

FAITH IS ...

IP #8

I want you to open your Bibles tonight to the book of Hebrews 11:1-3&6 , "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evedentes of things not seen. For by it, the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. 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 reworder of them that dilligently seek Him." Now let mea read again the first phrase of that sixth vers. "But without faith is tis impossible to please Him." That is one of ;the most devastating statemets in all the word of God. How ~~ma~~ much easier and more comforting that would be if the writer had saidl, "But without works it is impossible to please him, or But without baptism it is impossibl to please him, or But without tithing it is impossible to please Him. And yet the word says, "But without faith is is impossible to please Him." The possibility of being pleasing to God and gaining his favor without faith is non existent. That makes faith a very important quality in a man's life. That means that faith, like a lot of te other things, is not a luxury item in the Christian life. It is not optional equipment. It is a requirement, and obligation. Without faith it is impossible to plese God. When I read that statement, the first thaing that I want to ask is do I have faith? The secon question follows the first, what is faith, and how do I know that I have it or not? And I've been trying for a long time to come up with or discover what faith is. The only definition of faith that we have in the Bible is found in that first verse. I must confess to ;you that I've read that first verse over, I don't know how many times in the years that I've been studying the Bible, and preaching, I dont think htat I understood that verse until just recently. The message tonight is, What is Faith? In the Sunday eveining services, we have been dealing with the matter of a misnisty of intercession. And of ;course, when we come to ;the matter of prayers, we have to recognize that faith is an indespensible element in the matter of intercession. You would be ~~wasint~~ wasting yourrrtime if you don't pray in faith. Jesus said, " Whatsoever

ye desire when you pray, believe and ye shall have them." Faith is indispensable in this matter of praying. As it is, in this matter of living, whatever you do, if it is not done in the atmosphere and the element of faith, then God is not pleased. What is faith? Tonight we're going to preach on the Biblical definition of what faith is, and may the Lord open our eyes to see as we have never seen before. What is faith: First of all, faith is substance. ~~In~~ This is stated in the first verse. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. I want you to underline a word in that verse and tell me what word it is I want underlined. The most important word in that verse. It is the word "is". Faith "is" substance. It doesn't say that faith dreams substance, it does not say gets substance. It says faith is substance. There are three phases to Biblical faith. There are three things that you can say about God as far as your faith is concerned. First, you can have the king of faith that says God can. God can do anything. We used to sing a little chorus God can do anything, but fail, He can save, He can keep, satisfy with joy complete, God can do anything but fail. God can do anything, and all of us tonight, more than likely have that kind of faith. Don't you believe ~~in~~ that? Nothing is impossible with God. God can do anything. Jeremiah said, "If anything is too hard for the Lord, (and then he began to doubt) and the Lord said to Jeremiah, "Don't you remember what you just prayed?" "YOU said if anything is too hard for the Lord, (and we live by this, saying God can do anything. ~~Is~~ Is this faith, ~~not~~ no, not the Biblical kind. It's not worth much just to be honest. You can't get saved with that kind of faith. God can't bless you with that kind of faith. There is a second stage of faith which is better than this and ~~it needs~~ all of us who say not only God Can, God will. That's even better. Not only can God meet my needs, God will meet my needs. Not only God can deliver me from this, but I believe that one of these days, He's going to deliver me. And most of us tonight believe that. We have that kind of faith. God can, God will. A man setting here during the invitation says, "I know that God can save me, I

believe someday He will save me, is he saved? No. Third element of faith: God can, God will, God has. God has? It's not a matter of God being able to do it, and it's not a matter of God doing it. God has already done it. Now we must understand that God has already made provision for every need of our lives. It is not a matter of whether God can make it, it is not a matter of God will make it, it's a matter that God has made it. Now let's come back to our definition. Faith is substance. I heard a fellow talking last week. We were discussing this matter of faith and exchanging ideas because we were both ~~ditraviling~~ traveling in the same direction. He said, "There was a time in my life when I needed a large sum of money & and I ~~kept~~ camped on this verse. And I beleived that God could do it and would do it. And I said, "Lord, I have the faith, you provdie the subsatance." And he says that's not what the verse said, he said that verse says, faith is substaance. If you have the faith, you have the substance I never realized what this meant. Notice what it ~~say~~ says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." Here is what it means. Faith is having everything you always wanted, or hoped you would have. All of those things you hoped for, that deliverance that power, that victory that you hoped for—you have it. Faith is the substance of everything you ever hoped for. ~~Faith is not having,~~ Faith is not hoping, faith is having. Faith says I have it right now. Faith is substaance. YOU say , are you trying to tell me that if I need \$500 to pay some bills and I believe that I have it when I don't have it, that I do have it? That's right. It doesn't say that faith brings substance, it doesn't say that faith will get you the substance, it says faith is substance. In Mark 11: 24, "Jesus said, Therefore I say unto you, what things ~~seever~~ whatsoever you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them and ye shall have them." Believe in every sense. Beleive that you already have it and you'll get it. You say that doesn't make sense. No it doesn't make sense, we're not going tonight according to seneses . What you can hear, feel, see tasted and what you can touch and smell, we're going according to the scriptures. Jesus said, "Whatsoever things you

desire, when you pray, believe that you have it and you shall get it." That is exactly what he says. God has already made provisions for all things. Which came first; the second Adam or the first Adam? The second Adam came first. ~~You~~ If you go back to the account of creation, you will find that God made provision before He made the problem. First of all, He made the air and then some birds to fly in it. He didn't make the birds first, and then say now you hold your breath until I make you some air to breathe. That's what some of you are living by though. You're holding your breath until God meets your needs. God doesn't work that way. He never has operated that way. God made the waters and then made the fish. He didn't make the fish and say flop around on the dry land a while and I'll make some water after a bit. He didn't do that. ~~God made green earth for men~~ God made green herbs for man to eat and then He made man. God made the garden and then made man. That's the way God operates. He makes provision. You know what some of you believe? You believe that God created provisions to meet your problems don't you? If you run into a problem and face some difficulty, you begin to pray, "Alright Lord, here's a problem and need. ~~Meet~~ this need and make provision." I want you to know something, God does not create provision to meet your problem. God creates problems to meet His provisions. Remember in John 9, Jesus and His disciples were walking and they saw a man that was born blind. The disciples said, "Lord, who sinned to cause this man to be blind?" "His parents or himself?" Jesus said, "Nobody sinned, this man was born blind so that the works of God might be manifested" Why did God create that problem? So that it would meet a provision. So that God would be glorified. Remember in II Corinthians 5:12, Paul had a thorn in the flesh and couldn't ~~wasn't~~ understand that. Then he asked the Lord to remove the thorn. I have a problem, now create a provision. God said, "MY grace is sufficient for thee. For in my strength is made perfect in your weakness." ~~M~~ Then Paul said, "Most gladly will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest on me." "Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecution, in ~~distresses~~

for Christ's sake. For when I have a problem then I have provision." God says that the only reason that I created a problem for you is so I can display my power in your life. Every time Paul had a necessity, a problem, a persecution, a distress, he said, "Praise the Lord, God is getting ready to glorify himself again in my life." He never fretted or worried or was uptight and was filled with frustrations, praying that God would meet his need. God does not create provision to meet your problems. He creates problems to meet his ~~provis~~ provisions. Faith is substance. When you pray, believe that you already have it and you will get it. One of the most important words in the Bible is the word "is". Faith is substance. My grace is sufficient for you. I John 5:4, "This is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith!" Faith is the victory. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the ~~Some~~ of God. Faith is the victory. If you believe that you have a victory, you really have a victory. You say, "Now preacher, are you telling me tonight, that I have this problem. I have this habit, I have this weakness, do you mean to tell me that if I believe that I have the victory, just by believing?" You say, "I don't believe that." No, and you don't have the victory either do you. Faith is the victory. That is in the perfect tense. Overcometh the world. When was the world overcome? 2,000 years ago when Jesus died on the cross. It is wrong language for a Christian to say, "I must win the victory. You don't have any victory to win. Jesus won every victory 2,000 years ago. In Hebrews 2, it says that through His death, He destroyed the $\frac{1}{2}$ power of the devil and He delivered us from the bondage of the devil. ~~I~~ I John 3:8, "He was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil." Jesus destroyed the works of the devil 2,000 years ago. Jesus overcame the world of flesh and the devil 2,000 years ago. You don't have any victory to win. Jesus won all my victories for me 2,000 years ago. When He died on the cross, He got salvation for me. How do I get salvation? "He that believeth has—Faith is substance." "He that believeth has everlasting life. All I have to do to have everlasting life is to believe that Jesus has

already provided for it and I just take what He has already provided. When Jesus was on the cross, He not only saved me from my sins, He also delivered me from the devil, He also gave me victory over flesh, over the world, ~~over the~~ He also met all of my needs. How do you get those? The same way you got salvation. Just by saying thank you Lord, it's already done. This man standing back here during the invitation when is he saved? When he acts and he steps out and says praise the Lord. That fellow isn't saved when he gets down on his knees and ~~asks~~ asks God to save him, he's saved when he moves out. ~~in~~ the act of faith. When he says I believe. ~~I don't~~ Just from your taking, that's all that's necessary. Faith is substance. When you have faith, you; have substance. You can remove the word substance and you can put in there any word that you want to, whatever your need is. Whatever your problem is, whatever your difficulty is, you put that in that word substance,. Faith is it. If I need money to meet my bills, faith is that money. Faith doesn't bring it, faith doesn't obtain it, faith is it. If I had faith, that ~~is~~ is just like having the money. That's the synonymous with having the money. Faith is the victory. If I need victory in an area of my life, Jesus has already won it. God has already done it. All I have to do is face it, and when I believe that I have the victory, and I accept the victory that Jesus won for me, how do you overcome it? You overcome it by faith. Not by striving and struggling. You don't have any victory to win. Jesus won all your victories 2,000 years ago. Faith is not only substance, faith is also ~~science~~ sight. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. I can divide this congregation into two groups. Those who say seeing is believing, and those who say believing is seeing. John 20, "But Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples said unto him, we have seen the Lord." But he said unto them, "Except I shall see in his hands the prints of the nails and put my finger in the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I ;will not believe." Thomas said, except I see, I will not believe. Thomas had 'sense' faith. That's what most of

us have, 'sense' faith. Seeing is believing, or "Lord, you give me victory and then I'll believe that I have it." Well, who couldn't believe that after that? "Lord, you give me the substance and I'll believe that I have it." Well, ~~that~~ that doesn't take faith, that doesn't honor God. That's why Jesus said that you have to believe that you have it and then you'll get it. But Thomas said, except I see, I will not believe. And some of you tonight won't believe it unless you see it or smell it or hear it or touch it or taste it. What you can't see or what you can't hear or can't understand with your mind, this is why we're all the time asking God for a sign. Putting out the fleece. There are those that say that seeing is believing, then there are those that say that believing is seeing. And after eight days, his disciples were withing and Thomas was with them, then came Jesus, ~~to~~ the doors being shut and sttod in the midst and said, "Peace be unto you." Then said He to ;Thomas, "Reach here with thy finger and behold my hands and reach out thy hand and thrust it into my side and be not faithless, but believing." And Thomas answered and a said unto Him, "My Lord and my God." Sure he believed now, because he had seen it. Jesus saith unot him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou hast believed." Blessed are they that have not seen but still believe. Praise the Lord. He didn't bless Thomas, he didn't say, "Thomas, that's a good Christian." "You're growing." He said, "Thomas, (I believe He was shaking his head), because you have seen, you believe.) Because of the bread, you believe, because you see the miracles you believe. Blessed are those taht never see, and they don't need to see, they can just believe it. That is scriptural faith. Do you know w how to have victory in your life? Move out of the realm of the senses and into the realm of the scriptures. If your senses and the scriptrue contradicts, believe the scripture. Now I know what I'm saying and it's almost difficult for us to do, because we have been brought up to believe that what we can see, hear and tastw and smell and touch and so forth, believing is seeing. Listen... If faith is ;the substance, then faith is all I need to have it. Faith is the only evidence that I need. I don't * need any additional evidence except faith in the fact

of God's word. If God's word says that I have victory, that's all the evidence that I need. If God's word says that Jesus ~~did~~ died for me 2,000 years ago,.... Now listen, this is the way that you were saved. You couldn't have been saved if you hadn't have had scriptural faith. You didn't see Jesus die 2,000 years ago. No. You just believed the book. But after we're saved, we move into the realm of our senses, and we limit God.. It's contrary to human nature, it's all backwards. Believe you already have ~~it~~ and you'll get it. That's right. Don't be a slave to your senses. That's right. If the word of God and what you see, smell and hear, handle and taste and touch contradict, stick to the word of God. You don't need fleece. Faith is the fleece. It's the only evidence you need. I talked to a preacher, a friend of mine and he gave me a good saying. He said, "Act like it's so when it's not so, and it will be so." That's faith. Act like it's so when it isn't so, and it will be so. Do you remember the 10 lepers that came to Jesus? Jesus said, what do you want. They said, we want to be cleansed. we want to be healed. Jesus said, "Go show thyself to the priests." Now it was the law, that when a leper was healed, he was to go first of all and show himself to the priests and get a clean bill of health. so that he could be admitted back into society. They would go and show themselves to the priestss after they were healed. Now Jesus didn't heal them, they said, Lord we want to be healed. And He said to go show themselves to the priests. And what if they had said, but Lord, we're not healed. Jesus said, act like it's so and it's not so. And the Bible says, as they were going, they were healed. When they acted like it was so, and it wasn't so, it was so. You mean so say, that when I ~~got on m-~~ acted like I got ~~on~~ my knees and yet when I don't, they will be? That's right because the you already have them all met. What evidence do I have? The word of God. That's all the evidence you need. Faith is sight, faith is seeing. Faith is the only evidence that we need. And so you move out of the realm of the senses and into the realm of the scriptures and you realize that God not only can, God not only will, praise His name, God already ~~had~~ has, and His word says it. That's all I need. I believe that I have

victory because His word says so. I don't feel it, I haven't heard any angel wings flapping, haven't heard the heavenly ~~eel~~ chorus sing, haven't ~~fle~~ felt any supernatural power go through my being. If God's word says that I have victory, I believe it. And when I said that Jesus was Lord, I believed it whether I felt like ti or not. And when I ~~was~~ told thaata the spirit of God would fill me, when I yield to ;him, I beleive I'm ~~fel~~ filled whether I feel it ~~oooo~~ or ~~no~~ not. God's word says it and that's the only evidence that I need. Faith is sight. That's not enough. One more thing. Faith is spoken. Faith is saying it. I've brought to see a great deal that the Bible has to say about the confession of our faith. I'm talking now about confessing Jesus as our saviour and Lord, I'm not talking about confessing our sins. I'm talking aobut what ~~Hebrews 4~~ says Hebrews 4:14 says, "Hold fast your confession." The confession of our a faith, and if you'll take the time to read the book of Hebrews, you see how many times the word testimony is there and for instance in verse 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." There is this vital element in the matter of believing faith. You must not only know that faith is the substance, that faith is whan faith already has it, and you not only realize taht that's the only real evidence that you need to be sure that it's yours, but you have to confess that it is. You got to confess it that it is. Let's go ~~wack~~ to Mark 11;23, "For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." Now He mentions the word faith one time in that verse, and sying it three times. And you look at the last ~~statemtn~~ statement. "He shall have whatsoever he saithe." You possess what you confess. What does Romans 12? "What saith it, the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, the word of faith." Over and over againg, Jesus always spoke. When He sttod at the tomb of Lazarus, He said, "Father, I thank you that you

always answer me." He met Mary and Martha and told them that they would see the glory of God. They were not to worry about Lazarus, he had confessed his faith. All the way through, when the Apostles healed someone, they spoke to them. In Acts 3, Peter said, "IN the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk." The centurion in Matthew 18 came to Jesus and said, "Lord, jstut sayd the word and my servant shall be healed." And Acts 16:16, the Apostle Paul turned to the woman who was demon possessed and he spoke to the spirit within her and said, "In the name of Jesus, I command you to come out." You see, the Bible places a great deal on what you say. Jesus said, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." If thou shalt confess that Jesus is Lord, thou shalt be saved. For what the heart man believeth unto righteousness with the mough confession ~~if~~ is made unto salvation. God always demands taht you confess what you're convicted of in your heart. Whosoever shall speak a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.him. He ~~says,~~ doesn't say think a word or feel a word, whosoever shall 'speak' a word against the Holy Ghost. You say, I don't believe that there is that much power in words. God made the world with words. And Hebrews 1 says, "He upholds them by the words of His power." Now friend, your faith will be measured by your confession. Your faith will never rise above the level of your confession. You say, I don't understand what you mean? There are some people who just ~~went~~ once, step out on faith and confess, it's done. I do not believe that a man is saved until he confesses it. I don't think a fellow cans set ~~back~~ back there and say, ~~well I don't want~~ well I'm not going to tell anyone about it, I'm going to do this secretly and I don't want anyone to know that I'm a Christiaan and I'm not going to tell anyond about it, I'm just going to keep it to myself. I don't believe that the Bible teaches that salvation can come to a man unless he is willing to confess You need to let your ~~hea~~ ears hear your mouht say it. And when you realize taht faith id the substance and faith is the only evidence you need, that you halready have it, then you confess with your mouth, Thank God I have it and I believe it. And you hold fast to

that confession. How do you overcome the devil? Revelation 12:11, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." You just tell him that you have him beat. That's right. Not by the fault of ~~the~~ their testimony, not by the experience of their testimony, but by the word of ~~h~~ their testimony. they overcame. The word of a testimony brings the power of the blood inot action. In our warfare with Satan, you possess what you confess. You say, well, what am I supposed to ~~confess~~ confess? ~~£~~ You're supposed to confess that you are what God says you are. You're God says you're saved, I confess, I'm saved. Now if I can't confess that and I've got some doubts about confessing that thing, or saying it, that's probably where my doubts are coming from. God says that I'm filled with the spirit, I must confess that I am. God says that I have victory, ... what ~~am~~ am I doing when I confess it? I am merely giving my vote, consent, embracing what God has already said. I'm mearely saying what God said about me. You say, well taht's the power of positive thinking. He- Oh no, the power of positive thinking is this, t hat if you believe it, it will havppen. Scripture will say this, You believe it because it's already happend. The power of ~~pe-~~ positive thinking is faith in faith. If you believe in your believing, if you have enough faith in you ability to believe, then things can happen. No, this is faith in what? LThe word of God, what God says. Faith in facts, nto in fancy. It's not saying that if we believe osomething hard wnough it will happen, no. Believe it because it has already happened. Now that ~~bei~~ brings us to this matter of prayer. He says in I John 5, "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us and if we know (ther's faith) that He hear us, (You know sometimes we pray and we pray according to God's will but we're not sure He hears us, then you have made null and void taht prayer.), whatsoever we ask, we know that we are having (that's in the present tense) the petitions that we desire of Him." You're having it right now. I John 3:22 says the same thing. It's talking about prayer. Verse 22, "And whatsoever we ask, we are receiving (it's in the present tense) of Him because we keep

His commandments." You can't get away from it. God says, it's already done. The provision is already made. What you must do is to agree with God. And confess that you are what God says you are. Faith says it and speaks it. It seals it. You will possess what you confess according to the word of God. Now let's pray together.