

Readings

Scripture

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

- Hebrews 11:1 (*English Standard Version*)

Reflection

Now Faith, in the sense in which I am here using the word, is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods. For moods will change, whatever view your reason takes. I know that by experience.

- C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (p. 140)

Faith is a settled confidence that something in the future—something that God has promised—will actually happen because God will make it happen.

- *ESV Global Study Bible* (Notes, Hebrews 11:1)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

- Hebrews 12:1–2 (*English Standard Version*)

Sermon Outline

The Assurance of Faith

Hebrews 11:1

An Evergreen Faith

Brad Anderson

Our faith is anchored by the assurances that hope supplies. (Hebrews 11:1, 6:19)

How does hope supply assurances for our faith?

By directing us to what God has revealed. (Romans 1:20)

By directing us to what God has promised. (Psalm 16:8; Hebrews 6:17-18)

By directing us to what God has offered. (John 3:16-21)

Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- Take time to ask two people how they define the word “faith”. Ask someone older than you as well as someone younger than you. As you do so, listen closely to their answer. Listen for the object of their faith, “the who” or “the what” that their faith is placed in or upon. Is it an important word to them? Why? Why not? Has that always been the case for them or would they have answered the question differently at an earlier point in their life. Be prepared to give them your answer, if they ask.
- Describe the relationship between faith and hope as described in Hebrews 11:1.
- Faith has a present aspect that is related to a yet unseen reality. How does Hebrews 12:1-2 picture the unfolding dynamic of faith over a lifetime? How would you describe your race of faith presently (On Pace, Last Lap, Injured, Resting, Need New Shoes)?
- What has God revealed according to Romans 1:20?
- How do the promises of Scripture offer assurances for faith? (See 2 Corinthians 1:20 to help shape your answer.)
- Describe a present situation where God is growing your faith, where your capacity to trust is expanding. How would you describe God’s activity in that situation? Can you think of people in the Bible who experienced something similar and how God was active in their situation?