

The Heart of Faith

- Ron Stullenbarger -

As believers living our lives founded on the hope given to us by God, faith is our lifeblood. Without faith we have nothing. Without faith, all sense of purpose, value, and joy in present trials and circumstances scatters as dust in the wind. But with faith we discover a wellspring of life with its origins found in the faithfulness of our Creator God. With faith we experience the effects of promises made to us by our living, loving, active, and trustworthy heavenly Father. With faith the abundant life God desires for us is removed from a shroud of doubt, fear, and hopelessness and becomes our reality. So what is at the heart of this incredible gift of faith? How do we as children of God access the life-giving fruits of faith?

The Bible defines faith as "*the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*" (Hebrews 11:1). It continues in verses 2-7 saying, "*For by it the people of old received their commendation. 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. By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commanding him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. 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. By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.*"

Hebrews 11 tells us that faith is simply this: Trusting in our God who is completely and altogether faithful. Faith is the natural response to a revelation of God's faithfulness.

We are to live entirely by faith, or entirely in response to God's faithfulness. Every action, thought, emotion, word, and perspective is meant to be founded on the faithfulness of our heavenly Father. Romans 4:20-21 says in reference to Abraham: "*No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.*" We are to be children convinced of the overwhelming ability of God to move and work in our lives.

Where do you lack faith today? What areas of your life have you taken into your own hands? Where are you full of fear, anxiety, depression, or hopelessness today? Know that the path to faith in those areas is paved with revelation of God's faithfulness. 2 Timothy 2:13 says, "*If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.*" Our God will always be faithful to us. We can trust Him with any problem we are going through.