

# UNDERSTANDING FAITH SERIES

## DEFINITION OF FAITH

Heb. 11:1-3 *Now faith is the assurance (some bible translate it as substance) of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old received divine approval. By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear.* Heb. 11:1 is the only definition of faith that the bible gives. The bible does talk a lot about faith but it's the only definition that explains what faith is. You cannot develop your faith unless you understand the concept of faith and what it actually covers.

Some of the English translations define faith as the substance. The word *substance* is actually not a noun in the Greek New Testament. The word *substance* in the Greek is *hupostasis*, which is actually a participle. A participle describes a position or a state of being. And here it describes faith not just as a substance. It is describing faith as a state of being. There are certain things that require the exercise of faith in our lives. In fact the New Testament in Greek translate faith as a substantiating or the substantiation the causing of some thing into a substance. Faith is substantiation or the substantiating of things that are hoped for. That describes faith as a movement rather than a substance. And that should be the way we understand faith. But the emphasis in the bible speaks about faith as a condition and a movement and state of being. Being a state of being you can move out of it from time to time. Like running is a state of being. When I say that he is running, I am describing a person in a state of running. I am describing a movement that is taking place. When I use it as a noun I will say the run was marvelous. Its different since I am describing a race which makes the word run into a noun. The word substance describes not just a noun form. Its actually talking about a process. Faith is a process of being that takes place continually. It's a process of substantiating things that are hoped for into the realm of reality.

Heb.11: 1 *for the evidence of things not seen.* The word *evidence* conveys a very

dormant personality. The word evidence does not convey the fullness of what the Greek word actually conveys. The word evidence is another Greek word, which is used to refer to a reproof or a correction. The word *elanchos* is a noun. In its verb form it is *elancho*. The verb form is a word that is used for rebuke. It carries more than just evidence. It is not just the presentation of an evidence for somebody. I can say, "I can give you evidence." But if I say, "I give you a rebuttal," that describes the character of a counterargument. The rebuttal contains evidences and facts to prove you wrong, like in a debate. Team A and team B will debate over certain issues. Team A will present certain points. Team B will present certain points. But as they present their points they will contradict their opponents' points; they will try to prove their opponents' points wrong with facts. And they will present a rebuttal. This speaks about strong action than just evidence.

Lets look first at the word evidence as it is used. The word *elanchos* is used in II Timothy 3:16 *All scriptures is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness.* Reproof is that word *elanchos*. When you reprove somebody you are using evidences in an argumentative form to bring down, to pull down the wrong theories that people are having and to present the true facts and evidences. So the word *elanchos* present not only the elements of bringing the facts to a person, but it presents the concept of pulling down those false facts and then bringing in the evidence. That will be a true rebuttal.

The word *elanacho* which is the same root word in its verb form is used in the book of Titus 1:9 *He must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it.* In the Old King James it translates to reproof or to rebuke. Here it is translated as *confute*. Verse 13 *This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke (elancho) them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.* If we try to put the word *evidence* here it does not carry its meaning. *This testimony is true. Therefore evidence to them sharply.* It does not convey the meaning.

You can see how Heb. 11:1 the meaning has been weakened by its translation of evidence. We understand the scholars' struggle to convey the concept. Titus 2:15 *Declare these things; exhort and reprove (elancho) with all authority.* Rebuke with all authority. So the word *elanchos* speaks about the rebuttal. It carries a weight of authority. It carries the strength of tearing down facts and theories that are wrong

and replacing them with the truth.

Look at Heb. 11:1 *Now faith is the assurance (substantiating) of things hoped for, the conviction (rebuttal) of things not seen.* In other words the spiritual realm, which is the invisible realm moves into the natural realm and it rebukes the things that are. It places a rebuttal against the things that are seen and the things that are temporal. The existence of things that are touchable, feel-able and see-able. It crushes against all these things and tear them down. It rebukes all those things that are against God's Word. It comes from the spirit realm. It is a rebuttal of or from the spiritual world. And it moves into the natural world with great force and authority tearing down things that are seen, replacing them with the truth and with the things that are not seen. So to exercise faith is a position of being or it is an active move of flowing along with the things of God. It is not just a dormant substance that comes into the heart, which you may have received by just reading that verse on the surface.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. There is an element of truth in that translation but it does not bring the full meaning of the verse in Greek. It is not the substance. It is the substantiating of substance, the action that brings that substance into reality. It is a position a state of being, of bringing in the substance. Therefore it's another mystery. See it says *by faith we understand.* We could rephrase Heb 11: 1 as *Faith is the state of substantiating things hoped for, a rebuttal to the things that are seen by the things that are not seen.* In that position or in that place that God has placed us in we can move and understand the things of the Word. It is only in that position of knowing that things that are not seen are brought into the realm of the things that are seen that you understand things by faith. In that position you understand that the world was framed by the Word of God. It's the Word of God that rebukes the things that are not in line with His written Word. There are many areas you could step on that position.

It's just like a run. When you are running there are many speeds that you can run in. Sometimes you slow down because of physical exhaustion. Some times you slow down because you are maintaining your pace. You want to finish the race. You don't want to consume all your energy before the end of the race. So there are

many speeds. In the same way as you substantiate the things of the spirit realm into the natural, there are different degrees of doing it. The bible uses all these words for faith; little faith, strong faith, great faith, growing faith. All these words describe faith. If you understand faith is a position of being and doing, then you can understand how when Peter was walking on water in Matt. 14. I believe that when he was walking on water faith was being exercised. But as he was walking on water he saw the waves coming suddenly his thoughts went into that area he was no more in a position of substantiating his faith and entertained the possibility of drowning. That was when he started drowning. How can it happen so fast? If great faith is a substance it takes time for the substance to diminish. But because faith is a state of being, that position is maintained from the spirit realm. We see how we can stop and come out of that position instantly. And we can go back into that position instantly. And you can compromise in that position from time to time. It is a substance no doubt but the emphasis on the teaching on faith in the New Testament is on the state of being. If Peter had great faith walking on water where did the substance go? But if faith is a position of being then we understand that he moved out of that position and straight away started drowning. So faith is the position of bringing a substance into being.

And I requires certain evidence. For example what is the evidence of a person running. No. 1 the speed of the person's movement. No. 2 a position or posture. Third 3<sup>rd</sup> is the movement. So there are signs of a person running. There are signs and evidence of a position of faith. Things like your confession, your thought life reveals your position, whether you are in a position of substantiating or not. And the reason why we cannot understand this area is people don't realize as a position you can get out of it very fast. You may say I have exercised faith and I can last for years. No sir. It's a position so every day you have to renew it. You can move out of it tomorrow.

Lets see some examples of what it means to have little faith or great faith. Notice the difference. Lets look first in the gospel of Matthew verse 30-31 *But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out His hand caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?"* His position had diminished until his position and action of substantiating the miracle was affected. What was wrong? He put his eyes in verse 30 on the wind. He saw, he was afraid, and he cried. That produces little faith. The

reason why we touch on this area is sometimes when I converse with people, I found that even though they have gone through faith teaching they don't understand faith. They can talk faith and still have fear. See if you move out of that position you will start to fear. Faith means that you position yourself not to look at the natural anymore. Faith means that I position myself, I lock myself to only look into the spirit world and bring it into the natural world. See the bringing it into the natural world is like taking it from the spirit realm and speaking it as a rebuttal to the things that are. This is why we confess what we believe and not what we see. The confession becomes a rebuttal to the things that are. The things around you may say you got problems, you got sicknesses but the things of the spirit says you are healed by His stripes; every mountain shall move, all things are possible to those who believe. And you come into this realm and you speak to the mountain is like a rebuttal to the things that are in existence. To exercise faith you must never be moved by things that are seen. The moment you move out of the position you consider it little faith or sometimes no faith.

At one time the disciples had no faith. Mark chapter 4:36 onwards *And leaving the crowd, they took Him with them just as He was, in the boat. And other boats were with Him. And a great storm of wind arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?" And He awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?"* See faith is a position that is inside. You have taken and locked yourself into that position. And from that position seeing the things that are in the spirit world you turn around to the things that are seen and you rebuke it because its not in line with the spirit world. Notice that when Jesus turned around at the storm He did not say what He saw. He said what He wanted. Jesus did not look around and say this is a great storm. He didn't confess what He saw. He turned around and said what He wanted. He saw in the spirit realm, peace and calmness. So He rebuked it because it was not in line with what He saw. Faith is a rebuttal from the spirit realm. Jesus is definitely one who looks at circumstances. Then He said to His disciples in verse 40 how is it that you have no faith. They were not even in the position to contact the spirit realm.

Imagine that this is in the spirit realm and this is a boundary line between the spirit realm and the natural realm. Faith moves into the position in between. This is

possible for man was created with the ability to move in the spirit and the natural. So faith positions itself in between. It touches the spirit realm and begins to form and move the natural realm according to the spirit realm. Faith is the mediation factor. Substantiating of the things of the spirit into the natural realm. The disciples didn't position themselves here. The disciples moved out of this line and on this side where there is no faith. Sometimes they position themselves on this section of faith very weakly. You could grab this state of believing weakly or you could grab it strongly. As a result of that little faith, you can't solve or overcome the circumstances. In this particular case in Mark 4 the disciples were completely on this side of no faith.

The problem is that Christians were not taught the Word of God and the concept of faith. They were also people who live in this realm. In this realm you are subject to the things around you. The things around you will affect you. You are a victim of circumstances. You go by what you see. It's a very sad state of being. The disciples in the boat saw the storm, saw the wind, saw the waters coming into the boat. They were completely subjected to circumstances and they were victims of circumstances. Sometimes Christians think that they have gone through the foundation of faith. Then they forget it and they began to go back to the natural. You see the world is pulling you to see things that are in the natural. When you start moving in that natural realm your faith began to weaken.

This is why when we fellowship together I am very careful in what I say. For example we knew that God is going to cause this church to grow. But we have been going steady for the past 3 years. Sometimes people will come and say well there doesn't seem to be that amount of people yet. When we moved into the Federal Hotel a bunch of us moved in with about three quarters of the room still empty. The church members can say what they want but if the leaders start talking the same way - finish. But I have to keep seeing in the spirit world. We were reaching into the spirit world and confessing ourselves in. For one moment I cannot even come down into the natural and see and speak about it. We do not deny the facts but we are denying the right of the facts to continue to exist, and that's the world of a difference. Christian Science denies the existence of material form. For example Christians Science tells you that sickness must not exist. It's only in the mind. That's the wrong doctrine. We don't deny the sicknesses. But we deny the right of sicknesses and diseases to continue to exist in our bodies. That's the difference.

So we need to train a group of people. Think about the impact that we will have if we get into unity in the spirit world. When we move into the spirit world and we say thank God we got a hundred thousand souls. What are we doing? We are substantiating souls. But the moment you move out of that position and start talking in the natural you have cut off that substantiating. So we need to train ourselves in that area. It is the same with finances. It is the same with winning souls. It is also the same with building a ministry of God. If we have ever done with what we see we would have never done anything. Each step takes faith. Each step takes a view of the spirit world. The most important is that you must see the spirit world correctly. Get into that realm and know what God's plan is. Then come into the natural world and go ahead. God will back it up with all of His resources.

Think about man of God who had lived in the bible times, Noah. Nobody had seen rain up to that time and yet Noah was building a big project an ark. Think about the mockery people have made about him. Spending his whole life building the ark while the others were doing other things. Hebrews 11 tells us he was warned of things to come things that are not seen and he moved. See faith is a movement. He was moved by what he saw in the spirit world. Whether it is your finances or any areas, we must go on to despise to reject all evidences in the natural realm that are against God's Word. If you want to exercise perfect faith it's a position of being. You maintain your position. Come what may you maintain the position. If you maintain that position some thing has to break through.

God didn't look out into the darkness of the world in Genesis 1 and said its dark out there. In the book of Genesis they didn't translate it with impact and power. Actually in Genesis 1 it is "light be". There was no "let" in the Hebrew. The word *let* weakens it. God was not saying light you can come in now. God spoke what He wanted. He rebuked the darkness by saying what He wanted in the spirit realm. He was substantiating so He said "light be". He says to the firmament, "firmament be separated" the word *let* is not in the Hebrew at all. We are learning to operate like God. 10 years ago we visualize what we have today. But 10 years ago when we visualize all those things people thought we were crazy. But today we have every thing we visualized 10 years ago. Now we are visualize things 5 to 10 years ahead. We are determined people. If you are willing to lay down your life to bring the

spirit realm into the natural people may laugh but it will still come to pass. Faith is the substantiating of things hoped for. The things that are hoped will substantiate it. Some people have hope but they don't know how to substantiate it. One evidence of that is you can see them always looking at the natural. You can keep looking at the natural and in 10 years' time you will remain where you are.

We started in the seminary we had a whole bunch of seminarian students. All of us started the same - nothing. But where we are today in fellowshiping with them, I see that what we are today was what we had visualized 10 years ago. Some who had no vision looking at the circumstances are the same. Wouldn't it be dangerous if you don't have a vision 10 years from now? Without a vision the people of God perish. We have to have a vision to substantiate the things of the spirit realm into the natural realm. See people either talks in the natural realm or in the spirit realm. I like it when people talk in the spirit realm. I can't stand it sometimes when people talk in the natural realm. They say, "But we must tell the truth." Yes the problem is that's the only thing that they are talking about, the natural realm. And the devil would like you to do that. If Jesus talked in the natural all the time He would not have been able to do His ministry. To Jairus He said fear not. He released faith. The news came that the daughter had died. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life." He speaks forth what He wants.

Now we have seen 2 examples of how when Peter moved out of that position automatically the faith diminishes and he may even reach a part of no faith or little faith. The opposite of it is found in Matt. 8:10 *Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith.* What does Jesus mean when He said great faith? Look at the centurion. The centurion said Lord I don't need you to come to my house. Just say the word and it shall be done. That is great faith. You could move in the spirit realm without any problem.

Look at Matt. 15:28 Jesus said *O woman great is your faith. Be it done for you as you desire.* The woman wanted deliverance for her daughter Jesus said its the dispensation of the Jews but she persisted.



Look at Rom. 4:20 *No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God.* The previous verse says his body was dead, Sarah's womb was dead. If Abraham had looked at the circumstances there will be no Jewish race today. There would be no Isaac from which the Jewish race came forth and that's a miracle child. The bible describe it as strong faith. So faith by its many positions and nature has to be the ability to focus on the unseen realm without being moved by the natural realm at all, And if a group of people could get into that faith level God will move great things.

The opposite of walking by faith is also called walking by sight. II Cor. 5:7 says that *we walk by faith and not by sight.* It gives you the opposite of walking by faith. The opposite of walking by faith is walking by sight. We could also define walking by faith, walking by what you believe and not by what you see. Walking by faith is walking in the unseen realm. Walking in the realm beyond sight. So we have to put on our socks as we look into the new things that God will help us to do. And why do we want to exercise our faith into that realm? If one person or one minister begins to raise the dead it inspires hundreds of others to do it. When anyone in the body of Christ moves into a higher realm the impact is felt by breakthroughs in the whole body. For example if the anointing of God starts moving in one part of the body the faith will affect the other parts of the body. For example if the largest church in Malaysia is only about 10 000 in number, then suddenly somebody move into a hundred thousand members realm, what will it do to the rest? It will give them the faith that this is possible. It has an invisible influence throughout the whole body of Christ. So for that reason every victory by any member of the body of Christ in this world is in a sense a victory for the whole body of Christ because it began to stir them up to a higher level of faith. We need to stir our faith.

We need to understand the concept of faith. Faith means that you determine never ever again to move by what you see, to go by what you see, to walk by what you see. It's in the spirit realm hanging on to it. When Cho Yonggi built his first building, it was an oversized building. It was built with funds from Christ For The Nations. He preached to a couple of old ladies. The church was 90% empty. He had to exercise his faith. But it reached a certain stage where I call a break-even time. In exercising faith there is a level where you break even. For example if you are believing God against a sickness, when you exercise faith you know the sickness is conquered and the rest is recovery along the way. See faith has a rebuttal of the

natural realm and then the natural realm flows along with the spiritual realm. It is important for us to understand the concept of faith in the bible. Faith is a choice that I know it and never to live in the natural realm but to live in the spirit realm. And not to moved by the things around me or by the things that are seen but to be moved motivated only by the things that are not seen. So that's the introduction of the concept of faith. We will move more into that to see how the substantiating have to move down into the rebuttal and the various ways that we release our faith in God.