

Faith

Hebrews 11:1-3

Greetings once again in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. You know, it's a pleasure each week as I come to you and share with you the Word of God. I never take it lightly, but I look at it as a privilege and an honor to be able to share the Gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Today, I want to speak with you just for a few moments about faith, and what does faith mean? Now, there's no way that I'm going to be able to exalt everything about faith today, but I want to bring you some highlights that may just help you and help each of us in our daily walk as we live for the Lord. And maybe you have never trusted Jesus as your Savior. Maybe today would be that day that you would ask Him to come into your heart.

Let me invite you to go to our website, www.LRWM.org. On the website, you'll find Bible study helps that will help you study the Word of God. You will also find some Gospel messages on there by different ministers. You'll find messages by me, as well, and you can also leave prayer requests on that website. You'll also find that there's an email address that you can send emails to. Now, if you don't have access to a computer, let me invite you to write to me: Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731.

Did you know that grace is the means of salvation? Faith is the eye of belief. Now, sometimes we get the cart before the horse, and we believe that it's faith that saves us. But it's by the grace of God that we are saved. It's through the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Hebrews chapter 11, verses 1 through 3, the Bible says, ¹*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* ²*For by it the elders obtained a good report.* ³*Through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed*

by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

First, I want you to notice that faith is the Gospel message. *The faith is the Gospel message.* This means salvation. In II Corinthians, chapter 13 and verse 5, it says, *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* First Timothy chapter 4, verse 1, says: *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.*

In those verses I just read to you, the term "the faith" is mentioned. "The faith" is the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Gospel, the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord. If someone comes to you, the Bible says, and says something that there's a different way to Heaven other than through Jesus Christ, the Bible says that they are lying to you. The Bible says let God be true and every man a liar [Romans 3:4]. And what that means is, if a person comes to you and says something contrary to the Word of God, to what God says in His Scriptures, in His Word, that person is a liar if they try to tell you there's another way to Heaven other than through Jesus Christ. Well, "the faith" is the Gospel message of salvation, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Next, I want you to notice that there is a faith that man goes through and sees salvation. This faith is the avenue or the street which leads us to salvation. Matthew 7:14 says: *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Ephesians 2, verses 8 and 9, those familiar verses, it says, *For by grace are ye saved*

through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Grace. For by grace are ye saved through faith. Faith is the eye. Faith is the avenue. Faith leads us to the cross of Jesus Christ. We see Jesus hanging on the cross. We accept His death, burial, and resurrection. We see Him hanging there. We see him shedding His blood for mankind, for you, for me. We see Him shedding His blood. We see Him dying there.

And then we see through faith's eye how that He rose from the grave and that He is now with the Father. He is seated at the right hand of God according to the Scriptures. So, through faith, by faith, by the grace of God the person comes to a saving knowledge of the Lord. Faith does not save you. It's the grace of God, the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ that saves, but it's through the eye of faith that we see Jesus and that we understand that God sent His only begotten Son into this world that whosoever would believe in Him, ask Him into their hearts, whosoever would ask Him to save them, they would be saved.

Notice something else about faith. Saved, not because of faith, but through faith's eye, we see Jesus. And that's what I'm talking about right now. Hebrews 12:2 says: *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Jesus died for our sins. We see that through faith's eye. We see Jesus. Now, I can't force anyone to see Jesus today. The Holy Spirit of God has to move into the heart of the person. The Holy Spirit has to impart through the Word of God that important aspect of believing. In other words, Jesus came into this world to seek and to save those who were lost. The Holy Spirit has to impart that to the individual. And if you're listening to my voice today, you're

understanding that I'm reading the Word of God, that I'm telling you what God says. It's not my words, but it's what God says. And the Bible says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. The Holy Spirit will impart to you if you'll open up your heart and let Him speak to your heart today. He will help you to understand that you, too, can come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Notice something else. There is a faith that helps us when the going gets tough. We're going through some difficult times in our nation today, and I'm afraid we haven't seen anything yet, unless God's people get things right with Him, unless we as God's people fall on our faces and say, "Oh, Lord, turn our nation around. Help me to be an instrument. Help me, Lord. Give me the revival in my heart that I need. Help me to turn from my wicked ways and to help others find Jesus as Savior."

In I Timothy, chapter 6 and verse 12, it says, *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.* First John 5:4 says: *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

And then in I Corinthians, chapter 16 and verse 13, it says: *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.* In other words, we are the pillars of God. You say, "Well, that's being pretty presumptuous." No, it's not. The Bible tells us that we are ambassadors for God. We are ambassadors for our Lord, and as we stand, we are to stand in the faith, and we're to be strong. We're to put on the whole armor of God, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

First Corinthians 2:5 says that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. When we stand on our own strength, in

our own power, we're going to fail miserably. There is a faith that helps us when the going gets tough.

Now, we have in Matthew chapter 14, verses 22 through 31, we have something here that the Lord tells us. He says that, after He fed five thousand, after these people, after this miracle, He told his disciples, His apostles, to get into a ship and go onto the sea. He stayed behind and He prayed. As He prayed, these men went out. And it tells us that, as they went forth, that there came a mighty wind. There was a tempestuous wind. And as that wind increased, they became more and more afraid. And eventually, they saw someone walking on the water and it was Jesus. He told them, "Be not afraid." Peter said, "If it be You, Lord, have me come to You." And the Bible tells us that Peter stepped out of the boat, and he walked on the water.

But then we also read how that he took his eyes off the Lord and he began to sink. But the Lord reached out and grabbed him and saved him from going down into that water. In verse 30, it says, *But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid—This is Peter—and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.*³¹ *And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*

And this wind came about in the fourth watch of the night. The first watch, the second watch, the third watch, then came the fourth watch. Many are in the fourth watch of their lives today. Many are ready to meet the Lord. And as they prepare, as many of us prepare to meet the Lord, it doesn't have to do with age. It could be that our lives could be caught away at any moment, and as we look and we understand that we are in the fourth watch of the night, we need to look and say, "Lord, bid me come to you. Help me, Lord, to realize that I need You as my Savior." And as people look to Him, receive Him as Savior, that

fourth watch, the time of life when things seem to be going the worst, when things are bad, we can look to Him and we can claim by faith that the Lord is going to take care of us. As a saved person, you need to look to the Lord today. Trust Him. You may be going through a difficult time but understand, through the fourth watch, that Jesus comes by and He says, "Be not afraid. It is I."

We need to cast our care upon Him today. We need to have that faith that helps us when the going gets tough. If you've never trusted the Lord as your Savior, may I invite you to do so right now where you're at. "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive you as my Savior. I know I can't save myself. Please save me right now." If you'll pray that prayer, Jesus will save you right where you're at. Mean it in your heart.

And if you're saved today, you need to be following Jesus by faith, trusting in Him to carry you through these rough times.

Until this same time next week, this is Lewis Woodard inviting you to tune in when you'll hear me say, "It is a good life." May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.