

Faith Defined: 11:1 – 3

Faith is being sure of the unseen.

- **Some things are unseen because they haven't happened yet: "*things hoped for*"**
The promise of being in Christ's presence the moment we die
The promise of a resurrection body like Christ's glorious body
The promise of acquittal at the final judgement and a home in heaven
- **Some things are unseen because they cannot be seen: "*things not seen*"**
This is true of God, but also the whole spiritual realm. Yet I am sure that God exists, that angels and demons exist, because God has revealed Himself and the spiritual realm in His word.

My certainty in both cases is built on the same foundation: **God has spoken, and I believe what He has said.** Though they haven't happened yet or I am unable to see them, they are realities to me, and I take all of them into account in my thoughts, words, and actions.

Only those who live by faith, and who die in faith, arrive at their heavenly reward. Have there been any such men and women who have lived and died this way? Hebrews 11 gives us a list of such people.

Faith Illustrated: 11:4 – 6

Abel (verse 4) [Genesis 4:3 – 5]

Enoch (verses 5 – 6) [Genesis 5:21 – 34]

Three times in verse 5 Enoch is said to have been "translated" or "taken." The Greek word for "translated" is *tithēmi* which means to "carry away" or to "transfer."

Pink makes the spiritual connection to Colossians 1:13 and John 5:24.

Pink emphasizes: "**God had translated him**," seeing in those words the truth that our salvation – passing from death to life, being made new creatures in Christ – is entirely the operation of God wrought in the believer, severing our affections from things on the earth, and setting our affections on things above as the experience of ***the translated life***.

The author of Hebrews concentrates on the fact Enoch did not die, in contrast to Abel who did die. The believers to whom the author was writing were dying, some by natural death, others by martyrdom. The author reminds them that God has overcome not only spiritual death, but physical death. When they die, God is able to raise their physical bodies back to life – glorified!

"Before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God"

Our sinful nature is self-pleasing and self-indulgent. "While we gratify the flesh, the blessing of the Spirit will be withheld. While our hearts are so much occupied with the concerns of earth, He will not make the things of heaven real and efficacious to us." [Pink] **Enoch pleased God because he believed God.**

"But without faith it is impossible to please him..." [verse 6]

"...the great thing God required was not attendance on outward ordinances, but the diligent seeking unto him by a whole-hearted trust." [Pink]

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8). The corruption of our nature makes it impossible for us to do anything or offer anything that is acceptable to God.

Faith rests upon the promises – the word – of God alone. And it is this word of God which creates the faith that pleases God:

"Therefore we conclude that ***a man is justified by faith*** without the deeds of the law"
Romans 3:28

"To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, ***his faith is counted for righteousness.***" Romans 4:5

In the context of Romans 3 and 4, Abraham is held up as an example of an Old Testament believer who was justified because he believed God. And his believing God pleased God.

In Hebrews 11:5, Enoch is held up as an example of an Old Testament believer who was justified because he believed God. The evidence that Enoch was justified is the fact that he was "translated." Enoch's believing God pleased God.