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“O For A Faith . . .”

Hebrews 11:6

Introduction

1. I would like for you to take a moment and consider the lyrics to a hymn which we have sung on occasion.

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2. It is a hymn about faith, written in 1831 by William H. Bathurst, who at the time was 35 years old.

**Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe!**

**That will not murmur nor complain
Beneath the chast'ning rod,
But, in the hour of grief or pain,
Will lean upon its God.**

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**A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt.**

**Lord, give me such a faith as this,
And then, whate'er may come,
I'll taste, e'en here, the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home.**

3. Have you ever longed for a faith such as this?
4. Perhaps you already have such a faith. If so, may God's richest blessings shine upon you.
5. If you are still seeking such a faith, please join me in a study of Hebrews 11:6 tonight.

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6. In a letter penned to Jewish Christians, known to us simply as Hebrews, the writer in a chapter on the concept of faith writes these words, “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him” (*Hebrews 11:6*).
7. This one verse is rich in the truths it presents — let us peel back and examine each layer of truth to find the nugget hidden beneath.

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I. Before We Can Seek God, We Must Believe He Exists

A. WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE HIM

1. What is faith?
2. The writer begins this chapter by telling us that “faith is the assurance (substance) of things hoped for the conviction (evidence) of things not seen”
 - a. Assurance (*hupostasis*)
 - 1) From a compound word meaning substructure or foundation
 - 2) That which supports or upholds something
 - b. Conviction (*elegchos*)
 - 1) A proof, that by which a thing is proved or tested
 - 2) It involves being certain about unseen hopes and realities
3. Faith is the assurance that these things which we cannot see are, or will become, a reality (*2 Corinthians 4:18; 5:7*).

"while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (*2 Corinthians 4:18*)

"for we walk by faith, not by sight." (*2 Corinthians 5:7*)

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B. HE WHO COMES TO GOD MUST BELIEVE THAT HE IS

1. In *Isaiah 45:5*, through His prophet *Isaiah*, God declared, “I am the Lord, and

there is no other; besides Me there is no God.”

2. One chapter later, in Isaiah 46:9, He again declares, “For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me.”
3. The first words which Moses wrote in Genesis 1:1 were these, “in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”
4. All that we see came to exist somehow.
5. The most logical explanation is all-powerful Creator is behind it.
6. Faith requires that we believe in God.

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II. Believing That God Exists, We Must Seek Him

A. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “SEEK” GOD?

1. It means to search for Him in an effort to know Him.
2. After telling the philosophers in Athens that “God . . . made the world and all things in it” he pointed out that it is God’s desire “that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each of us” (Acts 17:27).
3. Long ago, David told his son, Solomon, “If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.” (1 Chronicles 28:9)

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B. HOW DO WE SEEK HIM

1. Our search for God must be continual.
 - a. After bringing the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem, David wrote a psalm of thanksgiving.
 - b. It is found in 1 Chronicles 16. There in verse 11, we find these words:
“Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face continually.”
2. We seek Him with our heart and soul.
 - a. David once commanded all the leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon as the new king, “Now set your heart and your soul to seek the

Lord your God” (1 Chronicles 22:19).

- b. Through His prophet, Jeremiah, God said, “You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13)
3. We seek Him through the study of His Word — In Isaiah 28:23, God said, “Give ear and hear my voice, listen and hear my words.”
4. Finally, we seek Him through prayer and supplication (Daniel 9:3)

“So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications . . .” (Daniel 9:3)

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III. The Reward of Such A Search

A. WE FIND GOD

1. Remember, it was Jesus who said, “Seek and you will find” (Matthew 7:7).
2. Finding God is the greatest joy a person can know (Psalm 16:11)

“You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.” (Psalm 16:11)

3. In speaking of the king who sought God, David wrote, “You make him most blessed forever, You make him joyful with gladness in Your presence” (Psalm 21:6).

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B. SALVATION

1. Deliverance from physical straits in which we may find ourselves:
 - a. After watching God destroy Pharaoh’s army in the Red Sea, Moses and the sons of Israel sang a song of praise in which they said, “the Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise Him; my father’s God, and I will extol Him” (Exodus 15:2).
 - b. When David was fleeing from his own son, Absalom, he wrote, “Salvation belongs to the Lord” (Psalm 3:8).

- c. In Psalm 62:7 David wrote, “On God my salvation and my glory rest; the rock of my strength, my refuge is in God.”
2. Deliverance from the consequences of sin
 - a. Paul wrote to Timothy, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men” (Titus 2:11).
 - b. Peter wrote that we obtain as the outcome of our faith the salvation of our souls (1 Peter 1:9).

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B. ETERNAL LIFE

1. “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3).
2. John said that “this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life” (1 John 2:25).

Conclusion

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1. God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah and said, “You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).
2. After writing about a faith that “will not shrink,” “will not murmur or complain,” “shines more bright and clear” William Bathurst concluded his hymn with this request . . .

**Lord, give me such a faith as this,
And then, whate'er may come,
I'll taste, e'en here, the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home.**