

FAITH IN ACTION

Dear Teacher,

Hebrews 11:1 states “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” How do we as mature Christians convey the power of something intangible such as faith to youth who might have difficulty with abstract concepts?

We hope this quarter’s focus on faith helps answer this question. The first five lessons use passages from Hebrews to move students toward a better understanding of faith, while the remaining lessons continue the study of faith through the lens of the early church.

Lessons six and seven will focus on Stephen’s message and martyrdom. Lesson eight explores the repercussions for those who treat faith as a commodity. The ninth lesson will look at the faith that guides both Philip the evangelist and the Ethiopian seeker to examine the Scriptures together.

The final lessons will study Paul’s faith and ministry. We will cover Paul’s speech before King Agrippa, Paul’s journey aboard the ship to Rome, and Paul’s ongoing ministry even though he is a prisoner.

We hope your Jammers enjoy this quarter. Above all else, we pray they will grow in their faith of God and learn how to put their faith into action!

With Love,

The *J.A.M. (Jesus And Me)*® Editorial Team

FAITH

By Dale Boswell

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see” (Hebrews 11:1).

Faith is the unreasonable acceptance of an end or outcome without physical or material proof that such an outcome is even possible. Faith is the confident assurance that we will, in fact and in time, receive that which God promised.

Faith is invisible. The writer of Hebrews calls it substance. Faith is spiritual—it exists on a level that is foreign to the physical, mental, and emotional levels we’ve become so accustomed to when governing ourselves. And while there may be no imperial evidence to support our confident expectation, faith IS the evidence.

Growing Christians must have an accurate understanding of faith, especially if they are interested in receiving anything from God. We must believe in Him, and that He is a rewarder to those who diligently seek Him.

Faith is different from hope. Hope is a condition for faith. Hope is a positive unwavering expectation of good. Hope is for the mind (1 Thessalonians 5:8; Hebrews 6:19), an anchor for the soul. It keeps us in the place where we can believe, but it is not in itself “faith.” Yet without hope, there are no “what we hope for,” and therefore there cannot be faith.

Faith allows Christians to see light in the midst of darkness, to be fearless in terrifying circumstances, to be content despite everything around them going wrong, and to be hopeful in the midst of tragedy. Life often allows Christians to exercise faith in difficult times. Taking a leap of faith is important when circumstantial evidence attempts to deter someone from moving forward.

Faith is essential to your foundation. We need it when things are going well. We need it when things are not going well. We need it for our Christian walk. We need it during hard times. Whether times are good or whether they are hard, rely on your faith to give you more strength because in the midst of any challenge or obstacle, faith will see us through.

Keep the faith!

A QUICK LOOK

Lesson	Date	Theme Title	Scripture	In My Heart	Last Jam
1	9/4	Faith Calls for Perseverance	Hebrews 10:19–31	Hebrews 10:22	My faith in Jesus is growing daily!
2	9/11	Faith is Assurance	Hebrews 11:1–3, 6; Psalm 46:1–3, 8–11	Hebrews 11:1	I have firm confidence!
3	9/18	Faith is Endurance	Hebrews 12:1–11	Hebrews 12:1–2	I have that enduring type of faith!
4	9/25	Faith Inspires Gratitude	Hebrews 12:18–29	Hebrews 12:28	God’s love isn’t too good to be true. It’s true that it’s good.
5	10/2	Faith Requires Mutual Love	Hebrews 13:1–3; 1 Corinthians 13	1 Corinthians 13:13	“Love in your heart is not put there to stay; Love is not love until you give it away.” Oscar Hammerstein II
6	10/9	Stephen’s Arrest and Speech	Acts 6:8–7:2a	Acts 6:8	The next time you see something that needs to be done to make the world better think, “If not me, then who?”
7	10/16	Stephen’s Martyrdom	Acts 7:51–8:1a	Acts 7:56	It’s worth standing for God—no matter what!
8	10/23	Simon Wants to Buy Power	Acts 8:9–24	Acts 8:18	Equation for gaining God’s Power = Truth + Sincerity
9	10/30	Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch	Acts 8:26–39	Acts 8:36	God includes others—what about you?
10	11/6	Paul before King Agrippa	Acts 26:19–32	Acts 26:25	STAND! God’s got your back!
11	11/13	Paul Sails for Rome	Acts 27:1–2, 33–44	Acts 27:34	Somewhere someone is praying for a friend to listen; remember, you can be an answer to a prayer.
12	11/20	Paul Ministers in Malta	Acts 28:1–10	Acts 28:6	Let your light shine!
13	11/27	Paul Evangelizes in Rome	Acts 28:23–31	Acts 28:28	I will spread the Good News of Jesus daily!

Quarter At-A-Glance September 2022

A Living Faith

This study focuses on faith. The first unit uses passages from Hebrews to move participants toward a definition of faith, while the second and third units continue the study of faith through the lens of the Early Church.

UNIT 1 • What Is Faith?

These lessons engage learners in responsive obedience to God's love that is revealed in Jesus. This response is an act of faith.

UNIT 2 • Who Understands Faith?

The first two lessons focus on Stephen's message and martyrdom. The third lesson explores the repercussions for those who treat faith as a commodity. The fourth lesson looks at the faith that guides both Philip the evangelist and the Ethiopian seeker to examine the Scriptures together.

UNIT 3 • What Does Faith Cost?

This unit is a four-lesson study of Paul's faith and ministry. The first lesson examines Paul's speech before King Agrippa. The second lesson goes with Paul aboard the ship to Rome. The final two lessons focus on Paul's ongoing ministry even though he is a prisoner.

CHARITY GIVES

WEEKLY THEME:

FAITH CALLS FOR PERSEVERENCE

BASED ON:

Hebrews 10:19–31

LESSON AIM:

By the end of this lesson, the students will:

KNOW: Discuss how Jesus' sacrificial death opens the way to the presence of God.

FEEL: Reflect on the importance of holding on to faith in Jesus.

DO: Share their faith with others.

TARGET

The writer of Hebrews tells us that because of Christ's sacrificial death, we can enter into the presence of God. We can also develop a personal relationship with Jesus and grow in faith (Hebrews 10:19–31).

TOOLS

Student magazines, Bibles, pencils, newspapers, magazines, and index cards.

OPEN THE LESSON

Student magazines, Bibles, pencils, and index cards.

1. How do you define faith?
2. Is it hard for you to share your faith in Jesus? Explain your answer.
3. What does the term "good deeds" mean to you?

REALITY CHECK

Charity Gives

The aroma of freshly baked cookies and music fills the air of the Montgomery's house. The kitchen table and floor are covered with grocery bags filled with canned goods and other groceries. The chime of the printer, along with the chatter of 15 women preparing care packages, echoes from room to room. Charity is assisting the Sister-to-Sister women's group, founded by her mother, designed to help single mothers in need. Charity is printing labels for the care packages:

To my sister from afar!

You are special no matter where you are!

Sister-to-Sister sends you this package during your time of need,

Sharing and caring is our ultimate deed!

"Charity, we need more labels," her mother shouted from the kitchen.

"Sure Mom, they are printing right now," Charity responded.

Charity had asked her BFFs, Shonda and Tasha, to help her that day.

"It's so great that your mother organized such an amazing group to help others," said Shonda while stacking the labels to be placed on the care packages.

"I know a lot of single moms are happy because of the Sister-to-Sister women's group," added Tasha.

"Yes they are, and I'm happy to help my mom help others. You know, things have turned around for us since I decided to give up my rebellious ways," Charity explained.

"The mothers are so grateful and appreciative. Some of them tell my mother that they didn't have any food for their children before getting the care package. I asked you guys to help because my mom wants to include teenage girls on staff as mentors. Would you all be interested?"

"Absolutely," Tasha and Shonda said simultaneously.

"It feels so good to help others," Charity said. "My mom is going to be excited!"

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did Charity do after she decided to stop her rebellious ways?

2. How is the Sister-to-Sister women’s group helping women?
3. Describe how you felt when you did a good deed for someone.

**PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES
IN MY HEART**

Recite this verse: “Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22, NIV).

WORD!

Divide the class into two groups. Have each group recite the verse in dramatic form. Students should put emphasis on the following: “true heart,” “full assurance,” “sprinkled clean,” and “our bodies washed.”

SIDEBAR

Faith Calls for Perseverance

Students will understand the meaning of faith. Students recognize what having faith is.

EXPLORE THE MEANING

How to Hold on to Your Faith in Jesus

Students are given pointers on how to maintain faith in Jesus.

1. Believe that Jesus is with you no matter how you feel.
2. Believe in what is written about Jesus in the Bible.
3. Believe no matter what unbelievers say about your God.

GOT IT!

A. Enduring Faith

Jammers use Word! to help them put the following statements in the correct order.

- 5 — It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
- 2 — Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings.
- 4 — The Lord will judge His people.
- 3 — Let us consider how we may spur one another

on toward love and good deeds.

- 1 — Brothers and sisters we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place.

B. Love in Action

Jammers will convene in small groups to research examples of love in action from current newspapers and magazines to share with the class. Provide magazines and newspapers for the groups to look through.

JAM SESSION

Steadfast Determination

Jammers will learn that because of Jesus all sins are forgiven and we can boldly enter into the presence of God. Additionally, because of Jesus’ death, all things have become new and Jammers can develop a personal relationship with Christ and grow in their faith.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

JAM ON IT!

Sharing The Faith

Jammers will understand that someone is in need of their hand of support. This week students will share the Good News about Jesus with at least three people. They will write on an index card a brief paragraph describing something great God has done for them and share it with someone they think needs to hear it.

NOTES

Faith Calls for Perseverance

Bible Background • HEBREWS 10:19–31

Printed Text • HEBREWS 10:19–31 | Devotional Reading • ROMANS 5:1–5

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: KNOW Jesus' sacrificial death opens the way to the presence of God; FEEL the importance of holding on to faith in Jesus; and SHARE our faith with others.

In Focus

Anthony and Angie dated for one year and had been friends for eight. One Saturday, Anthony met with Mr. Williams, Angie's father. Anthony said to him,

"May I have your permission to ask Angie to marry me? I love and respect your daughter and I want to make her my partner for life. She is my blessing from God. I can't imagine life without her."

Mr. Williams thought for a moment then smiled. "You have my permission, Anthony," he said. "Let's pray for your lives together."

One evening as Anthony and Angie walked through the park, Anthony knelt on one knee and proposed. Angie was speechless. As tears ran down her cheeks, she said,

"I have made too many mistakes in my life. You can't truly love me, because I have not forgiven myself. I don't deserve a life with you. I love you, but I can't marry you!"

As Angie started to leave, Anthony said, "We all make mistakes, but God forgives us when we sincerely come to Him."

Through faith in Christ, our sins are forgiven and we have a new life. In today's lesson, we can develop a personal relationship with Jesus by faith and enter into the presence of God.

Keep in Mind

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering;"
(Hebrews 10:23, KJV)

Focal Verses

KJV Hebrews 10:19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The People, Places, and Times

Holy of Holies. It was located in the innermost sanctuary of the temple. Separated from the other parts of the temple by a thick curtain, the Holy of Holies was specially associated with the presence of Yahweh, God. In the early years of the existence of the temple, the Holy of Holies contained the Ark of the Covenant, which represented God's presence with the people of Israel.

High Priest. He was the one in charge of the temple worship. It was a hereditary position based upon descent from Aaron. Normally, the high priest served for life. Only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies and only on the Day of Atonement.

Hebrews. Because there are references to religious sacrifices and ceremonies, the book of Hebrews was probably written before the

destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The name of the author is not given, but the person is a "brother" of Timothy (Hebrews 13:23). The setting for the book is a period when Jewish Christians underwent severe persecution from the Romans and Jews, both socially and physically. It's clear that the author was knowledgeable of the Old Testament because there are direct quotations from it as he argues the superiority of Jesus Christ and faith.

Background

Sacrifices were practiced from the earliest of times in the Old Testament. Sacrifices from the produce of the land and firstborn of the flock were offered by Cain and Abel; Noah built an altar and offered sacrifices after he left the ark. The Mosaic sacrifices were prior to Christ's

ultimate sacrifice on the Cross. Animals were imperfect sacrifices that could not completely purify and atone for the sins of the people. If they could, they would have ceased. The annual sacrifice on the Day of Atonement was a visible reminder of the sins of humanity.

The writer expressed the importance and superiority of Christ's priesthood and the New Covenant to the Levitical priesthood and the Mosaic covenant. The Levitical high priest could only enter the Holy of Holies, which was the most holy place (inner sanctuary of the temple) one day a year, the Day of Atonement, the 10th day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar (September-October). On the Day of Atonement, the high priest made reconciling sacrifices for the sins of the entire nation. The images that the writer revealed about the Day of Atonement emphasize the superiority of the priesthood of Christ.

In Chapter 9 of Hebrews, the writer explained that the *diatheke*—the Greek word for agreement, covenant, or arrangement—was placed into effect when Christ died (Hebrews 9:11–12, 24–28). The new covenant, which was initiated when Christ died, frees believers from the bondage of the first covenant. God took away the Levitical sacrificial system, which was the first arrangement, when He established the perfect sacrifice—Jesus Christ.

At-A-Glance

1. The Priesthood of Christ Is Superior (Hebrews 10:19–21)
2. The Priesthood of Christ and Our Profession of Faith (vv. 22–25)
3. The Priesthood of Christ and Knowledge of the Truth (vv. 26–27)
4. The Priesthood of Christ and How God Will Judge His People (vv. 28–31)

In Depth

1. The Priesthood of Christ Is Superior (Hebrews 10:19–21)

In chapters 5 through 10 of the book of Hebrews, the writer has explained that the priesthood of Christ is superior to the Levitical priesthood, which was made at Mount Sinai. The Levitical priesthood could not bring the people to perfection. There was no permanent reconciliation between the people and God through the temporary animal sacrifices. The people needed the perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ, who gave His life once to restore the people to a relationship with God. The Levitical high priests atoned for all sins of the people on the Day of Atonement. Every year, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies where he made a sacrifice for the nation's sins. A curtain prevented anyone from seeing the inner sanctuary. When Jesus died for the sins of humanity, the curtain was torn open, permitting anyone to enter the holiest of all—God's presence. The high priest was no longer required for believers to be forgiven. By a "new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20), believers can go directly to God through faith in Christ.

During biblical times, the high priest passed through a veil to enter the inner sanctuary where God's presence existed. Because of Christ's sacrificial death on the Cross, believers can now personally come before God. Christ shed His blood to give humanity the ability to come before God's presence by faith. Our High Priest is Jesus Christ, who experienced the pain, temptations, and trials that we experience as believers. By the righteousness of Christ, the Superior Priest, we can approach God with "boldness ... by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19). Through the shed blood of Christ, we can come before our Creator by faith. Have you accepted Christ by faith and experienced a relationship with God that is only available through Christ, the Superior Priest?

2. The Priesthood of Christ and Our Profession of Faith (vv. 22–25)

Through Christ, we can freely enter into the presence of God. Through faith in Christ's work on our behalf, we have "full assurance," or certainty, that our sins are forgiven. There is an allusion to Christian baptism when the writer refers to "our hearts sprinkled" and "bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:22). Because of the eternal efficacy of the blood of Christ, our consciences are cleansed. When the high priest entered the "holy place . . . He shall put on the holy linen coat . . . the linen breeches . . . a linen girdle . . . these are holy garments" and he must be cleansed; therefore "shall he wash his flesh in water" (Leviticus 16:3-4). Likewise, the believer must be cleansed before he or she can come before the Holy One. While we are declared "not guilty" because of the work of Christ, we need to cleanse ourselves daily by turning away from sin and turning to God to experience the fullness of relationship with Him. We must give ourselves completely to God and maintain a personal relationship with Jesus.

The writer encourages believers to "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering" (Hebrews 10:23). God reveals His promises and truths through His Word; thus, we must embrace God's Word and resist temptation and opposition. His promises are our treasures that we believe with a confident expectation. The foundation of our faith, therefore, is based upon the integrity and righteousness of Christ. We have hope because "God is faithful" (1 Corinthians 1:9). Although the Jewish Christians were experiencing persecution, the writer urges the believers to resist the temptation to apostasy. He wants to reassure the believers by calling them to remember, "He (God) is faithful that promised"; God will do what He has promised (Hebrews 10:23).

The writer instructs the believers to "consider"—which means to observe or contemplate—each other (Hebrews 10:24). Believers must provoke or stir up the qualities of love and good works toward each other (Hebrews 10:24). The writer knew believers could have an impact on one another by loving and doing good deeds for each other.

Because of the fear of persecution, some of the believers had stopped attending worship services; therefore, the writer encourages believers to pull together to stir up loving and active faith. The fellowship of believers is a source of encouragement; it is an opportunity to share faith and grow stronger. The writer urged the believers to get involved in encouraging or "exhorting one another" with the truth (Hebrews 10:25). The fellowship of believers promotes accountability; it is the opportunity to worship and pray with others. As you fellowship with the body of believers, encourage someone today!

3. The Priesthood of Christ and Knowledge of the Truth (vv. 26–27)

The writer of Hebrews reminds believers that if they "sin willfully" they deliberately reject Christ (Hebrews 10:26). It is a conscious rejection of God after receiving the truth and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The writer does not refer to an occasional act of sin. God sent Jesus to die for our sins; "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Believers should not willfully rebel against God's provisions after receiving and fully understanding the "knowledge of the truth," which is Christ's offer of salvation (Hebrews 10:26).

The consequences of rejecting God are "judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries," and there is no hope of forgiveness (Hebrews 10:27). Thus, those who reject Christ and disobey God are His adversaries. There is one certain judgment,

death and destruction, for obstinate apostates. The apostates will experience the wrath of God because there is no other help for sinners who reject their only remedy—salvation through accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

4. The Priesthood of Christ and How God Will Judge His People (vv. 28–31)

The Old Testament refers to the sin of idolatry that requires “two witnesses, or three witnesses ... (to) be put to death” (Deuteronomy 17:6). The judgment for idolatry was death by stoning, but there is a worse punishment for someone who rejects the word of Christ. If someone considers the “blood of the covenant ... an unholy thing,” the person grieves the “Spirit of grace,” the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:29). The person that rejects the Spirit of God will receive a punishment greater than a physical death.

Judgment belongs to God for “the LORD shall judge his people” (Deuteronomy 32:36). There is no other sacrifice for sin except Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross. If someone rejects God’s mercy, he or she will receive God’s judgment. The writer of Hebrews states, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31). The apostate will experience an eternal punishment from God’s hands. Believers, who have received the mercy of God through Christ, are saved and have nothing to fear.

Search the Scriptures

1. What is the “Holy of Holies” (Hebrews 10:19)?
2. What is the “new and living way” that Jesus has prepared for believers to come into the presence of God (Hebrews 10:20)?
3. Explain the difference between a “willful sin” and an “occasional sin.” (Refer to the “knowledge of the truth” and the effects of deliberately rejecting “the truth” that are discussed in Hebrews 10:26.)

Discuss the Meaning

1. How can we draw near and remain in the presence of God each day? How can we truly experience God’s presence?
2. When we accept Christ, He responds, “henceforth, I call you not servants ... I have called you friends” (John 15:15). What should be our response to Christ as believers? Does your relationship with Christ reveal that He is your friend?

Liberating Lesson

Faith is effective when we depend on God and rest in what Christ has done on the Cross. The writer of Hebrews urged believers to recognize the superiority of our faith and live in obedience to God each day. Through Christ, we have an eternal reward and significant privileges that we can experience through our new life in Christ. Through Christ, we can experience God’s presence and develop a relationship with Him. We can grow in faith and experience a deeper relationship with God when we trust and believe without doubts and concerns that the world presents. The world is temporary, but our life with God is eternal. Each day we must trust God and hold on to our faith and then share our faith with others. When we share our love for God, we can encourage others and introduce them to a new life through Christ.

Application for Activation

The world focuses on tangible rewards, promotions, and recognition with financial bonuses. The world encourages the pursuit of tangible endeavors and earthly wealth with retirement plans focused on life in the world. Retirement plans can be important, but as Christians, our focus is greater. Because we have accepted Christ by faith, we are friends of Christ with a purpose to share our love for Christ through faith. Consider local ministries that allow you to share your faith in God. Volunteer

your time to share your love for God with people who do not know Him or share your faith and encourage believers who are homebound or sick. Help others to remain faithful and experience the presence of God each day. Make a daily affirmation to share your faith. Finally, ask God for boldness to share your faith with others. God will give you the opportunity and bless your desire to be faithful.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

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Say It Correctly

Abihu. uh-BAHY-hyoo.
Nadab. NAY-dab.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

A Great Faith
(Matthew 8:5-13)

TUESDAY

A Saving Faith
(Romans 10:8-17)

WEDNESDAY

A Justifying Faith
(Galatians 2:15-21)

THURSDAY

An Examined Faith
(2 Corinthians 13:5-10)

FRIDAY

An Enduring Faith
(Romans 5:1-5)

SATURDAY

An Exemplary Faith
(1 Thessalonians 1:2-10)

SUNDAY

The Full Assurance of Faith
(Hebrews 10:19-31)

REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.: A MAN OF FAITH

WEEKLY THEME:

FAITH IS ASSURANCE

BASED ON:

Hebrews 11:1–3, 6; Psalm 46:1–3, 8–11

LESSON AIM:

By the end of this lesson, the students will:

KNOW: Discuss the meaning of faith and its implications for their lives.

FEEL: Appreciate God’s constant presence.

DO: Develop a practice of relying on God for positive change.

TARGET

The writer of Hebrews offers a definitive understanding of faith in a changing world, while Psalm 46 is a hymn of praise to God for providing refuge in times of trouble (Hebrews 11:1–3, 6; Psalm 46:1–3, 8–11).

TOOLS

Student magazines, Bibles, pencils, and writing paper.

OPEN THE LESSON

Ask your Jammers the following questions:

1. Why do you think faith is so important in the believer’s life?
2. Define faith in your own words.

REALITY CHECK

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.: A Man of Faith

The Jesse Owens Track Team was excitedly boarding the charter bus to Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s monument in Washington, D.C. It was a long-awaited trip for the 30 track members, parents, and chaperones who had worked tirelessly to get here.

Dr. Lee, the organizer of the trip, often shared his “civil rights adventures” with the team. In his deep baritone voice he would say, “I remember it like it was yesterday... I participated in the great March on Washington in 1963 and heard, in person, the famous, ‘I Have A Dream’ speech.”

Julius and Tony, the team’s track and field superstars, talked with Dr. Lee about the tumultuous

times when African Americans were not treated fairly and were not included in major sporting events. Jesse Owens, a famous African-American track and field superstar, defied all odds when he won four gold medals during the Berlin Olympics.

“I’m going to the Olympics just like Jesse Owens to break some track and field records,” Julius chuckled.

“I am too,” said Tony. “There’s no reason why we can’t. With great leaders past and present like Rev. King, Jesse Owens, and of course Dr. Lee, what’s stopping us?”

After nine hours, the bus finally pulled up to the parking lot in Washington, D.C. The team’s visit to Rev. King’s monument was a glorious day of faith.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain how you think Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. used faith during the Civil Rights Movement.
2. Do you believe that positive change can occur in the world today? Explain your answer.
3. Share about a pioneer of faith that you know of in your own life.

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES IN MY HEART

Recite this verse: “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see” (Hebrews 11:1, NIV).

WORD!

Separate the class into male and female groups. Each group will develop a song from today's key verse. Encourage Jammers to be dramatic and creative.

SIDEBAR

Faith Is Assurance

Students will visit the lives of a few faith pioneers seen throughout the Bible. They will learn what these people accomplished through faith and will perhaps increase their own faith journey.

EXPLORE THE MEANING

How to Apply Faith in All Areas of Your Life

Jammers will develop increased confidence in their lives through unwavering faith in God.

1. Resolve not to give up, no matter how bad or tough the situation.
2. Know that God is greater than any situation you may encounter.
3. Expect God to give you what you need.
4. Don't forget that God's presence is everywhere at the same time.

GOT IT!

A. Faith in Our Living God

Jammers use Word! to help them answer the questions below.

1. Describe the character of God.
 - A. God is our refuge and strength.
 - B. God is an ever-present help in trouble.
 - C. God makes wars cease.
2. Describe faith.
 - A. Faith is confidence in what we hope for.
 - B. Faith is assurance about what we do not see.
 - C. Faith formed the universe at God's command.
3. Name three things that God says about Himself.
 - A. Be still and know that I am God.
 - B. I will be exalted among the nations.
 - C. I will be exalted in the earth.

B. Dear God

Each student will write a letter to God expressing gratitude for His constant presence during difficult times. Students will exchange letters with each other to see what God has done in the lives of their classmates.

JAM SESSION

Steadfast Confidence

In Reality Check, Julius and Tony experienced faith pioneers walking by faith and receiving great benefits. Jammers will know that God's presence is still felt today—just like it was during biblical days. God's presence is consistent and forever, ready to lead and guide the believer to victory.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

JAM ON IT!

Faith Pioneers

Jammers will interview faith pioneers around them and create a notebook about these individuals to encourage them when they need it. Spend time today discussing the importance of acting on faith and activating faith by being baptized in Jesus' Name and receiving the Holy Ghost. Explain how the power to activate faith is developed by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

NOTES

Faith Is Assurance

Bible Background • HEBREWS 11:1–7; PSALM 46:1–11 | Printed Text • HEBREWS 11:1–3, 6; PSALM 46:1–3, 8–11 | Devotional Reading • PSALM 27:1–6

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: KNOW the meaning of faith and its implication for our lives; FEEL God’s constant presence; and DEVELOP a practice of relying on God for positive change.

In Focus

The students knew today’s lecture was going to be about the terrorists’ attacks on September 11, 2001, but they wondered why it was going to be discussed in their African American Studies class.

Professor Williams started the class by asking the students what they thought of the movie she assigned, “The World Trade Center.” Several students shared their critiques of the movie. When she asked what was missing, the room was silent.

Then a student asked, “Were the Black people on the board behind you also directly affected by the attacks?”

“Yes, Deshawn,” Professor Williams said. “Not only were the stories of African Americans left out of the news coverage at that time but the real life account of Jason Thomas, a former U.S. Marine who helped to rescue New York Port Authority police officers from out of the rubble, was cast as a white man in the movie. It’s as if anyone Black was scrubbed from this event.”

She told the students that over 260 African Americans died in New York; Washington DC; and Shanksville, PA on that day.

Professor Williams continued, “These stories aren’t just important for their families, and the nation at large, but for us as African Americans. Mr. Thomas had the faith and commitment to do the work he was called to do, even though it could have cost him his life.”

In today’s lesson, we learn that when we experience conflicts in life, we can trust God by faith to see us through.

Keep in Mind

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
(Hebrews 11:1, KJV)

Focal Verses

KJV Hebrews 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.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

11:6 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.

Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

46:8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

The People, Places, and Times

Sons of Korah. Psalms 42 through 49 were written by the sons of Korah, who were temple musicians and assistants. The Korahites were among the chief Levitical families; they were listed as “gatekeepers.” Korah was a Levite who led a rebellion against Moses. Although Korah was killed, his family remained faithful to God and continued to serve in His temple. King David appointed men from the clan of Korah to serve as choir leaders. Later, the choir leaders continued to serve as temple musicians for hundreds of years.

Psalms. The book of Psalms is a series of five collections: Book I (Psalms 1–41), Book II (Psalms 42–72), Book III (Psalms 73–89), Book IV (Psalms 90–106) and Book V (Psalms 107–150). Several authors wrote the collections, and some are anonymous. David wrote at least 73 psalms, and Asaph, sons of Korah, Moses, Solomon, Ethan, and Heman wrote others. Psalms was written over a period of more than 1,000 years, which included the time of Moses

(around 1440 B.C.) to the time of captivity in Babylon (around 586 B.C.). The majority of the books were written during Israel’s wilderness experience and time in Israel, Judah, or Babylon. The title “Psalms” was first used in the Septuagint. The traditional Hebrew title is *tehillim*, which means “praises” but most of the psalms are *tephillot*, which means “prayers.”

Background

The readers of the book of Hebrews knew Scripture and professed faith in Christ. Because of doubt, persecution, or false teaching, the believers, who were Jewish Christians, considered giving up Christianity and returning to Judaism. The writer emphasized the superiority of faith to encourage the Christians of the first century to stand by faith.

Christians were demoralized and discouraged because centuries of tradition were replaced with spiritual freedom based upon faith in Christ. As a result, the believers experienced the wrath of the Jewish religious establishment

because they believed in God’s greatest promise—Jesus Christ—the Messiah, who fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament. The writer wanted to prevent believers from rejecting Christianity and returning to Judaism.

The writer explained the superiority of faith by examples of people who demonstrated greater faith. The heroes of faith were intended to encourage the power of faith as the believers adhered to their profession of true religion. Through examples in biblical history, faith is revealed through assurance in God’s future promises with the implications that inspire believers to persevere. Through the summary of Jewish history, the heroes of faith challenge believers to grow in faith and live in obedience to God. Psalm 46, which was written by the sons of Korah—who were temple assistants—was a celebration of God’s deliverance. The psalm may have been written when the Assyrian army invaded the land and surrounded Jerusalem. As the psalm speaks to ancient Israelites, it speaks to believers today. We need not fear if we trust God. Through faith we can give thanks for God’s constant presence in our lives. Because God is with us, we can be rescued. The writer refers to a “river” (Psalm 46:4), which is the tunnel that King Hezekiah built to guarantee a continuous water supply for Jerusalem during times of war. Like the tunnel, God’s presence is constant for believers.

At-A-Glance

1. Faith Is Confidence and Certainty (Hebrews 11:1–3)
2. Faith Is Necessary (v. 6)
3. Faith Is Trust in God as Our Refuge (Psalm 46:1–3)
4. Faith Is Trust in God Whose Presence Is Constant (vv. 8–11)

In Depth

1. Faith Is Confidence and Certainty (Hebrews 11:1–3)

The writer of Hebrews begins chapter 11 with a description of faith as “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). The reality of faith is what is “hoped for.” Our prayers and hopes are based upon the promises of God. With a firm persuasion and expectation, the writer encouraged the believers to trust that God will perform what He has promised through Christ. We cannot see the future, nor do we know what will happen tomorrow, but our confidence is based upon the certainty of God’s trustworthiness. To encourage struggling believers to hold to the superiority of their faith in Christ, the writer refers the believers to the elders of the Old Testament (Hebrews 11:2). The “elders” received a “good report,” which was the evidence that they would receive the promise of participating in God’s kingdom when it arrives in its fullness. Their actions revealed a genuine faith that will bring honor to the ancient believers.

Many Jewish teachers believed the material universe was created based on God’s invisible pattern exemplified in His Word or wisdom. By faith, we believe God created everything out of nothing. Moses detailed the story of creation in Genesis chapter 1; there was a majestic display of power and purpose. With each creation, God “saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21). By faith, we believe God spoke and created the entire universe. Our faith is based upon who God is; our response should be a confident and certain hope in God because He is ever present. Do you have certain and confident faith in God?

2. Faith Is Necessary (v. 6)

Faith reveals the reality of God. “It is impossible to please God” without faith because

faith is necessary to have an active relationship with God; it is necessary to walk with God (Hebrews 11:6, NLT). By faith, we believe in God and trust with certainty the future promises that He has revealed.

The heroes of faith believed and obeyed regardless of the consequences. In the same way, we can believe with a willing trust and please God. Our steadfast confidence is based upon who God is—the creator of the universe. God will recognize and reward our faith because we “diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). By faith, we realize our own insufficiency and depend on God to work within us and through us. By faith we have confidence in the continual promises of God.

3. Faith Is Trust in God as Our Refuge (Psalm 46:1–3)

The sons of Korah were temple assistants who wrote Psalm 46. The psalmists recognized God as their source of help; they realized God’s complete power and ability to rescue His children. As believers, we do not need to fear because God’s presence is constant. God is our refuge; therefore, we can flee to Him and find security.

Life presents temporary destruction, doubts, and uncertainty, but God’s presence is constant; “therefore will not we fear” (Psalm 46:2). We can appreciate God’s constant presence because He is our mighty fortress. The earth swallowed up Korah, but the psalmists did not fear. We can be fearless with God as our present help, too. God is not a temporary resource; instead, God is our eternal refuge. The psalmists remind believers, “Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake,” God’s power is complete and victory in Him is certain (Psalm 46:3). We should not be troubled when the earth is unstable because our confidence is not found in the earth. Our confidence is based upon God, our sound eternal footing.

4. Faith Is Trust in God Whose Presence Is Constant (vv. 8–11)

The psalmist urges the believers to “behold the works of the LORD” (Psalm 46:8). Recognize the presence of God and His ability to save His children. He is the creator who cares for nature and all living things. As believers, we can trust in God’s strength and His constant presence. Those who oppose God will experience desolation and face His judgment. But believers can stand in awe of God’s power.

The psalmist encourages believers to respond with a generous heart. We can, as the psalm states, “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). Even though war, destruction, and famine are a part of the world, God is still in charge. He is sovereign. Final victory belongs to Him, and He will be exalted. Therefore, we can rest assured and know with comfort that He is Lord.

Search the Scriptures

1. How did the writer of Hebrews describe faith (Hebrews 11:1)?
2. Who received a “good report” (Hebrews 11:2)?
3. Why is faith necessary to “understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God” (Hebrews 11:3)?

Discuss the Meaning

1. The writer explains that faith is required to understand that God created the universe where nothing existed. Genesis 1 details the awesome creation of the universe that was formed by God’s Word. Faith is the beginning of our relationship with God. What qualities of faith are necessary to continue to grow and strengthen our relationship with God?
2. When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram led 250 princes against the priesthood of Aaron and Moses’ general authority, God punished the leaders by allowing their challengers to be

swallowed up by the earth. A fire consumed 250 of them. The psalmists, the sons of Korah, reiterate God's presence and encourage readers not to fear. How can we maintain a quiet confidence in the midst of economic turmoil, natural disasters, and continual wars?

Liberating Lesson

If we watch the news, listen to the radio or interact with others on social media, we hear about the current state of the world. The pandemic has devastated communities in different ways. Many people are homeless, unemployed, or on the verge of both. Natural disasters occur, and the number of fatalities grows. War and destruction are continually reported by the news. Peace seems impossible. While positive change seems nonexistent, we must not lose hope. God is ever present. If we trust God, we will be rescued, and change will occur through God's strength. We can rely on God for positive change as we realize our faith will be tested. How has your faith in God become stronger or weaker in light of world events, catastrophes, and unrest? How much do you think the world dismisses the constant help of God as a result of abundant negativity, catastrophe, and unrest?

Application for Activation

To remain faithful with steadfast confidence and certainty, we must keep our eyes on God through continual prayer. We must remain hopeful for positive change, as we believe that God is in control. We can have faith in God's constant presence even today because we know He is our refuge in times of trouble. Make a commitment to regularly attend Bible study and Sunday school to increase your awareness of God's power in troubling times. Join ministries that actively build the community and encourage people who are suffering or do not know God. Allow God's presence to be evident through your actions and words.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

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Say It Correctly

Abel. **AY**-buhl.
Cain. **KAYN**.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

The Trusting Child
(Mark 10:13–16)

TUESDAY

The Trust of the Weak
(2 Chronicles 14:2–12)

WEDNESDAY

The Prayer of Trust
(Psalm 3)

THURSDAY

The Security of Trust
(Psalm 4)

FRIDAY

The Confidence of Trust
(Psalm 27:1–6)

SATURDAY

The Patience of Trust
(Psalm 27:7–14)

SUNDAY

The Certain Refuge
(Hebrews 11:1–3, 6; Psalm 46:1–3, 8–11)

Notes
