

# G R O W

## Get focused, Read, Observation, Worship

### By Faith – Hebrews 11:1

Who or what do you trust? What makes you trust? Is it just gut feel, past experience, or something else? Many people have performed trust falls, where you fall backwards with all your weight trusting another person to catch you and hold you up. Now, if you didn't believe the person would catch you, what would you do? You may not fall at all, you may hold some of your weight back in case they didn't catch you, or some other tempered response. But faith is trusting completely and giving yourself fully to something. This is what we see in Hebrews 11.

### GET FOCUSED

If we want to grow, we must get focused. We want to grow in faith; we want to grow in relationship with God; we want to grow in the Word. But there are many distractions, both within and without. If we're going to get the most of our time in God's Word, we must focus our hearts and minds.

### READ

If we're going to grow our faith and grow our relationship with God, we must read His Word. In Acts 17, we read about the Bereans. They were eager to learn the Word from Paul, but they didn't just take His word for what he was teaching. Rather, they diligently examined the scriptures to make sure all was true. They read and studied the Word of God because it's what truly matters.

### OBSERVATION (COMB through the text)

In this step, we want to investigate the passage, to understand its message and meaning. In addition to reading our main passage, read the verses around it to understand the **context**. Hebrews 11 is often called the "Hall of Faith" because it contains numerous examples of people who showed great faith in God. Hebrews 11:1 defines what faith is and the rest of the chapter recalls those that exemplify what faith looks like. Hebrews 10 sets up the conversation of faith. Trials and struggles are discussed in Hebrews 10 and how we are to respond. We see that faith is key to rightly respond to struggles (10:36-39).

Next, we want to **observe** the key words and phrases in Hebrews 11:1. What stands out to you? You should see these key words and phrases: assurance, hope, conviction, not seen.

To help understand the **meaning** of these words and phrases, invest in a good study Bible or utilize online tools like netbible.org. Hebrews 11:1 defines what faith is, touching on 2 important words: assurance and conviction. The Greek dictionary defines “assurance” as something that has a firm foundation. We understand the necessity of a solid foundation when building structures, and the same is true for our lives. Hope is not “que sera, sera,” whatever will be, will be. Hope is having confidence in the future or outcome because of the foundation it is built upon. In Luke 6:46-49, Jesus talks about 2 builders: one who built his house on the ground and the other who built his house upon the rock. During the dry season, their ground became very hard and it was very difficult to dig down to find rock. So, some would just build upon the ground, hoping the rains wouldn’t weaken the ground under their house. But we see this isn’t actually hope; it is foolishness. The rains do come, as they always do, and they do weaken the ground, and the house gives way and is ruined. It’s harder to dig down and find rock, but those that do can have assurance of hope, for they know the foundation will hold. Jesus draws a comparison to those that call Him Lord and obey His commands with those that call Him Lord but don’t obey His commands. We see that Jesus is only Lord when we submit our lives to Him and His ways, and when we do, we can have the assurance of hope. There may be storms and trials in life, but we have hope that God is at work for good. Ultimately, we know that our hope is eternal life, and sometimes the good comes in the next life. That’s what we see in our “Hall of Faith” examples (Hebrews 11:13-16).

“Conviction” is something proved by testing. Convictions come from confidence in something or someone because they have proved themselves. We can have conviction in God and His promises. Hebrews 11 is written for this purpose to show how God has proved Himself, time and time again. Jesus’ demonstrated His divine authority, time and time again, by casting out demons, healing disease, even raising Lazarus from the dead. You and I can have absolute conviction in Jesus, even when things are not seen. In fact, Jesus says “blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29).

So, what’s the **bottom-line**, how would you sum all this up? Faith in God is trusting Him completely and building your life on His word and ways.

## WORSHIP

So, what does it mean for our lives? How can we worship God based on this passage? We must live and walk by faith. Hebrews 11:6 states, “without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.” If we do not build our lives on God, we will not please Him and we will reap the consequences of sin (Gal. 6:7-8). So, to live by faith means that we must seek Him, because we know Him to be true and to be a rewarder of those who seek Him. Jesus promises us abundant life (John 10:10), even in the trials of life (John 16:33). Without faith and a life of faith, we will miss this abundant life and peace.