



[Leader Note: I shared a story about how I went skydiving and how I put trust in a stranger. Tell your own story, if you've done this. Otherwise, share a personal example of a time you had to put your trust in stranger.]

[Share your skydiving experience. Talk about how you had to trust the person who packed the parachute, even though you never saw them do it. Relate this to how faith in God often requires us to trust in what we cannot see.]

We put our faith into things that we do not fully know, fully understand, or fully control all of the time, like having faith that other people will stay in their lanes while driving, or that the airplane pilots on flights we're on know what they are doing and where they are going.

We put our faith into so many things that we don't even fully think about and give so much trust. I remember the first time my friend put his Tesla on auto pilot on the freeway and it was so exhilarating and weird, and wild, and freaky and exciting.

When we learn to put our faith into Jesus in the same way, we experience the same feelings. But some of us put more faith in Elon Musk than we do Jesus.

It seems so difficult to put our faith, true faith, in Jesus sometimes. Have you ever thought about why?

Hebrews 11:1 - Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.

I have noticed that students like yourself may be spiritual but not necessarily religious, believing in something but not always Jesus. They struggle with faith when they haven't seen God move personally.

Our culture promotes skepticism, viewing faith as outdated or a crutch. But I say thank God it's a crutch because I am a broken person and I need something to lean on to live in this life and I believe the best thing we can lean on is Jesus.

Have you ever struggled to believe in something because you couldn't see the results? What makes trusting God harder than trusting things we can see?"

John 20:29 - "Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'"

So, what do we do with this?

I want to remind us and challenge us when we talk about this idea of faith. Whether you feel like you have had faith in Jesus for a long time, or maybe you wouldn't even say that you have any faith whatever, or perhaps you are interested in it and just kind of checking things out, I think there are things we need to keep in mind when diving into our faith, that if you can get right now when you are in junior high and high school, it will only help you later.

Tonight, we are going to read through Hebrews chapter 11, and this is like the "Hall of Fame of Faith" in the Bible. It lists people we read about in the Bible and how they showed their faith in a mighty way that we still remember to this day. And as we look at them, we can learn about our faith through their faith. Let's jump in:

Hebrews 11:1-3 Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. 2 Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation. 3 By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.

- **Faith is Trusting in What You Can't See**

Faith is like believing in something without needing to see it first. Think about Wi-Fi; you can't see it, but you trust that it's working when you're online. Faith in God works the same way. Even when you can't see what God is doing in your life, you trust that He's there and working for your good.

[Adjust my following illustration to match your personal story.]

My oldest son is funny man. He is a little guy, only seven, but he has big emotions. Whenever he doesn't get his way, he is overly dramatic to the point that it is comical. Just the other day he wanted to start a fire in the backyard. That's right, a fire. At 7:10 am. Dude, I just got up and have not had my coffee yet and he asked me to start a bonfire in the backyard, like chill. Not relaxed, not demure. You know?

And I told him no, we are not doing that, and he flung his head back and shot his arms up in the air and goes, "This is the worst day of my life!"

Then the next day, he wanted to do yard work, at 630am. My kids wake up really early, full of energy by the way, and I told him we would do it when it gets later so the neighbors don't hate us, and again, he flung his head back, threw up his arms and yelled, "This is the worst day of my life."

In the moment, not funny, but looking at his reaction when he doesn't know all the great things that I, as his father, provide for him, is funny.

He is seven, so he doesn't fully understand that I'm the one who works so he has food, a house to live in, clothes to wear, money to do fun things, provide the bed he sleeps on, and the air conditioning on when it's hot outside.

But the moment something doesn't go his way, he complains and throws it all away. I feel like a lot of us are like my 7-year-old when life doesn't seem to go our way and we just give up on our faith because God did not move in the ways we thought He would move.

God is often working behind the scenes, even when it's not obvious. And our faith matures when we learn to trust in God's character, not just in visible results.

2 Corinthians 5:7 - "For we live by faith, not by sight."

The next thing I want you to understand about faith is:

- **Faith is an Ongoing Journey**

Hebrews 11:8-10 - 8 It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give

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