

3. BTW, don't try and fake it with God. "I'll read the Bible more and make up for my lack of faith." Uh, no. Verse 6 doesn't use the word "improbable" or "unlikely," but "**impossible.**" Without faith it is *impossible* to please God. There are no substitutions.

E. Faith means we believe God is _____, v.6. Here is a personal question: *Can someone come to the conclusion that God is real by watching your life and how you respond to life's hardships?* In other words, when besieged by difficulties, do you show your faith or do you fall apart—as if God doesn't even exist?

F. Faith understands that God rewards the _____, v.6. The word "seek" means *to search for with diligence; to require.* Real faith goes beyond just believing God exists—real faith believes God has the power to see me through.

III. Two Final Questions:

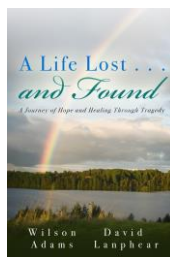
A. Why is faith so hard for me? There is an answer:

- Maybe its fear...
- Maybe it's bitterness and anger...
- Maybe it's pride...
- Maybe it's hypocrisy...

B. Why is it so hard to live one day at a time? The Scriptures tell us to do that (Ps.90:12; Matt.6:34; Ps.118:24). But how? There's only one way:

Faith!

FYI: Material for the "Where is God When I Hurt?" series is condensed from the book, ***A Life Lost & Found—A Journey of Hope & Healing*** by Wilson Adams & David Lanphear. If interested in the book, see Jason Hardin. Or visit: www.courageouslivingbooks.com



Where Is God When I Hurt?

A Journey of Hope & Healing

Far away they are in the sunshine and my highest aspirations.
I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty,
believe in them, and try to follow where they lead.

—Louisa May Alcott

Facing Life with Faith

Hebrews 10:35-39; 11:1-6

Life is hard and some days it gets harder. The easiest response to threatening and overwhelming problems is to panic, throw away our faith, and quit on God. The Hebrew writer says—that's the one thing we cannot do: "We are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul" (v.39).

Faith! I don't know anyone who doesn't need more faith and a deeper conviction in the things of God. So, let's quit pretending like we have all the answers and that we have it all together all the time. In fact, let's quit pretending that we never worry or question or doubt, because...that's phony. Everyone at different points along the path of life struggles with faith.

You aren't the only one...

Faith?


I. What is F*A*I*T*H?

A. We know that faith is essential for salvation (Eph.2:8; John 3:16; Mark 16:16) and is inclusive of everything God asks us to do. Here it is: faith is not only necessary to save you eternally, but faith is necessary to get you through the hard times now. In fact, it is the only thing that will.

1. How would you complete the sentence: *Faith is* _____. Faith is trusting God to handle me in troublesome times. It's trusting Him to get me through the maze of problems that beset me. It's trusting Him to help me with temptation and trials. It's trusting Him to get me to my eternal home.

2. For our faith to work, it must be practical. It's not enough to sing, pray, and preach about faith—the question is: will my faith work *out there* in real time?

3. "We walk by faith and not by sight" (2 Cor.5:7). That's easier to read than do. And yet...

B. Hence the question:  does your faith count...in hard times?

If your faith doesn't count in hard times, your faith doesn't count at all!

II. Six Truths About Faith

Hebrews 11:1-6

A. Faith requires _____ & _____, v.1.

1. The word "assurance" means *to stand under something so that it is supported.* In other words, your faith supports you when everything and everyone around you is crumbling. It will give you the strength to go on; the courage to face another day.

2. The word "conviction" means *proof, evidence.* What is necessary to *convict* a criminal? You must have proof that he is guilty. What is faith? Faith is living proof that God will take care of me and my family. It is being convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is in control and can handle whatever happens. We may not understand the "when" and "how" of God, but we must be convinced of the "what." And the "what" is...**faith.**

NOTE: Bible faith is not a goose-bump emotional feeling. Neither does it mean that God will eliminate all the hardship. It does mean that I am assured and convicted that He will take care of me—in His own way and in His own time.

B. Faith points to the _____, v.1a. "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for..." Hope is one directional: future! The problem is this: our worries go in the same direction. We worry about tomorrow (future) or are filled with nagging "What ifs?" (future).

1. Why? Because—we view our tomorrows in the light of our ability rather than in God's capability to handle whatever happens.

2. His promise is clear: "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Heb.13:5). Whatever happens tomorrow, He will not leave us alone.

C. Faith involves the _____, v.1b. And that's the hard part. Like Thomas ("Unless I see..."), we want to see it, too. Remember the words of Jesus to the doubter? "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are those who did not see and yet believed." That's you. That's me. That's faith.

No pessimist ever made a great leader. The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty. Which are you? In other words, do you walk by faith or by sight?

D. Faith is basic to _____, v.2. Hebrews 11 is filled with multiple examples of those who were blessed because of their faith. Even God goes back to a time when there was nothing and sets the precedent by creating the visible out of the invisible (v.3). In other words, God can make something (the creation) out of nothing.

1. What's the point? If God can do that with the creation (operate in the area of unseen impossibilities), can He not take what appears to be an impossible situation in your life and make something out of what you think is a hopeless situation?

2. The key is...**faith!** It worked for Abel (v.4), for Enoch (v.5), and for all the others mentioned in the Hall of the Faithful (Heb.11). And...it will work for you (v.6a).