

# The Definition of Faith

*“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” ([Hebrews 11:1](#))*

The marvelous “faith chapter,” [Hebrews 11](#), is an amazing chapter. Here, faith is defined not as some intangible wishfulness but as “substance” and “evidence.” Let us look closely.

First of all, faith must have a legitimate object, nothing less than the mighty Creator by whom “the worlds were framed” (v. 3) out of nothing but His omnipotent Word.

Beyond this, faith is further defined not by what it is, but by what it does! The man of faith comes to God by “a more excellent sacrifice,” like that of Abel (v. 4), typifying the sacrifice of Christ. Faith will, like Enoch, live to please God (v. 5), and will, like Noah, prepare an Ark (i.e., do whatever necessary out of obedience to God) “to the saving of his house” (v. 7).

True faith will, like Abraham, go out as God leads, “not knowing whither he went,” even “dwelling in tabernacles” (literally “tents”) (vv. 8-9) if need be, as he looks for that city with sure “foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (v. 10). Such faith will even, like Abraham, offer up to God the greatest love and joy of his life, knowing that God will keep His Word (vv. 17-19).

Like Moses, the man of genuine faith will choose rather “to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (v. 25). Faith is even willing to be “stoned . . . sawn asunder . . . slain with the sword,” if need be, for the promises of God (vv. 37, 39).

We are saved by grace through faith, not of works ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)), but since we are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” ([Ephesians 2:10](#)), our faith should motivate us to action. “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” ([James 2:24](#)).

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Mailing du 14.11.2017

Source : <http://www.icr.org/article/10268>