

Faith—so amazing

IN THE BEGINNING

Heb. 11:4 By **faith Abel offered unto God** a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

For 2024, our theme is *Faith So Amazing*. The Bible teaches that “faith” is the centerpiece of God’s focus for mankind. Consider Heb. 11:6:

Heb. 11:6 But **without faith *it is impossible to please him***: for he that cometh to God must **believe that he is**, and *that* **he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him**.

- ❖ The way mankind lives life should include a concern for pleasing God. The entire chapter of Hebrews 11 is replete with examples of believers exhibiting their faith and being pleasing to God.

❖ The word “faith” is only found in two places in the Old Testament:

Deut. 32:20 And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end *shall be*: for they *are* a very froward generation, **children in whom is no faith.**

Hab. 2:4 Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but **the just shall live by his faith.**

The word “faith” is not mentioned in Genesis, but the evidence is seen in several people. Most of the examples in Heb. 11 are found in the Book of Genesis. Faith was exemplified in the beginning of civilization. Right after Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, the exhibition of faith is described by the example of Abel:

Heb. 11:4 By **faith Abel offered unto God** a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

The account is found in Gen. 4:3:

Gen. 4:3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And **the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:**

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. ...

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Abel “offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice”
Abel “obtained witness that he was righteous, God
testifying of his gifts”
Abel, “being dead yet speaketh”

In Heb. 11:4, we gain a more vivid understanding
of God’s perspective of this event:

I. THE OFFERING GIVEN RIGHTLY, 11:4a “By **faith**
Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice
than Cain...”

A. The Characteristic of Abel's Offering – “By faith Abel...”

- ❖ The primary characteristic of Abel's offering is that it was by faith.
- ❖ Abel's motivation is hidden to others, but not to God.
- ❖ The key is Abel's love for God and to be pleasing to Him.

Gal. 5:6b “...faith which worketh by love.”

B. The Comparison of Abel's Offering – “...a more excellent sacrifice than Cain...”

- ❖ The quality of Abel's offering is that God called it excellent, especially in comparison to Cain's.
- ❖ Also, the quality of Abel's offering would qualify as being well-pleasing to God.

- ❖ The Bible teaches that “faith” is the centerpiece of God’s focus for mankind. Consider Heb. 11:6:

Heb. 11:6 But **without faith *it is impossible to please him***: for he that cometh to God must **believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**

- ❖ Abel’s offering was well-pleasing as God saw that he was righteous.
- ❖ Abel’s offering was “a more excellent sacrifice than Cain” as it followed God’s plan where Cain used his own works, an expression of pride and self-dependence.

II. THE OBTAINING OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS,
11:4b "...by which he obtained witness that he
was righteous, God testifying of his gifts..."

A. Abel Obtained the Witness of Righteousness
as the Gifts Testified

❖ Righteous believers are motivated to produce
spiritual fruit, not fleshly rituals.

B. Abel's Offering was Witnessed as Righteous by God's Testimony

- ❖ God's evaluation focuses upon the quality of spirituality, not quantity of self-expression.
- ❖ What a wonderful assessment when the spiritual sacrifices are so expressed by God.

III. THE ORATORY from the GRAVE RESOUNDS, 11:4c “...by it he being dead yet speaketh.”

A. The Voice from the Grave – “...being dead yet speaketh.”

- ❖ There are many believers in heaven whose “voices” will speak throughout eternity.
- ❖ Believers should have a desire to live a life that gives testimonies that will influence others long after they are gone from this wicked earth, especially in the lives of their friends and loved ones.

B. The Victory from God – 1 Jn. 5:4

1 Jn. 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and **this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.**

- ❖ A victorious life for the believer is one that is lived by faith in Almighty God.
- ❖ The Judgment Seat of Christ will be an event of evaluation regarding the type of works were performed by believers.

❖ In 1 Cor. 3:9-15 indicates various values of works performed by believers: the descriptions are wood, hay, stubble, gold, silver, and precious stones.

1 Cor. 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and **the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.**

- ❖ The ultimate achievement for a believer is found at the end of 1 Cor. 4:5:

1 Cor. 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and **then shall every man have praise of God.**

- ❖ Abel had praise of God!

Summary

- ❖ Faith is often unseen by casual onlookers of another.
- ❖ A life that is well-pleasing to God is one that is the epitome of faith.
- ❖ A believer's life of faith is motivated by love for God.
- ❖ A believer's life and works will be known at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Conclusion

1 Jn. 4:17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because **as he is, so are we in this world.**

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 **We love him**, because he first loved us.

Gal. 5:6b “...**faith** which **worketh by love.**”

Deut. 6:5 **And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.**

Mt. 22:36 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**