

Faith

6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

NUGGET – The first part of the nugget verse in the Greek ends with a period. So that it states plainly, *And without faith it is impossible to please God*. That's important in our understanding of what the author of Hebrews wants us to understand about faith: that there are no works, no efforts, no deeds, no doings, no *anything(s)* that, of themselves, will please God. It is made clear here that man does not earn the favor of God through works alone. (I'm not saying we don't do works, or that we shouldn't do works, in fact we are commanded elsewhere [see James] to *DO* good works, it's just that they merit not a whit of God's favor.)

It is faith the author wants us to focus on as paramount in this portion of his epistle. And he makes clear, by using numerous Old Testament examples of people of faith, that it is faith alone that pleases God. It is trust in Him demonstrated – ah there it is – demonstrated by faith that pleases God. So how do we demonstrate faith without works? We don't.

But it is not the *demonstration* itself that brings value. Rather, as the second sentence in the nugget verse says, *because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists*. Without believing that, without faith that God IS, we are left only to believe that there is no One Who is for us.

Go back to the first 2 verses of this chapter, which say, *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. 2 This is what the ancients were commended for*. They were commended for trusting in a God Who could not be seen. When you read through that list of people and what they did and how the author turns our attention to what they did as a demonstration, not of their own human abilities, but of faith in God, we begin to see that we share the same faith as "the ancients". The writer of Hebrews is pointing out to us that God has always been a God Who keeps His promises and thereby those who have faith in Him, trust that He IS, are rewarded.

APPLICATION -

1. Sometime set aside a few minutes and try to imagine 'no God'. If you seriously consider that, then imagine those around us who live that way everyday. Now, how do you feel about them? Show them the same compassion God has shown you as you gently share with them the love of God in Jesus Christ.

PRAY – Oh God the Father, the Creator of all, in Your abundant and never-ending mercy look down on us and guide us into the ways of *faithful* living. We long for You to be honored, in our lives, in our speaking and in our actions. As You have sent Jesus to show us Your love, may we, with faith in You, show Your love to others. In Jesus name we pray, amen.