

# Adult Bible Class

For Adults Ages 18 and Up

Trust  
in the  
**LORD**  
with all  
thine heart

Proverbs 3:5

Summer Quarter

June | July | August

2025

*Large-Print Edition*

# Adult Bible Class

Large-Print Edition

SUMMER QUARTER

June, July, August 2025

## Christlike Living

### UNIT I: Biblical Thinking

June 1—Learn from Good Examples—Heb. 11:1-2, 4-13 .....	2
June 8—Learn from Bad Examples—I Cor. 9:24—10:13 .....	7
June 15—Seek Godly Wisdom—Prov. 4:10-15, 20-27 .....	12
June 22—Hold Fast to the Gospel—Gal. 2:15—3:5 .....	17

### UNIT II: Biblical Feeling

June 29—Affection for Those in Christ—I John 4:7-21 .....	22
July 6—Affection for Christ's Church—Phil. 2:1-13 .....	27
July 13—Affection for Things Above—Col. 3:1-17 .....	31
July 20—Humility Before God—Jas. 4:1-10, 13-17 .....	35

### UNIT III: Biblical Doing

July 27—Be Doers of the Word—Jas. 1:19-27 .....	39
Aug. 3—Pray for Peace—I Tim. 2:1-8 .....	43
Aug. 10—Live in Light of the Gospel—Col. 4:1-6 .....	47
Aug. 17—Trust the Lord—Prov. 3:1-12 .....	51
Aug. 24—Be Vigilant—I Pet. 2:11-12; 3:13-17; 4:7-11; 5:8-10 .....	55
Aug. 31—Be Ready—I Thess. 5:1-11 .....	59
Paragraphs on Places and People .....	63
Daily Bible Readings .....	64




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# SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

**HEB. 11:1** 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.**

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.

**5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.**

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.

**7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.**

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

**9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:**

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

**11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.**

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so *many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

**13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.**

## NOTES

# Learn from Good Examples

Lesson Text: Hebrews 11:1-2, 4-13

Related Scriptures: Genesis 4:3-7; 5:21-24; 6:9-22; 12:1-5; 17:15-22

TIME: about A.D. 67

PLACE: unknown

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**GOLDEN TEXT**—“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” (Hebrews 11:6).

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## *Lesson Exposition*

### **FAITH DEFINED—Heb. 11:1-2**

Hebrews 11:1 is one of the most familiar verses in the Bible because it answers a very important question: What is faith? The verse consists of two descriptive phrases. They are roughly parallel in meaning, but not exactly; the second phrase explains the first.

The word translated as “substance” can refer to an objective reality or to a strong confidence in something (see 1:3 and 3:14, where the word is used in these two ways). Perhaps the two senses can be combined; biblical faith is a strong confidence in something objectively true. It is certainly not some ethereal, unfounded feeling, as the world sometimes understands faith.

The biblical idea of hope is also very different from the world’s conception, which is often a desperate, against-all-odds clinging to the notion that things might turn out all right. The believer’s hope is built on the firm foundation of the promises of God and His redeeming purpose. This biblical brand of hope is as certain as the fact that God is trustworthy and good.

Like “substance,” the word “evidence” has both an objective and subjective sense. It can refer to proof or to the strong convictions that arise in the presence of such proof. A person of strong faith believes in the unseen spiritual realities as much as if they were visible to his physical eye. These spiritual realities are of eternal value, the things that make life worth living (cf. II Cor. 4:18).

The “elders” here refer to his Jewish readers’ Old Testament ancestors. (Additionally, the author of Hebrews was almost certainly a Christian of Jewish ancestry himself.) Faith was the means by which these ancestors “obtained a good report,” or were declared to be righteous in God’s sight (cf. Gen. 15:6) and thus were the recipients of God’s approval.

### **FAITH ILLUSTRATED—Heb. 11:4-13**

**Abel (Heb. 11:4).** The list of people of faith proceeds chronologically. The first example goes all the way back to the son of Adam, the first man. In Genesis 4:2-7 we are told how Abel, who was a shepherd, offered a sacrifice of one of the firstborn of the flock



and the choicest meat to the Lord and that the Lord looked with favor on this sacrifice. God did not look with favor on the offering from Cain, who merely gave some of his crops.

The emphasis of Hebrews is that Abel offered his sacrifice by faith; this is what prompted God's acceptance of his gift. This acceptance was a testimony that Abel was counted as righteous in God's sight, but his brother was not.

The phrase "he being dead yet speaketh" is a figure of speech for someone's long-lasting influence. In Abel's case, although he suffered an early death at the hands of his envious brother, his example of faith lives on as an example and inspiration to God's people. His life had an eternal value and purpose.

**Enoch (Heb. 11:5-6).** Because of his great faith, Enoch received the mysterious blessing of not experiencing death. Genesis 5:24 reports that Enoch "walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." The term "translated" in Hebrews means "to transfer, to remove from one place to another" (Rienecker and Rogers, *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, Zondervan). In the midst of his life, he was taken to the presence of the God with whom he had already been walking so closely (see II Kings 2:9-12, where we learn of how Elijah was also taken away to heaven while still living).

Only by faith can a person please God, as Enoch did. Hebrews 11:6 explains the indispensability of faith. Enoch's life illustrates the life of faith that should be evident in all of God's people. He is said to have walked with God, so we know that he possessed the two crucial components of faith that this verse says are at the heart of a relationship with Him. We must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.

Since Enoch had fellowship with God, he certainly believed that God existed. True knowledge of God is more than

merely an intellectual acknowledgment of a divine being. It is an experiential knowledge of the One who has revealed Himself in His Word. The second crucial belief is that God rewards those who seek Him. The fact that Enoch continued in his fellowship with God is evidence that he was anticipating the blessings that God promises to those who are dedicated and passionate about their desire to know Him (cf. Ps. 119:2; Matt. 7:7).

**Noah (Heb. 11:7).** One of the most widely known figures from the Bible, Noah demonstrated his faith by building a huge sea vessel (and building it inland!) when there was not yet any sign that it was needed. He believed what God told him (cf. Gen. 6:11-22); his faith provided him with "the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

**Abraham (Heb. 11:8-10).** Considering that Abraham is often regarded as the father of the faithful (cf. Gal. 3:6-9, 29), it is not surprising that the author of Hebrews made a more extended study of his example of faith. God commanded him to leave his homeland of Ur, in southeastern Mesopotamia, and travel to a land many hundreds of miles away. Incredibly, when he set out, he was not even sure where he was going! He went only with the promise that God was going to give him an inheritance, many blessings, and the honor of becoming a blessing to the whole world (cf. Gen. 12:1-3).

Abraham's faith would be tested again and again. When he got to the place where God wanted him to go, he did not immediately see much evidence that the Promised Land was going to be his. Hebrews 11:9 says he "sojourned" in the land, meaning that he lived as a stranger there. He was an alien who did not feel at home among the Canaanites—people who had no intention of giving up what belonged to them.

Much time passed, and Abraham continued to have a generally nomadic exist-

tence. He lived in tents (“tabernacles”), a striking symbol of the fact that he had no real home at this point. The passage of time is highlighted by the fact that first Isaac and then Jacob—who themselves were in line to be heirs of God’s covenant and would be singled out for their faith in this chapter (vss. 20-21)—arrived on the scene and the situation did not seem to change (Jacob was fifteen when Abraham died [cf. Gen. 21:5; 25:7, 26]). During all this time Abraham never formally owned any land except the parcel he bought for his family’s burial (cf. 23:3-20). Abraham’s faith was also tested when God asked him to sacrifice Isaac, the child of the promise (cf. Gen. 22:1-19; Heb. 11:19).

**Sarah (Heb. 11:11-13).** Scholars disagree on whether the Greek of this verse makes Abraham’s or Sarah’s faith the main focus. Whichever side is correct, it surely is not unimportant that Sarah is mentioned here.

It is true that Sarah did not respond very well when first informed that she was to have a child (cf. Gen. 18:9-15), but she was around ninety years old, well past the age for bearing children. We should ask ourselves whether we would have responded differently. Despite her initial response, Sarah’s faith and willingness grew.

Because of the faith of both Abraham and Sarah, abundant life sprang forth from those as good as dead (Heb. 11:12). Abraham and Sarah were indeed “as good as dead” as far as a reasonable hope of conceiving and having a family was concerned, but God is not limited in what He can bring to pass.

The “these all” of Hebrews 11:13 refers to everyone mentioned thus far in the chapter, including Abel, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah. The “promises” were the ones given to Abraham, but also others (cf. Gen. 3:15). The patriarchs did not live to experience the fulfillment of what had been promised, but their faith

remained strong until the day of their death. It was as if they could envision the reality of God’s promised kingdom off in the distance (cf. Heb. 11:1). This is what they lived for and longed for, and this is what sustained them.

As an old song says, “This world is not my home, / I’m just a passin’ thru.” Every person of faith recognizes that we are spiritual pilgrims on the way to better things (cf. I Pet. 2:11). The patriarchs of old did not let themselves get too attached to what the world has to offer. Let us follow their example, living by faith for what will truly last. This world is not our home.

—Stephen H. Barnhart

## QUESTIONS

1. What does the word “substance” in Hebrews 11:1 mean?
2. How is the biblical idea of hope different from the world’s?
3. What does it mean to obtain a “good report” (vs. 2)?
4. What does “he being dead yet speaketh” mean (vs. 4)?
5. In what special way did God bless the faith of Enoch?
6. What are the two crucial components of faith that make a relationship with God possible?
7. How did Noah demonstrate that he was a man of faith?
8. Why did the author of Hebrews devote extra attention to the life of Abraham?
9. What circumstances acted as tests of Abraham’s faith?
10. How should the fact that we are strangers in this world affect the way we live?

—Stephen H. Barnhart

## PRACTICAL POINTS

1. God commends people in any age who will trust Him even when they do not see the immediate fulfillment of His promises (Heb. 11:1-2).
2. True faith always impacts the way one worships and lives (vs. 4).
3. Faith prompts us to act in accordance with the conviction that God will reward us (vss. 5-6).
4. People of faith obey God even when they do not fully understand Him (vs. 7).
5. People of faith are willing to act on what God has said and to leave the results up to Him (vss. 8-10).
6. God always rewards our faith, no matter how small or faltering it may be (vss. 11-13).

—Don Kakavecos

## RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. Define faith in your own words. Be sure to include all of the criteria found in Hebrews 11:1 and 11:6.
2. How did Abel display faith (Heb. 11:4; cf. Gen. 4:1-11)? How did Cain fail to display faith?
3. Whose faith still speaks or witnesses to you even today? What made this person's faith so impactful for you?
4. Did Abraham always obey God (cf. Gen. 12)? If not, why is he characterized as a man of faith? What does this fact teach us about faith?
5. What one truth does each of these men of faith prove (cf. Heb. 11:6)?
6. What does Sarah's inclusion on this list teach us about faith? How is that encouraging?

—Don Kakavecos

## Golden Text Illuminated

**“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” (Hebrews 11:6).**

The mustard seed is tiny, yet it produces a large plant. A small faith that is genuine and growing is a faith that is pleasing to the Lord. How do we grow our mustard-seed faith? The father of the epileptic looked to Jesus for help in overcoming his unbelief. So did the apostles, who on another occasion turned to Jesus with the plea “Increase our faith” (Luke 17:5). We must likewise look to Him who is the “author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2). As the Author, He is the source of our faith. As the Finisher, He brings our faith to completion. As the chief cornerstone of all the faithful who “as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house” (1 Pet. 2:5) of God, Jesus Christ is Head of the house of faith (Eph. 4:15).

How can we help our faith grow? The apostle Paul wrote, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). To develop our faith we must read the Bible and meditate upon it.

We must be ever vigilant lest the enemies of the truth lure us away from the gospel of Christ. In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul wrote, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, . . . be strong” (1 Cor. 16:13).

As we seek to better know our Lord and follow His perfect will, our faith will grow. As the faithful of old “obtained a good report” (Heb. 11:2) through faith, so our faith will come to completion and find approval before God.

—Margaret Hicks