

NT 14 2.04

# The BIBLE PROJECT

## FAITH Hebrews 11



### **BIG IDEA 1: SAVING FAITH IS NOT BELIEVING SOMETHING CONTRARY TO REASON OR TRUTH.**

Faith does not make fake into fact.



### **BIG IDEA 2: SAVING FAITH IS NOT MERELY KNOWLEDGE.**

Facts may be believed or not but faith does not change fact. (*Noticia*) IN FACT knowledge is essential to true faith.

You can believe in gravity or not. Objects still fall and do not depend on your “belief.”  
But it does help you live if you believe in facts.  
So what does believing change that makes it **FAITH**?  
Believing without knowledge is not faith at all; it is merely credulity or gullibility.

Merely knowing something is not sufficient for a response. (I know I should lose weight ...) But knowledge is a step in the right direction. Saving faith is based on what God reveals of his will and purpose. *Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. (Rom 10.17 KJV). ... Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word [OF] (JRT) Christ. (NIV)*  
Humankind cannot respond to something or someone of which they have no knowledge. See Gal 3.2-5, Prov. 9:10b and Hos 4.6: *my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you.*

### **BIG IDEA 3: SAVING FAITH IS NOT MERE ASSENT (AGREEMENT) TO THE TRUTH OF THE FACTS. (Assensus)**

IN FACT assent is essential to true faith.



You may well agree that seeds will produce plants. That is merely recognizing the truth. People can acknowledge that smoking brings cancer, but refuse to agree that it applies to themselves.

Again such “faith” does not make something true. No amount of subjective agreement with the facts or acceptance of their truth can be FAITH. James says the devils acknowledge the truth about Jesus and they are so certain of it that they are afraid, but they do not have SAVING FAITH. (James 2.19)

For example, in Acts 24, the governor Felix, who at the trial of Paul had a knowledge of the facts, but did not agree they were acceptable. He did not assent.

### **BIG IDEA 4: SAVING FAITH IS TRUST (FIDES or FIDUCIA)**



**(Fides)** or Reliance upon or confidence in the facts which you have found to be true and to which you assent. In the memorable words of Dr. Kenneth E. Bailey all we do is like the lost sheep—accept being found.

True saving faith trusts so completely the truth of Scripture that Christ died for our sins that it causes the one who trusts to rely completely on the truth of Christ even if he risks life itself to follow Jesus.

True saving faith produces a change within the person who exercises it that the course of existence is no longer what it used to be.

Trust is the willingness to let go of self and let God's will be done.

We see this faith in Abraham who trusts God to leave Ur of the Chaldees and to accept a life that is nothing like his old life.

We see this faith in NT Saul who once persecuted Christians and then became one of them, persecuted though he himself was.

This trust is stepping out beyond what we see in order to step into the plan of God. That faith begins in the simple act of accepting God's grace by faith.

What that means is like a Christmas present. We see them under the Christmas tree. And we acknowledge that they are there. Our experience tells us to believe those wrapped boxes contain good stuff. They are GIFTS. When is faith actively engaged?

When does faith come about? \_\_\_\_\_

God provides the content of the gift – that content is \_\_\_\_\_.

He offers that content as a gift and that is \_\_\_\_\_.

And we receive the gift and that is \_\_\_\_\_.

Ephesians 2. 8-9.

And the consequence of receiving the gift is a change; describe that change: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 12. 1-2

See Ephesians 2:10; John 3.7

We get new relationships: 1 to \_\_\_\_\_

2 to \_\_\_\_\_

Augustine: I believe in order to understand: *Credo ut intelligam*. Are we more likely to discover truth by faith or by doubt? Faith opens minds, doubt closes them.

**What can a person do to “deserve” a gift?** \_\_\_\_\_

## The Triumphs of Perseverance in Faith

Paul tells us that we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor 5.7) For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last Rom 1.17.

Now Hebrews tells us about the difference between gullibility and faith: Heb 1.1.

Faith grants greater understanding, knowledge of God’s whole counsel, acceptance of God’s blessings, conquest of fear, and performance of miracles. That’s the message of Hebrews 11.

### Perseverance in Faith in the Antediluvian Era – 11. 1-7

Definition of faith Now faith is **confidence** in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

Declaration of necessity of faith: Those who come to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who diligently seek him. 11.6.

The Bible presents the existence of God as self-evident. What **evidence** is presented elsewhere that he does not exist? There are many who “believe” God does not exist? Where is their evidence? OR does it take a greater gullibility to “believe” God does not exist?

### Patriarchal Era – 11. 8-22

### Mosaic Era 11.23-31

### The rest of history 11: 32-40

### Hebrews 12: 1-2 THEREFORE...

BIG IDEA RECAP:

**BIG IDEA 1: SAVING FAITH IS NOT BELIEVING SOMETHING CONTRARY TO REASON OR TRUTH.**

**BIG IDEA 2: SAVING FAITH IS NOT MERELY KNOWLEDGE.**

**BIG IDEA 3: SAVING FAITH IS NOT MERE ASSENT (AGREEMENT) TO THE TRUTH OF THE FACTS. (*Assensus*)**

**BIG IDEA 4: SAVING FAITH IS TRUST (FIDES)**

# Desert Pete

The year is 1936

**YOU** are an exhausted, parched and desperate desert traveler. You come to Pete's well.

The following letter was found in a tin tied to an old pump on a remote desert trail:

This pump is all right as of June, 1932. I put a new sucker washer into it, and it ought to last five years. But the washer dries out and the pump has to be primed. Under the white rock I buried a bottle of water, out of the sun and corked up. Pour about one fourth and let her soak to wet the leather. Then pour in the rest medium fast and pump like crazy. You'll get water. The well has never run dry. Have faith. When you get watered up, fill the bottle and put it back as you found it for the next feller.

Would you drink the small supply bottle? and forget the unlimited supply supposedly in the well? Do you believe what he said is true? [Is that faith?]

Why might you *trust* the writer of the letter and bet your life on following his instructions? What reasons are there for trusting?

When would you know you had really trusted "Desert Pete?" Is that faith?

Does trusting the note put the water in the well or quench your thirst?

After that what would you have done?

## One more illustration of faith:

The Last Crusade is to find the “HOLY GRAIL.” This is the mythical chalice Jesus was supposed to have used at the Last Supper. “The Cup of Christ.”

Finding the Holy Grail was the object of the Arthurian quest stories. The cup was a symbol of eternal life. [We understand the “Cup of Christ” to have been communion in his blood at the Table of the Lord. But the middle ages turned it into a physical object that was lost. It became the relic of all relics.

So Indiana Jones’s father has been on lifelong “grail quest” and has compiled the book of the Quest. I would like to suggest that the quest of salvation is the subject of the Bible. Lots of plop details are not relevant to the point of this illustration.

Indiana Jones is following his father’s steps. Father and Son. Where have we seen this similarity. But the elder Jones refuses to call his son by his given name and calls him “Junior” throughout the movie even though his son hates being called that. This has a significance at the end of the movie.

They have finally located the place where they can find the grail, but it is guarded by three death-dealing obstacles. The elder Jones’s book now in the hands of the Son Indiana/Junior. To get through the trials, Indiana has to follow the Book and interpret it correctly. Sound familiar?

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade: <https://youtu.be/MxPdqbMYi8U>

So we have the three elements of faith: Notitia (knowledge), Assensus (agreement with its truth) and finally trust (fides). Each trial is a test of faith. You can see how by watching the film. The last is especially graphic—“walk by faith and not by sight.”

The fact that we have scripture and assent to its truth it is not sufficient to save us. The Devil has Scripture and knows it to be true. But he is unwilling to trust it. Faith is stepping out on the promise of God, come what may. And that is where we find that God is trustworthy.

“Indiana let it go.” <https://youtu.be/nGTEXqudVJM>

This the relational result of faith. Jones the Father calls Indiana by his given name and Indiana lets go of his quest and is saved by his father.

No one should think this is intentionally portrayed with this meaning in the film. At least I do not think so. But despite its intent, the film portrays (maybe inadvertently) spiritual truth about faith. What do you think?

# The Bible Project 2.04

Consider the following if you choose to prepare for the next class:<sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

Please **Read Acts 16 & 17, Philippians and 1 & 2 Thessalonians.** We now go on toward the conclusion of the NT with the completion of the Letters.

BY MY COUNT, WE HAVE ONLY 6 more classes after today to complete the New Testament and to review the whole BIBLE PROJECT. On the basis of our progress, I believe we will make it.

## MARKERS

- Hebrews 1      God's final Word.
- Hebrews 4      Our Great High Priest
- Hebrews 9      WithOUT the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness
- Hebrews 11     Faith Hall of Fame
- Hebrews 12     THEREFORE ... do not grow weary and lose heart.