

# Faith Heroes Who Persevered

Hebrews 11

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.  
For by it the elders obtained a good testimony..*

*Hebrews 11:1 - 2 (NKJV)*

Hebrews 11 is the famous “faith chapter” of the Bible. But without understanding the previous context of the epistle at this point we will fail to truly appreciate the kind of faith the author is describing. Often this passage in Hebrews 11:1-2 is used to justify extravagance and materialistic greed on the part of the believer. We hear people say that they “have faith for a new car” or “faith for a new job” and use Hebrews 11:1 to undergird their reasoning.

Interestingly this chapter cites the Old Testament heroes of faith, yet the word “faith” does not occur in the Old Testament! To the Hebrews, *faith* was not merely *believing* - it was a decision bringing about a change in the way one lived. The closest word we have in English to describe this concept is *faithfulness*.

Christ Was The Perfect Antitype of the Entire Old Covenant

1. Faith is the basis for faithfulness, but what does the word *faithfulness* encompass that the word *faith* does not necessarily?

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2. Read Hebrews 6:12 and note what is being urged.

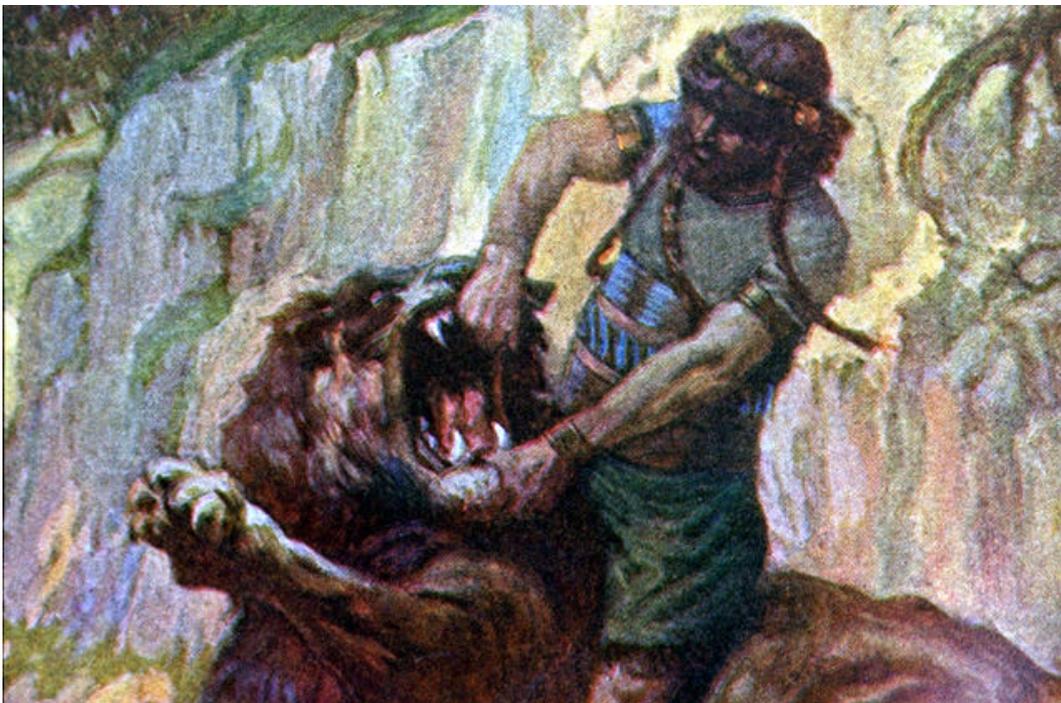
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3. Consider Hebrews 10:23-24 and determine from this whether the author considers faith to be merely a belief or an act of the will. Give reasons for your answers.

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## Obtaining A Good Testimony

Under the Old Covenant the emphasis was on *working* at maintaining the Law of Sacrifices and Ceremonies, thus, the requirement for *faithfulness*. But under the New Covenant the primary emphasis is on *trusting* Christ's finished work. Since trust is the essence of faith and belief, what we believe is critical because it will determine how we live.

4. How does Hebrews 11:6 show us that what we believe really does matter?
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Hebrews 11 lists people who trusted God despite their circumstances and makes the statement in verse 2 *that they obtained a good testimony*.



5. Which people stand out to you in this Hebrews 11 list and why?
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## Faith Holds On

These people had faith in God and thus demonstrated faithfulness toward Him.

6. What is the great irony of these faith heroes? (Note Heb. 11:39)
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7. What reasons does the author of Hebrews give for these heroes to be tempted to *not* trust God?
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The author to the Hebrew Christians is trying to encourage these believers not to abandon Christ because of the opposition and difficulties they faced. He cites these treasured heroes as inspirations for having faith in God even when prayers are not answered and God seems silent.



8. In what ways are modern Christians tempted to abandon their walk of faithfulness with God?
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I pray that we may also be stirred to remain increasingly faithful to Christ despite any circumstances which would tempt us to abandon Him.

*Amen.*