

Faith is Reality

Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen. For our ancestors won God's approval by it. By faith we understand that the universe was created by God's command, so that what is seen has been made from things that are not visible. ...By faith Noah, after he was warned about what was not yet seen and motivated by godly fear, built an ark to deliver his family. By faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. Hebrews 11:1-3, 7 (HSCB)

Here begins the Bible's great chapter on faith, which lists 20 individuals and groups of people¹ who trusted God's promises as sure and certain, and who looked forward to spending eternity with God in heaven.² The world would not judge some of these men and women as righteous, since the list includes a prostitute (Rahab), deceivers (Abraham and Jacob), and murderers (Moses and David, whom God also choose to write major parts of the Bible). Yet God declares that by faith these sinners "won God's approval," and later in verse 39 God says it again, "All these were approved through their faith."

Before listing these people of faith, God provides us with one general example of faith. "By faith we understand that the universe was created by God's command, so that what is seen has been made from things that are not visible." Every article of faith is believed by faith, including belief in creation. By faith we believe that "He spoke, and it came into being; He commanded, and it came into existence," (Psalm 33:9).



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Noah worships God upon leaving the ark

(Genesis 8:15 – 9:17)

¹ In chapter 11, I count 16 individuals and 4 groups. Groups are those listed in verses 23, 29, 30, and 32.

² Heaven is mentioned in verses 13-16.

God begins this Scripture by revealing that faith is “reality” and “proof.” Through faith we can be certain that God created the universe from nothing, that 8 people survived a planet-wide flood aboard Noah’s Ark, that Jesus died on the cross and rose on Easter Sunday, and that we will spend eternity in heaven with Jesus our Savior. We cannot see these things with our physical eyes, but we can see them clearly through the vision of faith.

Noah is our ancestor. He did not win God’s approval by obediently building an ark. He won God’s approval by faith, the same way we win God’s approval. Noah is an heir of eternal life and is now with God in heaven, because he has “the righteousness that comes by faith.” We have that same righteousness that comes by faith, the robe of righteousness we received from Jesus when he brought us to faith.

We Pray

Lord, send your Spirit to strengthen my faith as I read, hear, and contemplate your Word. Increase my trust in you and in your promises. I am a sinner who does not deserve any good from you, but in your amazing love you gave me faith and the righteousness that comes by that faith. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. How can I ever thank you enough? You are amazing. There is no one else like you. Protect me from the temptation of evolution, which seeks to shipwreck my faith through false claims about you, about your Word, and about your creation.

Amen

-MSB