. Be willing to sacrifice. Earthly pleasures. Down here. If need be.

Christians of good times. That were entitled to good times. Down here. But not always. Can you wait for heaven. For real happiness.

This world is cursed. It's cursed. There's problems all through life. Heaven's the next world. And I tell you.

It's worth waiting for. It's worth waiting for. Well. Well. Worth it. Faith.

Worships. Obeys. Refuses. Suffers. Holy. Holiness. Next letter. I. Faith.

[27 : 59] Imitates. Subconsciously. We copy. Those we admire. We do it automatically.

You love someone. Without realizing it. You copy. You imitate that person. In fact. In the previous. In chapter 6. Verse 12. Becoming followers of Christ.

The word. The original word. God used. Is mimitos. From which. We get. Our English word. Mimic. Mimic. If you love Christ.

Subconsciously. You'll mimic him. Not perfectly. Oh. Not perfectly. You hear people saying.

Oh. Oh. You could. In fact. I often do it. I come from a congregation. Oh. So and so's brother. It must be his brother. He's so like him. It must. That kid.

[29 : 00] His father must be so and so. They're so like each other. Family resemblance. Faith. Mimics.

The world says. You are what you eat. You are what you read. You are what you listen to.

There's some truth in that. Some truth in that. You become. Like what you. Like what you worship. You want to become like Jesus.

You want to become. Godly. Worship him. And subconsciously. It will happen. God will use it. There's a blessing.

In coming. To the house of God. Mixing with his people. Hearing the word. Singing the word. Understanding the word. It works.

- [29 : 58] I don't know how it works. It doesn't matter. But it works. You become. Christ like. By hearing about Christ. Reading about Christ. Singing about Christ. Understanding Christ. Well. The last letter. P. Faith. Worships. Obeys. Refuses. Suffers. Holiness. Initiates. P. Perseveres. That's probably the most important. Faith. Endures. Verse 27. Endurance. Perseverance. Christ himself said. He that perseveres. To the end. Shall be. Saved. You can't. Possibly. Read this chapter. Surely. Hebrews. The 11. Without.
- [30 : 59] Seeing. Are you like me? I used to think. If I was a Christian. And I've got faith. And I see a problem. Coming to me. If I'm a Christian. And I pray with faith. That means the problem will disappear. I used to think that. But I read Hebrews 11. Hebrews 11. Faith. Faith. Is not for dodging. Problems. Faith for. Enduring. Problems. Now. Occasionally. It will be for avoiding problems. But not all the time. You see. Where do you get that? I get that in verse 34. And verse 37. By faith. Some. Escaped. The edge. Of the sword. Verse 34. By faith. Saw a problem coming. Saw the sword coming. Oh.
- [32 : 03] There's going to be death. We'll pray. And they escaped. The edge of the sword. Verse 34. But read a couple of verses further on. Verse 37. Verse 37. They were killed by the sword. By faith. By faith. They were able to say. If Christ wants me to go. If this is my time. I'm ready to go. You can't put God in a box. And say. Well I just have to pray about it. And it will not happen. Not. Not as long as Hebrews 11 is in the Bible. By faith. Some escaped the sword. By faith. Some were slain by the sword. It's not for dodging problems. It's for enduring problems. Now. We're to persevere in the faith. Oh. Right.
- [33 : 03] You don't just. Persevere. Regardless. You persevere. By faith. By faith. Believing. Not that you'll dodge. The danger. But that it will be for God's glory. God wants it. God's ordained it. And he'll strengthen you. And he'll keep you. And you'll still love him. It's an amazing thing. God doesn't answer your prayers. God's ordained it. But you still love him. That's faith. Persevering. When you don't get what you want. Well. Just one last thing. In conclusion. I suppose the summary of what we said is. The life of faith. May not be easy.
- [34 : 04] But I tell you. It's well. Well worth it. However. Don't listen to me. Listen. To Christ. Listen. To the Bible. There's nothing more worthwhile. Take my yoke upon you. And learn of me. And you'll find rest. For your soul. In glory. In glory. Heaven is not. Down here. Get your eyes up. And look forward. To heaven there. And you can put up. With an awful lot. Down here. If you're looking forward. To heaven. Up there. But the last thing. Is this. If you're not a Christian. If you're not a Christian. Maybe you wondered. Why did I read verse 29?

- [35 : 02] Let me read it again. By faith. The people. Crossed. The Red Sea. As on dry land. But. The Egyptians.
- The Egyptians. When they attempted. To do the same. Were drowned. If you're not a Christian.
- Maybe you're saying to yourself. Well. I'll just do what the Christian does. I'll go to church. I'll read my Bible. I'll make the odd prayer even.
- I'll do what a Christian does. The Egyptians. Attempted to do exactly the same. As the Israelites. But only the Israelites.
- Escaped. Why? Because the Israelites did it. By faith. The Egyptians. Just went through the motions. My friend.
- [36 : 05] If you're not a Christian. It's. You can't go through the motions. You need Christ. You need to believe in Jesus. You need to trust him.
- You need to believe. That when he was dying on that cross. He was paying God. For the sins of everyone. Who will confess their sins to him.
- There's a wonderful verse in the Bible. Whoever. Will call. On the name of the Lord. Shall be saved. Isn't that a wonderful verse? It's true.
- It's true. Do you believe it? It's by faith. It's by believing. God. It's by believing. What he has written.
- In his word. Christ died. For our sins. According. To. The scriptures. May. God.
- [37 : 02] The Holy Spirit. Make his word. Effectual. To every one of us. Let's pray. Our father in heaven.
- Be pleased. To take the things of Christ. And to make them ours. Here. Tonight. Give us this saving faith.
- Uniting us to Jesus. And may that faith. Not lie. Dormant. But by your grace.
- May we exercise it. For the rest of our lives. Oh Lord. Hear us in mercy. Answer us in peace. As we pray only.
- In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Well we'll. Conclude our service.
- [37 : 58] As we work it. By singing. From the Scottish Psalter. From Psalm 71. Page. Three hundred and eleven. Page three hundred and eleven. Psalm 71.
- And we sing verses 14 to 17. But I. With expectation. Will hope continually. And yet. With praises.
- More and more. I will thee magnify. I will go down to verse 17. For even from my youth. O God. By thee I have been taught.
- And hitherto. I have declared. The wonders thou hast wrought. Psalm 71. Verses 14 to 17. But I with expectation.
- will hope continually. And yet with graces more and more I will thee magnify.
- [39 : 21] Thy justice and salvation My mouth approach also In all the day For I thereof The numbers do not know And I will constantly go on In strength of God the Lord Of thy no righteousness in thine
- Alone I will record For even from my youth O God By me I have been taught And hitherto I have declared The wonders of the last road The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ And the love of God And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit Be with us all Now and forevermore
- Amen Amen