

A stylized illustration of a landscape. In the foreground, there are rolling hills in shades of purple and blue. In the middle ground, there are purple mountains and a small yellow house with a chimney. A large hot air balloon with purple and white stripes is floating in the sky. There are also several birds flying in the sky. The background is a light yellow color. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Trust
in the
LORD
with all
thine heart
Proverbs 3:5

SENIOR HIGH BIBLE TEACHER
FOR TEACHERS OF TEENS AGES 15-17

SUMMER QUARTER | JUNE | JULY | AUGUST 2025

Senior High Bible Teacher

SUMMER QUARTER

June, July, August 2025

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The Weeks Ahead

This quarter we will study the topics of biblical thinking, living, and action. These themes are interwoven, as we cannot fully do one without the other.

Our first unit on biblical thinking starts with some good examples in lessons 1 and 2. Hebrews 11 presents us with heroes of the faith who, although not perfect, modeled Biblical faith despite their failings. In contrast, Paul reminds the Corinthians that the Old Testament was written for our instruction and recounts multiple bad examples by way of warning. In lessons 3 and 4 we have direct instruction in the principles for living. In the opening chapters of Proverbs, Solomon emphasizes the importance of seeking wisdom. When we live the way God designed us to, we typically thrive. (Of course, Proverbs acknowledges exceptions, since we live in a fallen world.) Because God's ways promote what is best, it is important to study His truth. Concluding the opening unit, we see Paul rebuking the Galatians for turning away from grace and to works. Having begun by grace, we also continue by grace!

Our second unit focuses on biblical living. Lessons 5 and 6 deal with affection for those who are in Christ, His Church. John encourages us that we love because God first loved us. Everything we do is in response to His great love. Likewise, Paul encourages the Philippians to love one another, following the example of Jesus. He is God but humbled Himself and became human. We are to love others

both in response and imitation of Jesus. In lesson 7, Paul encourages the Colossians to set their minds on things that are above since they are united to Christ. We are called to respond to what God has already done for us. As we conclude the unit, James calls us to humility in lesson 8, reminding us that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Our final unit is on biblical action. We begin lesson 9 with James' urgent reminder that merely hearing God but not obeying Him does us no good. From there, we turn to more specific admonitions. Paul urges us in lesson 10 to pray for all people. This includes those who oppose us—consider that Paul lived in the Roman Empire, which persecuted Christians! We are to shine the light of the Gospel toward others, including those who work beneath us (lesson 11). In lesson 12, we return to Proverbs and Solomon's admonition to trust in the Lord with all our hearts. As we trust God more than our own limited understanding, we will live the way He has commanded.

How we think, live, and act are deeply connected. Lessons 13 and 14 conclude by warning us to be watchful and vigilant. As Peter reminds us, the devil is a roaring lion. We will suffer in this world, but we have an eternal hope to look forward to. Paul likewise reminds the Thessalonians that Christ will come again, and we should all live with anticipation of His second coming.

—Tom Greene

PLEASE NOTE: Fundamental, sound doctrine is the objective of LifeStone Ministries, Union Gospel Press. The writers are prayerfully selected for their Bible knowledge and willingness to submit to the Spirit of Truth, each writing in his own style as enlightened by the Holy Spirit. At best we know in part only. "They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

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

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).

Studying the Text

Sometimes we tend to see Old Testament heroes of faith as men and women who were larger-than-life superheroes. If that were true, it might let us off the hook. Since we are not superheroes, we would not be expected to demonstrate the kind of faith that we see in the lives of these Old Testament heroes.

But those men and women were just like us. They had doubts and fears and periods of depression—just like we do. They were heroes not because they had no weaknesses but because they trusted God and overcame their doubts and fears; they did what they knew to be right in spite of their human faults, frailties, and failures.

Hebrews 11 is the Bible’s “hall of faith”. As we read about Old Testament heroes of the faith, we can be encouraged to be heroes of the faith in the crises we face every day.

WHAT FAITH IS—Heb. 11:1-2

The writer of Hebrews begins the chapter by describing what faith is. When we have faith, we have assurance and confidence that we will re-

ceive what we hope for. Of course, by hope the writer means much more than wishful thinking or yearning for something we want. Having faith is more substantial than hoping it will not rain tomorrow.

When we have faith, we believe what cannot be seen. We have certainty that the unseen things of this world actually exist.

We do not need faith to see what is visible or tangible. We need faith to believe what cannot be seen. This includes the future as well as mysterious things about the present we cannot fully understand.

We must have faith to believe what the Bible says. For example, we were not present at Creation, so we have no way of actually proving the Bible’s account of what happened at the beginning. When the Bible says God created the visible universe (“things which are seen” [vs. 3]) out of nothing, we believe that on faith.

Genuine faith motivates us to act. As the apostle James said, “Faith without works is dead” (Jas. 2:20). The mighty

deeds of Israel's heroes of faith show us that. Because of their faith-inspired actions, they received God's "well done" (Matt. 25:21). They were commended for their faith. From this we see that salvation has always been by grace through faith, not by works (cf. Lev. 16, Rom. 4:1-8).

We exercise faith in every aspect of our relationship with God. Since we cannot see God, we must have faith to believe He exists. Whenever we call out to God and talk to Him in prayer, we are expressing our faith that He really is there for us.

God responds to those who put their faith in Him. He rewards those who seek Him. Hebrews 11 is a list of faithful heroes from Hebrew history whom God rewarded for their faith.

WHAT THE FAITHFUL DO—

Heb. 11:4-12

Abel's acceptable sacrifice (Heb. 11:4). Both Abel and his brother Cain offered sacrifices to God. One sacrifice was acceptable to God; the other was rejected (cf. Gen. 4:1-5).

Why did God accept Abel's sacrifice but reject Cain's sacrifice? Although the reason is debated, some believe that the answer to that question lies with the nature of the sacrifices themselves. Cain offered God the fruit of the ground, while Abel offered a blood sacrifice—an animal. In Cain's defense, he was a farmer. He brought to God what he had grown with his own hands. As a shepherd, Abel brought what he had raised, a sheep.

Whether or not that was part of the issue, we can be confident that the answer is deeper than mere external appearances. Indeed, the answer is in Cain's conversation with God after his sacrifice had been rejected. Cain had a bad attitude. He likely offered his sacrifice more as the fulfillment of an obligation than as a joyful act of worship. If he had offered an animal

sacrifice with a bad attitude, that too may have been rejected.

On the other hand, Abel's sacrifice was an expression of his faith in God. Abel's sacrifice was acceptable because it was offered with the right attitude and for the right reasons. Therefore, even though he is only a brief flash in the distant past of Bible history, Abel continues to serve as a model of a man of faith. Thousands of years after his blood was spilled by his brother, Abel's righteous life continues to speak (Heb. 11:4).

God's pleasure toward Enoch (Heb. 11:5-6). Enoch is a man of mystery. He walked with God and was taken to heaven without dying (Gen. 5:24). Like Elijah (cf. II Kings 2:11-12), Enoch was taken directly to heaven without dying first.

Enoch's family line was carried on by Methuselah, who lived longer than anyone else—969 years. Ironically, even though he lived to be the oldest man in the Bible, he still died before his father, who never did!

Enoch was known as a man who obeyed God. His enduring legacy is that he "pleased God" (Heb. 11:5). Who could desire a grander epitaph?

The writer of Hebrews repeats the faith theme at this point by saying that it is impossible to please God without faith—showing that Enoch was a man of faith. God is pleased when we have faith, act on our faith, and then express our faith.

The writer reduced faith to its basics: believing in God. If we do not believe there is a God, we certainly will not seek Him or call out to Him. The very act of approaching God expresses our faith in Him. We also see that God rewards those who seek Him, and it is critical for us to believe this. After all, if we believe that God exists but is apathetic toward us, would we seek Him?

Noah building an ark (Heb. 11:7). Noah was singled out by God and chosen for a difficult task. Noah was a remarkable man of faith. God told Noah to build an ark in preparation for a great flood that would destroy all life on earth (Gen. 6:17). In spite of what he may have wondered or thought, Noah did not challenge God. He acted—even though up to that time there had never been a flood. In fact, some claim that there had never been rain before the Flood. In Eden, vegetation was watered by a mist, not rain (2:5-6). However, even if it did not rain in Eden, we cannot say with certainty that rain and other forms of precipitation began with the Flood. It is possible, but not certain.

Noah expressed his faith in God by taking God at His word. He could have given a million excuses for not building the ark, but he believed something that he had no way of proving. God honored and rewarded Noah's faith.

Because of Noah's faith, he was saved from the Flood—together with his entire household. This demonstrates the importance of spiritual leadership. Elsewhere in Scripture, we see an individual's faith leading to his entire family believing in Christ (Acts 16:31-33). Faithful Christians can have a strong impact on their families.

Abraham stepping out into the unknown (Heb. 11:8). When you say "man of faith," many people immediately think of Abraham. Abraham was a great man of faith. At God's command, he left all that was familiar and comfortable behind and stepped out into the unknown. He did not know where he was going or what he would do when he got there, but he knew God was leading. That was enough for him.

Of course, when we say Abraham was a man of faith, we are not saying he was perfect. He made mistakes, and there were times when he doubted what God had told him. He had some serious laps-

es of faith, such as when he tried to fulfill God's promise of a son on his own (Gen. 16:1-4). When he stumbled, however, he got back up and kept going. He responded to God's discipline and mercy with obedience and faith (17:1-3). It took as much faith for Abraham to pick himself up and keep going as it did for him to step out in faith in the first place.

The patriarchs believing God's promise (Heb. 11:9-10). We want everything instantly. We are not used to waiting. From time to time, even the faithful patriarchs became impatient with the pace of God's timetable.

God had promised Abraham a son (Gen. 15:4) and a homeland (vs. 18). Isaac was the son of promise, but the promise of the land was not fulfilled in the lifetime of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. They lived in the Land of Promise, but it was not theirs. They were aliens and strangers in the land God had promised to them. It would be centuries before Old Testament Israel expanded to its height under David and Solomon.

It took much patience for the patriarchs to wait for God to work out His perfect will. Many people would have given up and lost faith; however, those who have genuine faith wait for God to work things out in His own time and His own way (Isa. 40:31).

Abraham spent the end of his life living in tents—temporary dwellings in a land that was not his home. He did this because he believed God and trusted in His promise of a future city far better than any home he could have on earth. We can likewise endure difficulties now with the knowledge that our sufferings are not worth comparing to the heavenly glory awaiting us (Rom 8:18).

Sarah becoming part of an "impossible" promise (Heb. 11:11-12). Sarah was Abraham's wife. What happened to Sarah proves that God can do the impossible.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

M—Enoch Walks with God. Gen. 5:21-24.
T—Noah Finds Favor. Gen. 6:9-22.
W—Abram Is Called by God. Gen. 12:1-5.
T—Abram's Shield and Reward. Gen. 15:1-6.
F—Sarah—Mother of Nations. Gen. 17:15-22.
S—Things Not Seen Are Eternal. II Cor. 4:16—5:7.
S—Embrace the Promises. Heb. 11:1-2, 4-13.

When God's call first came to Abram and Sarai (before He changed their names), Sarah was well past the age when having children was a physical possibility. However, God is not limited by who or what we are. He will do amazing things through us if we have faith. As Jesus said, if we have faith the size of a tiny mustard seed, we can move mountains (Matt. 17:20).

HOW FAITH WORKS—Heb. 11:13

Faith seeing the invisible (Heb. 11:13a). The patriarchs died without receiving the land God had promised them, but they still believed it was theirs. They “died in faith” (Heb. 11:13) because they took God at His word and believed His promises. Believing God, they could see His promises as though they had already been fulfilled.

Faith embracing the not-yet possibilities (Heb. 11:13b). When God called Abraham to leave his home and family, the father of Israel went in search of a new country. Having received a vision of what would be, he was no longer satisfied with what was.

Faith has a forward look. The patriarchs did not look back to what they had left behind. They looked ahead to what God had promised them.

Abraham and the other patriarchs desired and sought much more than a new homeland on earth. They desired and sought a heavenly homeland. By faith, they were able to see the eternal home that God had prepared for them.

We also are called to live as strangers and pilgrims in this world (cf. I Pet. 2:11). Instead of looking for our identity in the things of this world and living according to its ways, we should recognize that our citizenship is in heaven and seek first God's kingdom (cf. Phil. 3:20; Mat 6:33).

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. According to the writer of Hebrews, what is faith?
2. In what ways do we use faith every day in nearly everything we do?
3. What was the difference between Cain's sacrifice and Abel's sacrifice?
4. Why did God accept Abel's sacrifice but reject the sacrifice offered by Cain?
5. How do we know that Enoch was the kind of person who pleased God?
6. Why does Noah stand out as an exceptional man of faith? Why did Noah need so much faith?
7. How did God reward Noah for his faith?
8. What did God call Abraham to do? How did Abraham respond to God's call?
9. The patriarchs did not live to see the fulfillment of all God's promises. How do you think they felt about this?

REAL-LIFE APPLICATIONS

In a Mark Twain story, a small child described faith as follows: “Faith is believin' what you know ain't so” (Twain, *Following the Equator*, Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1897).

Regrettably, many teenagers—and adults—share that childish view of faith. Many believe it is simply a part of religious jargon—fine for church but out of place in the real world.

Actually, faith is very much a part of the real world. We all use faith every day in everything we do. When we sit down in a chair, we have faith the chair will support our weight. When we drive a car, we have faith the brakes will stop the car when we step on the pedal. When we flip the light switch, we have faith our room will be flooded with light.

Faith is also a big part of our relationships. We trust our loved ones and friends to act in a way that will not harm us. We trust that they will be honest with us. That takes faith.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

Purpose

Use this lesson to help the teens in your class follow the example of the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11 by exercising faith everyday.

Planning Your Presentation

Begin the class session by talking about heroes. Ask the teens to suggest some of the people they look up to as heroes. Many will probably name sports figures or other celebrities they do not know and have never met.

Some teens in the class will say their heroes are their parents. Others may say they look up to some of the faithful saints in the church. These are the kinds of heroes they should have—those we see in Hebrews 11.

Spend some time talking about the ways we use faith in everyday life. Ask the teens to identify the people and things in which they have put their trust in the past twenty-four hours. If

you need to get them started, list some common, everyday items they have used frequently without hesitation.

You can demonstrate putting faith in an object by placing a chair in the middle of the classroom and asking one of the teens to sit in the chair. Most likely, no one will be reluctant to express “faith” by sitting on the chair.

Expressing faith in a person is a little more difficult. You can demonstrate how difficult it is to trust another person by using a trust walk. Blindfold one of the teens and position him or her along one wall of the classroom. Select another teen to tell the blindfolded teen how to get from the wall to the chair that is still sitting in the center of the classroom without bumping into anything. Only verbal instructions are allowed.

Getting to the chair is the first step, but then the blindfolded teen must have enough trust in the guide to sit on the chair. Will the blindfolded teen have that much faith?

Visual Aid

Faith involves trusting God when we do not know what the future holds and obeying despite our uncertainty of the unknown.

—Richard A. Lint

