

# Believing God

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. **—Hebrews 11:1, KJV**

Faith is believing God. The heroes of Hebrews 11 are people who believed God. They are the writer's examples to show that faith itself is not a New Testament innovation. Faith goes way back in time, claims the writer of Hebrews. There is nothing new about it at all. God hides His face in order that we might believe. He withholds the evidence of things visible that we might be persuaded by His Word alone!

Faith, then, is the long parenthesis between the undeniable appearances of God's glory. When God appears, faith is no longer necessary. There are actually times when faith is eclipsed by such a sense of the majesty and glory of God that one is temporarily without the need of faith. These are times of mountaintop experiences, such as when our Lord was transfigured before His disciples (Matt. 17:1-9).

But one is not permitted to live indefinitely on the mountaintops. Like the disciples who "came down from the mountain" (v. 9, KJV), so must we. It is in the valley that we live by the faithfulness of God, who periodically reveals Himself so we will not be swallowed up in despair.

These Hebrew Christians were witnessing a long interval. They were discouraged. They had known better days—perhaps some mountaintop experiences. They were perplexed and could not understand the utter absence of the sense of God's presence. The writer comes along and shows them that this is nothing to despise. It is an opportunity to believe.

Although faith is not a New Testament innovation, it is a New Testament norm. The Christian life is a venture of believing God. Seeing is not believing. Believing is not seeing. Faith is an inner persuasion in those who live by the integrity and

faithfulness of One whose manifested glory is worth waiting for.

In the meantime, faith accomplishes extraordinary things.

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