

Modern Faiths

Introduction. Hebrews 11 stands in the Bible as the great faith chapter. Although this chapter is primarily hortatory, still it fits logically into the argument of the whole letter. The first readers had their roots deep in history, and on that history the author bases his appeal. His appeal as it develops, however, gradually is transformed into an implicit argument: he points to men of faith in the old covenant that he may renew loyalty to the new.

In this great chapter on faith, faith is presented as the opposite of falling back; it is staying power; it is the courageous spirit that enables a man to choose hardship and duty over ease and safety. Thus in the long chronicle of heroes in the chapter, the author stresses three characteristics in the lives of men and women of faith: their unfaltering trust in God, their vision of the invisible, and their power to press on in hope.

Unfortunately, some people who say that they have "faith" actually have a modern form of faith that is seen a lot, but is not very effective. These moderns faiths do not give "assurance" or "confidence." Because of this, we need to avoid them and aim for the good kind of faith. With this in mind, let's look at the different kinds of faith.

I. ***Intellectual Faith***

- A. This is the person that believes there is a God, and the majority of people believe this is enough.
- B. But even the devil accepts God's existence (James 2:14-19). The problem with this faith is that there is no "obedience of faith" (Romans 1:5; 16:26).

II. ***Environmental Faith***

- A. To this person, appearance is the most important. This religion must be appealing, fascinating, and beautiful.
- B. The beautiful cathedrals and the elaborate ritual make people say, "I feel God," thinking that this kind of atmosphere can give religious contentment (Matthew 23:27-28).

III. ***Supplemental Faith***

- A. To supplement something means to increase, extend, or improve it. This idea has caused the birth of the social gospel (Ezekiel 33:30-31).
- B. People think that they need to help God make a religion that is relative to our generation, but it takes people further away from God (Matthew 15:8).

IV. **Economical Faith**

- A. With this kind of faith, there are no demands or hard sacrifice. This kind of faith might be precious, but it is not expensive.
- B. Religion that costs nothing is worth nothing (2 Samuel 24:18-24). The Lord said that it would take deep sacrifice (Luke 14:26-27; cf. Romans 12:1-2).

V. **Sound Faith**

- A. Sound faith is wholesome and healthy, building up the one who has faith and allowing them to teach others (Jude 20; Titus 1:9-10).
- B. Sound faith lets us draw near to God and afterwards we must hold fast the profession of our faith (Hebrews 10:22-24).

Conclusion. God's greatest truths are discovered by simple faith. It is not the world's way to truth, but a thousand years from now -- if the Lord tarries that long -- the world will still be devising and rejecting its theories. The person of sound faith knows the truth now.

You have to make a decision between the modern faith that you desire or the sound faith that is built upon the Bible. Sound faith gives a clear "picture" of what God wants from us. The person who can build their words on those of Jesus will be like a wise man (Matthew 7:24).