

RECEIVING GOD'S PROMISES THROUGH FAITH

Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

- “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for” - *The Greek word for “substance” is ὑπόστασις hupostasis and it means “substructure, foundation, something that is firm and actually exists.” Faith provides the basis for trust, reliance, and assurance.*
- *Faith takes the things we are hoping for and makes them real— something we can rely upon and look forward to.*
- “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for” - *This states that our hope is supported by and depends upon our faith.*
- *Faith is the foundation, the substructure that hope rests upon.*
- *True faith gives stability to our lives and to our hope.*
- *The concept of hope is looking forward to something we have not yet received.*
- *The concept of faith is having a strong conviction in something that we cannot see.*
- *Without faith, our hope has nothing to stand upon and it will collapse under disappointment.*
- *The Greek word for “substance” – ὑπόστασις hupostasis – in the papyri is used for title deed.*
- *ὑπόστασις hupostasis denotes the divine reality and substance that contrasts with everything shadowy and uncertain, so we can unwaveringly hope in the promises of God.*
- *Faith is that divine revelation that God is real and His promises are true.*
- *Faith is the foundation that we use to build our relationship with God and His Word.*
- *Faith provides us with the claim stakes that we use to claim the promises of God.*
- *‘Faith is the substance’ – ὑπόστασις hupostasis is like driving our claim stakes into the promises of God (our title deed) and standing on His promises until we receive our warranty deed – the manifestation of God’s promises.*

- *The reason we have deeds is to be able to prove ownership and protect against unlawful squatters or those who would try to seize our property.*
- *A deed is of no use unless the owner is willing to exercise his rights in a court of law against those who would try to seize it.*
- *The trials and circumstances of life try to drive us away from trusting God's promises by tempting us to doubt God's faithfulness. Our response must be to exercise our faith in God by standing upon His Word, driving in our claim stakes, and confessing God's faithfulness.*
- *We must continue to stay in agreement with God to see the fulfillment of God's purposes for our lives.*
- *Many times God will show us certain aspects of His will for our lives, not just to encourage us, but so we will begin to pray into His will to see them fulfilled.*

Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

- *The second part of the definition of faith deals with the word evidence.*
- *The Greek word "evidence" is ἔλεγχος elenchos and it means "proof, that by which a thing is proved or tested; verification."*
- *Hebrews 11:1 shows us the two characteristics of faith that enable us to stand against the uncertainty and hardships of life, that enable us to trust in His promises and see them fulfilled in our lives and in those around us. Those two characteristics are substance and evidence.*
- *Faith is the substance and the evidence that bring reality to our relationship with God.*
- *Faith does not do the persuading. It is because we have been persuaded by God through His Word, revelation, and His promises that we have faith. (TDNT)*
- *The Greek and Hebrew words for faith convey the idea of "to have confidence, to trust; to believe to the extent of complete trust and reliance."*
- *Thus faith is the supernatural impartation of trusting God and His Word.*
- *The enemy of our souls will use any number of false witnesses to testify against the promises of God.*
- *Those false witnesses will be some of our closest companions – our emotions, feelings, and carnal thoughts.*

- *Other false witnesses will be the apparent circumstances and discouraging words of unbelief spoken by others and even from our own lips.*

Hebrews 11:1 (NCV)

1 Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it.

- *Faith is having total certainty in God. Faith provides complete security regardless of the external circumstances in which we find ourselves.*
- *This life is filled with uncertainty.*
- *Faith is developed in the darkroom of uncertainty.*
- *Many times we pray, “God remove the uncertainty of life.”*
- *God wants us to pray, “God give us certainty in You in the midst of uncertainty.”*
- *How do we strengthen our faith so we can stand strong in the midst of uncertainty and even turmoil?*

Jude 20–21 (NKJV)

²⁰But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

²¹keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

- *“building yourselves up on your most holy faith” – We are to build ourselves up by building upon the foundation of our most holy faith.*
- *How do we build ourselves up on our most holy faith? One way is “praying in the Holy Spirit.”*

1 Corinthians 14:4 (NKJV)

⁴He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

- *Apostle Paul repeats the same principle as Jude, that praying in tongues builds up our faith.*
- *Praying in tongues is such a marvelous gift. Even in our lowest times we can begin to pray in tongues and our faith and confidence in Christ will be strengthened.*

- *There are other important things we can do to protect and build up our faith.*

1 Timothy 1:18–19 (NKJV)

¹⁸This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,

¹⁹having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,

- *“according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare” – God gives us prophetic words for our lives which we can hold onto and with them fight a good fight by building up our faith.*
- *“according to the prophecies previously made concerning you” - Many Christians live out their lives without a deep sense that God has a special purpose for their lives.*
- *We may not know exactly what God wants to do in our lives, but the important thing is that we believe He has a specific predestined purpose for us.*
- *“concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck” - If we do not embrace the fact that God has a specific and special purpose for our lives, this is a recipe for living a mediocre life at best, and at worst totally backsliding.*

1 Corinthians 10:12 (NKJV)

¹²Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

- *If we are not constantly building up our faith, we can end up in the unimaginable situation of falling with the result of living ungodly lives.*
- *Being watchful is key for us to live a faith filled life.*
- *What and how are we to be watchful so our faith continues to grow and does not stagnate or weaken?*

Mark 4:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.

²⁵For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.”

- *“Take heed what you hear” – It is of great importance that we are aware of what we are hearing and listening to.*

- *If we are listening to words filled with doubt, unbelief, sarcasm, bitterness, and any of a multitude of negative things it will result in our faith slowly being weakened and eroded.*
- *“With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you” – If we are listening to and participating in gossip and putting others down we will be judged by that same standard and our very attitude will become more and more negative.*
- *I prefer to speak words of mercy rather than speaking about the failures and sins of others.*
- *“to you who hear, more will be given” – Whatever we are listening to, the more we are going to have our ears tuned to those things.*
- *Negative people only hear negativity, while people of faith are always hearing and speaking words of faith.*
- *“For whoever has, to him more will be given” – The more we listen to and hear words of faith and hope the more our faith and hope will grow and our confidence in Christ will flourish.*
- *“but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him” – If we lack faith and hope and we listen to and speak words of hopelessness and despair, then even whatever faith or hope we may possess will be lost and replaced by an even greater despair and futility.*
- *We are surrounded in this world by an ocean of negativity and skepticism, but God wants us to tune our spiritual ears to hear His voice speaking words of faith and hope.*

1 Corinthians 15:33 (NKJV)

³³Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.”

- *Paul warns that associating with evil or unbelief will tear down our faith.*

1 Corinthians 15:33 (The Message)

³³But don’t fool yourselves. Don’t let yourselves be poisoned by this anti-resurrection loose talk. “Bad company ruins good manners.”

- *However, the context of 1 Corinthians 15 is regarding the veracity of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*
- *“Don’t let yourselves be poisoned by this anti-resurrection loose talk.” - It is surprisingly true that if we surround ourselves with unbelief and are not careful*

to fill our hearts with faith, then the very things we have experienced in God can fade into doubt and unbelief.

- *We should not be fooled into thinking we can entertain and listen to skeptical and unbelieving words without it affecting our ability to trust God and His Word.*

Luke 8:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him."

- *"Therefore take heed how you hear." – Not only must we be careful what we hear but how we hear.*
- *Sometimes God is speaking words of life, but the enemy comes and steals them away before we have time to take hold of them, because we are not watchful of how we are hearing.*

Psalms 62:11 - 12 (NKJV)

¹¹God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God.

¹²Also to You, O Lord, belongs mercy; For You render to each one according to his work.

- *"God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this" – Sometimes God speaks twice and we failed to hear once, but here is one example of why David was called a man after God's own heart.*
- *What did David hear? - "That power belongs to God."*
- *What a great word of faith David heard! Power belongs to God. It doesn't belong to the devil or man or to this world—only to God!*
- *If we meditate upon that one thought it would cause our faith and confidence to grow and cause our hearts to be filled with peace and security.*
- *However, David heard something more – "Also to You, O Lord, belongs mercy"*
- *David heard that mercy belongs to God and he also recorded that truth.*
- *In the times when David had to face his weaknesses, sins, and failures he was able to go back to the revelation that "mercy belongs to God." Then, instead of fleeing from God he was able to return to Him and repent, because he knew God was full of mercy.*

- *David was a man after God's own heart. Even after he failed he knew how to repent and receive restoration from God, because he had faith that God was merciful.*
- *However, David heard something more – “For You render to each one according to his work.”*
- *David heard that even though God is merciful we are still accountable for our life. Our actions and choices will determine if our lives will be fruitful or end in disappointment.*
- *David was a man after God's own heart because he valued the reward that He was offering him and ultimately Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world came through David's lineage.*
- *David is a wonderful example of how he learned to hear twice when God spoke once.*
- *David learned how to value, cherish, and protect God's Word in his heart.*
- *David was known as a prophet as well as a king. As believers we have the Holy Spirit so we can hear God's voice speaking to us.*

Matthew 13:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

- *Listen to what Jesus says to His disciples, which includes us. Many prophets and righteous men desired to see and hear what we hear, but they did not.*
- *David was able to hear what God was saying. He took hold of those words and placed them deep in his heart.*
- *What were the things that David overcame which enabled him to hear and retain God's word in his heart?*
- *The preceding verse in Psalm 62 shows us some of those things that will hinder us from hearing from God.*

Psalm 62:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰Do not trust in oppression, Nor vainly hope in robbery; If riches increase, Do not set your heart on them.

- *What stops us from hearing God speaking to us? When we trust in unrighteousness and set our hearts on riches and the vanity of the temporal success of this life.*

- *Sure steps that will build up our faith in Christ where He becomes more real than the obstacles that we face on a daily basis.*

Psalm 1:2 (NKJV)

²But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

- *1. We need to delight in God's Word and learn to have His Word constantly in our thoughts, because it will not only protect us from evil thoughts, but it will give us the correct criteria to evaluate everything that we hear and see.*

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷pray without ceasing,

- *2. We need to learn to be in a constant attitude of prayer.*
- *Expressing our hearts to God will keep us connected to Him.*
- *We become more God-conscious and our faith naturally will blossom.*

Ephesians 5:18–20 (NKJV)

¹⁸And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

¹⁹speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

²⁰giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

- *3. We are to be filled with the Holy Spirit constantly.*
- *When we pray in the Spirit, seek to do His will instead of being self-centered, and generally have a consciousness of the reality of God – all these things will help us to constantly be filled with the Spirit.*
- *4. Our hearts and mouths are constantly to be filled with a melody of thanksgiving and songs of joy, because we are children of God.*
- *5. We are to be thankful no matter what circumstance we face, because God is faithful and He has a plan and purpose for everything we experience — even when those experiences are painful or difficult.*
- *True faith results from experiencing the reality of God.*
- *As we experience God and spend more time with Him we grow more and more confident in His faithfulness and the perfection of His plans.*

- *Many Christians hear good teaching, but they do not benefit from them, because they fail to walk in the light of what they have learned and soon they forget the very things they heard.*
 - *God spoke once, but I heard twice – let us be hearers of His Word.*
1. *If there are people here who have never responded to God's call of salvation then today is the day you can respond and be saved.*
 2. *If there are Christians who have realized that there are many things God has spoken to them, but they have failed to take hold of those things then today is an opportunity to repent and say, "Speak Lord for your servant is listening."*
 3. *If there are Christians who are beginning to experience the delight of God's presence we can respond with thanksgiving and ask Him to deepen our walk with Him.*