

Believing IS Knowing

© Mark Beaird 5/2011

Text: Hebrews 11:1-3

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.” NIV

Just the statement, “By faith we know,” (KJV) or “Now faith is confidence,” (NIV) call us to stop and think about what is being said. Faith is essentially about belief. It is conviction about an idea.

Yet the writer of Hebrews says, “By faith we know.” And, “Now faith is confidence.” This statement is no less astounding than that which follows, “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see” (v.1).

What the writer seems to be telling us is that, faith makes the intangible tangible, the unknown known, the unseen sure. Note two key *facts* about faith found in these verses:

I. By Faith We Know Assurance in Spite of the Unseen.

A. Faith tells us there are greater things than what we can see.

The Apostle Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 2:12-14,

“What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.” (NIV)

B. Faith helps us to see beyond the invisible to what can be.

II. By Faith We Know Hope in the Face of the Unknown.

A. Faith grows out of hope. Hope feeds our faith.

In his book, *A Grief Observed*, C.S. Lewis writes, "You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a matter of life and death. It is easy to say you believe a rope to be strong as long as you are merely using it to cord a box. But suppose you had to hang by that rope over a precipice. Wouldn't you then first discover how much you really trusted it?"

B. Faith inspires us to look forward with expectation.

"Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore do not seek to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand." -Augustine.

Conclusion

There was a man who got lost in the desert. After wandering around for a long time his throat became very dry, about that time he saw a little shack in the distance. He made his way over to the shack and found a water pump with a small jug of water and a note. The note read: "pour all the water into the top of the pump to prime it, if you do this you will get all the water you need".

Now the man had a choice to make, if he trusted the note and poured the water in and it worked he would have all the water he needed. If it didn't work he would still be thirsty and he might die. Or he could choose to drink the water in the jug and get immediate satisfaction, but it might not be enough and he still might die. After thinking about it the man decided to risk it. He poured the entire jug into the pump and began to work the handle, at first nothing happened and he got a little scared but he kept going and water started coming out. So much water came out he drank all he wanted, took a shower, and filled all the containers he could find.

Because he was willing to give up momentary satisfaction, he got all the water he needed. Now the note also said: after you have finished, please refill the jug for the next traveller." The man refilled the jug and added to the note: " Please prime the pump, believe me it works"!

-Randy Leckliter - Sermoncentral.com