

***EARNESTLY CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH – Dec. 2025***

Southview Bible Church \* 135 Bennett Ave. \* Council Bluffs, IA. 51503

Phone: (712) 322-5743 E-mail: pastor@southviewbible.org \* Web Site: www.southviewbible.org

***TRUE FAITH CONTINUES....***

Apostasy departs from the faith, whereas a true saving faith continues. A KEY verse that defines the spirit of apostasy is found in 1st John 2:19.

**1 John 2:19 (NKJV)**

**19** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

If they had been of genuine faith, they would have “continued,” but their departure from the faith community proves openly that they never really had a true saving faith!

After dealing with the real concern of APOSTASY in Hebrews 10, the writer then says this:

**Hebrews 10:38–39 (NKJV)**

**38** Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.”

**39** But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

This provides the springboard into the “Hall of Faith Chapter” of Hebrews 11. Chapter 11 begins with a definition of faith, followed by various illustrations of it.

**Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)**

**1** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

The key to understanding faith is to properly understand the New Testament definition of HOPE. Faith is the essence of things HOPED for. Hope is a certain expectation that God will, in the future, bring to pass what He has promised. It rests on the bare Word of God for the fulfillment of what He has promised. It takes God at His Word for that which is not yet realized. The writer then proceeded to give a series of FAITH examples from the Old Testament that serve to illustrate the nature of true faith that pleases God (Heb. 11:6).

Hebrews 11 presents the following traits regarding FAITH.

- Faith takes God at His Word.
- Faith continues to believe God no matter the circumstances.
- Faith continues believing to the end that there will be a fulfillment of God’s promise, even if it awaits the afterlife.

The patriarchs “all died in faith, not having received the promises” (Heb. 11:13). Example after example is given in which “by faith” they did this or that. However, as we come to the end of this great chapter on faith, the writer again says, “And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise” (Heb. 11:39).

This illustrates an enduring HOPE, a confident expectation that God would yet fulfill His promise, even though that would take place beyond their life experience in the here and now. Faith CONTINUES! It does not apostatize! Even in death, HOPE continues! That is the essence of true God-honoring faith. God has prepared an eternal homeland for those who have this kind of faith (Heb. 11:13-16).

**Thot:** Jesus said, “If you continue in My word, you really are My disciples.” (Jn. 8:31 – HCSB)

***Earnestly Contending, Pastor Dwight J. Oswald***