



Faith

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WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IN WITHOUT EVER HAVING SEEN IT?

## The POINT >

We can confidently trust in what God says and does.

### > HEBREWS 11:1-6

<sup>1</sup>Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen. <sup>2</sup>For by it our ancestors won God's approval.

<sup>3</sup>By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

<sup>4</sup>By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was approved as a righteous man, because God approved his gifts, and even though he is dead, he still speaks through his faith.

<sup>5</sup>By faith Enoch was taken away, and so he did not experience death. **He was not to be found because God took him away.** For before he was taken away, he was approved as one who pleased God. <sup>6</sup> Now without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.



# THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

## FACT:

A gullible person is easily deceived or persuaded. By the way, did you know that baby carrots are just normal carrots cut smaller?<sup>1</sup>



## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // SALVATION

No amount of good works can save a person, and Jesus' paying the penalty for our sin is the only way to be reconciled to God.

It's difficult to know what to believe anymore. The Internet and social media are filled with "news" about all sorts of things we're interested in: our favorite celebrities and sports teams, fashion and electronics, and politics and medical treatments. Every writer or vlogger presents their take as being absolutely true.

The truth is there's all sorts of misinformation floating about in Cyberland, and it's difficult to know what to accept. Many people see faith as jumping blindly into something we want to be true. However, this simply isn't the case. It's much more. We aren't called to blind faith. Instead, we are to give serious consideration to the object of our faith. Throughout Scripture, we see who God is and the ways He relates to His people. And in Hebrews 11, the author captured the essence of faith in a single chapter. We see individuals whose faith was grounded in a loving God who is perfectly faithful and never changes.

Faith isn't believing something without substance. Hebrews 11 shows us real examples of people who faced overwhelming situations, but still lived by faith founded on our eternal God.

## HEBREWS 11:1-3

**1** Who or what do we tend to put our faith in besides God?

**2** What helps you have faith in God even though you can't see Him?



*Cain's offering was a ritual, not a true act of faith and worship, and it simply didn't mean much to him—therefore, it didn't mean much to God. #BSFLHolyVocab*

## HEBREWS 11:4

**3** What's the relationship between faith and genuine worship?

**4** What are some daily practices that strengthen your faith?

**5** How can the ways you live out your faith affect others?

## HEBREWS 11:5-6

**6** What are the challenges of living by faith? The rewards?

**7** Why is faith a necessary element for a relationship with God?

**8** What does it look like to please God with our lives?



# LIVE IT OUT



## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // SALVATION

*No amount of good works can save a person, and Jesus' paying the penalty for our sin is the only way to be reconciled to God.*

Throughout the history of Israel, many believed a person received God's approval by living in obedience to the law. However, this is not the case. Because it was impossible to completely obey the law—after all, it addressed not only our actions, but even our thoughts and motives—the law never made anyone right with God. Instead, it pointed out how sinful we are. Only Jesus fulfilled the law in every sense. Therefore, faith in Him is the only way we will find favor with God.

## > CHRIST

Faith is, essentially, trusting in Jesus in a way that leads to obedience.

**9** How would you describe your trust in Christ?

**10** In the past, how have you demonstrated that you trust Him? How have you failed to trust Jesus?

**11** How will you live this week to show your trust in Jesus?

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

### SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY  
& WORLD



## > COMMUNITY

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Because God is faithful and trustworthy, we are called to reflect this in the ways we live.

**12** Do you think people see you as faithful and trustworthy? Why?

**13** When is it difficult to live in ways that others would trust us?

**14** How is God calling you to be faithful to the people in your life?

## > CULTURE

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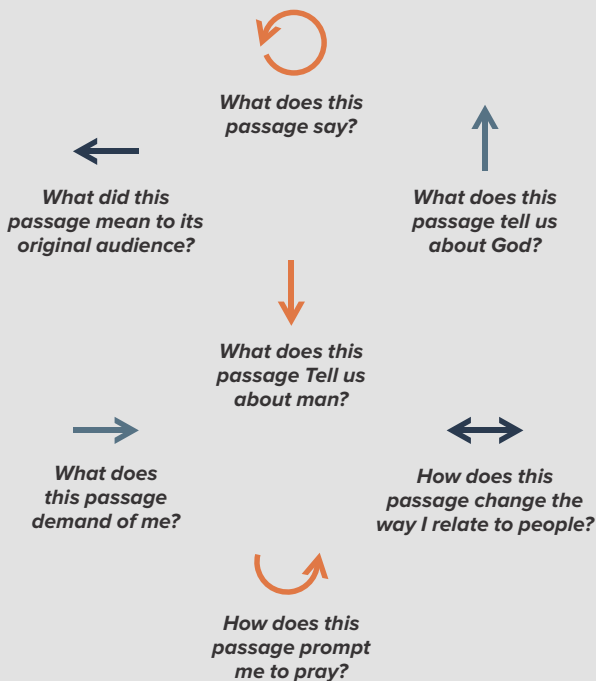
We are called to express our faith.

**15** As you live in obedient faith, others will take notice. Ask God for opportunities to share with someone why you believe in Him and choose to live by faith in Christ.

# DAILY DEVOTIONS



## The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



## Day One **JAMES 2:14**

When we as Christians share our faith, we're going to receive all kinds of responses. And in America today, though we're no longer the "Christian" nation we once were, many people still see themselves as being close to God. When asked about matters of faith, one of the most common responses is—I'm close to God because I believe in Him. The problem is that simple belief isn't what it takes to live in a relationship with God. True faith isn't a matter of our thoughts or beliefs. It's a conviction deep down in our hearts that affects all of life. Just like counterfeit money, which looks pretty good on the surface, but when you examine it more closely, it's worthless; faith without works is a sham and worth absolutely nothing. The one who possesses counterfeit faith may believe it's real, but when he tries to cash it in, he'll find out the truth. Real faith—the kind that saves us—always spills out into the ways we think and live.

- **How would you describe real faith that saves?**
- **Why do so many people believe counterfeit faith is real?**

## Day Two

# JAMES 2:15-17

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There’s a lot of Christian lingo we use, but which isn’t necessarily worth a whole lot. For instance, when a friend tells us she’s going through a difficult time, we may say something like, “Just let go and let God.” Or maybe we’ll say, “New levels—new devils” (i.e., because God is building you up, you’re going to face increasing difficulty). Or, perhaps most commonly, “I’ll pray for you.” In a certain sense, these all have a seed of truth. However, when we quote the clichés without real thought or intent, they don’t mean anything at all. And when we commit to praying, we’d better not forget. Further, when we hear of a friend’s need, real faith moves us to ask ourselves not just how we can pray, but how we can meet the need in a real way.

- **What are some common Christian phrases you hear people use? What do they really mean?**
- **How will you put your faith into action this week?**

## Day Three

# JAMES 2:18-20

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Believing in God is important. However, in and of itself, belief isn’t nearly enough. Even the demons believe. After all, they lived in the presence of God, and they know the truth about Him. However, they don’t love the truth, and they certainly don’t live by it. The demons’ response to God is to tremble before Him. They know His power and they know of the judgment that’s been pronounced against them. Still, they don’t love Him. We’d likewise do well to recognize God’s power. Counterfeit demonic faith will never reconcile us to God or save us from judgment. True saving faith isn’t simply intellectual knowledge of God, but trust that leads us to live for Him and His purposes.

- **Why do the demons tremble at the thought of God?**
- **How should knowing this affect the ways we think about God?**

## Day Four

# JAMES 2:21-25

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The Bible is clear—we aren't saved by works, but by faith (Rom. 3:28). However, here James teaches that we are justified by works. How do we reconcile this seeming contradiction? Imagine you're at the doctor's office, and you hear the doctor tell a patient in a room to your left to stay off his feet for at least six weeks. Then to your right, you hear the doc say to walk at least two miles a day. These statements seem contradictory—that is, until you realize one patient has a broken foot, and the other needs to lose 50 pounds. In Romans, Paul spoke to people who believed they had to work for their salvation. Here, James spoke to people who thought that, because they'd believed in God, how they lived didn't matter. Just like Abraham's faith moved him to offer his son as a sacrifice to God and Rahab's trust in God moved her to put her life on the line, true belief will always move us to live in obedience to God's commands.

- **How are faith and works connected in the life of a Christian?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **How was real faith proven in the lives of Abraham and Rahab?**

## Day Five

# JAMES 2:26

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When God created Adam, He formed his body from the dust of the ground, but at this point, Adam still wasn't alive. Only when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life did Adam become a living being (Gen. 2:7). Too many people today think that because they believe in God, they possess living, saving faith. However, this simply isn't the case. A body which is alive actually moves and breathes, eats and talks, and in the same way, living faith is active. A faith that does nothing isn't alive. But when God breathes into our spirit and faith comes alive, it moves us to live in obedience to Him and love toward others.

- **How do you know if a person is dead versus alive?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **How do you know if faith is dead versus alive?**