

Faith That Pleases God - I

Introduction and Review

- The last 3 weeks we have observed the faithfulness of four believers living & working in a hostile environment.
- Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego resolved as teenagers not to compromise & they were faithful to God until the end.
- Today we'll consider others who learned to live by biblical faith & look at their lives from the NT perspective.

I. Biblical Faith Described (v. 1-3)

A. Involves the future & the invisible (v. 1)

Faith involves "things hoped for" & "things not seen."
*"ὑπόστασις" can be interpreted subjectively as assurance or objectively as substance. "ἔλεγχος" can be interpreted subjectively as conviction or objectively as evidence/proof.
Biblical faith accepts what is promised by God as real even though it is in the future & invisible!*

B. Involves obedient people (v. 2)

Saints in the past (OT) proved that it is possible to live by biblical faith. They received approval from God in scripture.

C. Embraces God as the Creator (v. 3)

All believers whole-heartedly accept God as the Creator without any doubts. Though we were not present physically at the beginning, we accept creation as objective reality because God establishes it as truth in scripture (2Tim. 3:16).

II. Biblical Faith Exemplified (v. 4-7)

A. Faith in sacrificial worship (v. 4)

*Abel was commended as a righteous man by God. Both Abel & Cain knew what God expected in sacrificial worship (Gen. 4:3-5). But only Abel willingly obeyed God by faith without compromise & regardless of the level of sacrifice. Abel still speaks today as a witness for this kind of faith in worship.
By faith, we must be willing to worship the Lord the way He prescribes in scripture regardless of what other people & churches are doing. We must obey even if it results in rejection, hatred & even retaliation as with Abel.*

B. Faith in daily lifestyle (v. 5-6)

*Enoch "walked with God" in a perverted time (Gen. 5:21-24) = lived by faith; faith in raising his family, job, etc. for 365 years. He believed that God exists (v. 6a), he believed God rewards those who seek him (v. 6b), he had close fellowship with God (v. 6b – draws near; Gen. 5:24), he was commended by God (v. 5b), he was taken to heaven without natural death (v. 5a). **By faith, we must be willing to please God & obey Him in our personal lives regardless of level of depravity in which we live (Jn. 14:15).***

C. Faith in times of pending judgment (v. 7)

*Noah was also a righteous man who had close communion & fellowship with God (Gen. 6:9). He believed God's warning about the flood even though he had never seen rain or this kind of boat and by faith he responded in obedience. He endured the ridicule, opposition & rejection from people; securing materials, the hard-work, lack of help, building by God's details for 100+ years. God's word was all that Noah needed to take action. The ark (God's means of deliverance) is a picture of Jesus Christ: those in Christ are righteous & safe; those outside of Christ are condemned to destruction (v. 7b). **By faith, we must be willing to obey the word of God in redemptive ministry through long periods of opposition & hard work (Mt. 28:20b).***

ILL: A good coach instructs & practices with his team so that the team knows what the coach expects of them. And the coach is **pleased** when the team trusts his judgment & executes plays & principles they have been **taught** regardless of the outcome of the game.

APPL: The same is true with us spiritually between the believer & God our Father. He has given His word to teach, reprove, correct, train, warn, guide... He expects us to trust His judgment & obey Him by faith and God our Father is very pleased when we do so because this is the kind of faith that pleases God!

CONCLUSION

So then my brothers & sisters we learned from Abel to **worship** the Lord the way He prescribes in scripture regardless of what other people are doing. We learn from Enoch to obey God in our **personal lives** regardless of the level of depravity around us. And we learned from Noah to obey the word of God in **redemptive ministry** regardless of the length of time, difficulty of work or opposition. By faith, we have trusted Jesus to save us from eternal punishment. Now by faith we must trust the Lord to take care of us just as He did Abel, Enoch & Noah. Are you **worshipping** today by faith or popularity? Are you living your **personal & family life** by faith or compromise under pressure? Are you eagerly **servicing the Lord in ministry** by faith or have you compromised because the work is too hard, taking too long & you see no results? I hope your answer is I walk by faith not by sight & trust the Lord until I die!

If you are not a Christian, then faith is where new life begins for you. In order to become a Christian you must first believe that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior that has come into this world to live a perfect life for you & die a substitutionary death for your sins. By faith, if you will trust Jesus as Savior, He will save you today...

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