

Introduction to Hebrews 04-15-07

Hebrews 11:1, 6

1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

6 And 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.

Hebrews positively affect our prayer life because it exalts person/work of Jesus Christ, prompting us to draw near to Him. ...primary purpose of prayer.

- Connects dots between Old Testament and New Testament, focuses on faith (necessary to pray effectively) and speaks of Jesus more than any other epistle.

author, date (between A.D. 60-69) of Hebrews a mystery,

- ultimately, only Holy Spirit authorship truly matters.

Written to persecuted Jewish Christians to keep from slipping back into rites/legalism of Judaism.

- Thinking lost heritage (priests, sacrifices) by accepting Gospel.
 - Tempted go back to works-based righteousness.
- Gospel not adverse to Judaism but climactic expression of it. Luke 24:44, Hebrews 1:1-2a.
 - Jesus' eternal priesthood and sacrifice availed for sin of ALL Christians.
- Hebrews will help us connect the dots between Old Testament and New Testament to better understand gospel of grace that is received by faith not works.

Hebrews tell us all about faith—what it is, where from, what rests on, how lay hold of it, how live it out in everyday life. Hebrews 11:1

- Faith isn't being sure of all facts/evidence our senses can confirm.
 - It's awareness of invisible realities not perceived by 5 senses.
 - But being certain of what not see!....believing is seeing.
- Biblical faith is not blind faith.....no matter how sincere, faith must be rooted in reality/truth.
 - Biblical faith rooted in reality: Jesus Christ's incarnation, life, death, resurrection.
 - Biblical faith rooted in who God is and who we are in Jesus Christ

Faith is the means God determined for Christians to obtain all He makes available to them because of Jesus' atonement. Hebrews 11:6, 12:1-2

- Faith gift from God necessary to pray boldly/effectively
 - Jesus is the founder (begin) and perfecter (complete) of faith.
- If faith weak or nearly nonexistent—ask Lord to increase your faith.
 - Faith can increase when hear others praying with great faith.

- As we see Jesus' supremacy in Hebrews our faith in Him increases.

Power of faith derived from object/person faith is invested in.

- faith increases more know person and see pattern that warrants trust.
 - Biblical faith is confident trust that God is who He says and He can and will do what He promises He'll do. Hebrews 1:3

Hebrews about faith but more importantly, object of our faith, Jesus Christ.

- Hebrews speaks of Jesus more than any other epistle.
- Focuses on Jesus' character, redemptive power and absolute supremacy.
 - Superiority of Jesus Christ as a person and our priest/sacrifice.
 - Connects dots between Old Testament and New Testament.
- Hebrews positively affects prayer life because it exalts person/work of Jesus Christ, prompting us to draw nearer to Him...primary purpose of prayer.