

December Teaching Theme: Advent

讲员 Speaker: Pastor William R Horne

题目 Topic: Advent: Christian Faith

经文 Scripture: Hebrews 11

Monthly Theme: We are in the midst of Advent season on the Global Church Calendar. Advent means “the coming” and is a time when we both celebrate Jesus’ first coming and wait expectantly for Jesus’ return to make all things right. The Christian observation of Advent reorients us to a season of denial and self-examination rather than that of rampant accumulation, consumption, and self-indulgence so often experienced during the holidays. The Christian must choose formation in the ways of Jesus as opposed to the ways of the world. To explore what Advent seasons message to us we are going to examine Hope, Faith, Joy, Jesus’ Birth Narrative, and the Peace of God. This week we are taking a look at Christian Faith.

Resources:

[Sermon Video](#)

[PPT Slides](#)

Bonus Video in Important Note Section

Discussion Questions:

- (1) Read slowly, outloud, together Hebrews 11:1-12:1-2. What impression does the passage leave on your when read as a whole. What observations do you make and what stands out to you? In what ways is “Faith” described in the passage? (Take your time here - see note on Q1 below).
- (2) How would you describe Christian Faith? How does Christian Faith differ from popular notions of Faith?
- (3) Christian Faith is fueled by the Historical Testimony of Jesus and God’s People and the vision Scripture paints of the Kingdom of God. What is one thing from the story of Jesus that fuels your faith? God’s people throughout history and the present? The Kingdom of God (New Heaven & New Earth)?
- (4) Recall, Faith is both considering the evidence that something is changing, that the world is going to be different than it is right now, and choosing to live in light of that reality. What are some concrete actions we can participate in that “live” in the reality of “Heaven on Earth”? (Living and Acting in Faith).
 - (a) Example: When we choose to forgive the person who hurt us, we are acting in faith that one day all relationships will experience true reconciliation and be characterized by Shalom.
 - (b) Example 2: When we choose to live with radical generosity, we are acting in faith that the world will no longer be characterized by scarcity but by the abundance of a God who owns “cattle on a thousand hills.” (Ps 50)

Important Notes (Pastor Will):

Note on Q1: It is incredibly important that we spend time to read complete portions of Scripture aloud together as a community. This is a powerful practice done throughout the history of the people of God that we often neglect or speed through in our context. This is why our Advent readings this year during Sunday Service are larger portions of Scripture to be read in their entirety. Our cell groups are also a great place and time to read larger portions of Scripture out loud together. If you would like as a group watch this video from the Bible project on the importance of the [Public Reading of Scripture](#) and then dive into reading for Q1. (Use Subtitles for Chinese Translation).

Note 2 on Q1: Recall our translation of choice for Hebrews 11:1 - “信就是所望之事的**實底**，是未見之事的**確據** Faith is the **substance/reality** of things hoped for, the **evidence** of things not seen.” (和合本, 1919; KJV & CEV)

Key Statement: Faith is both considering the evidence that something is changing, that the world is going to be different than it is right now, and choosing to live in light of that reality.

Reflections on Q2:

- “Faith” in the modern English language and American context has become a shallow word capped off by the idea of religion as only a private, individual spiritual experience. Christianity in its truest form doesn’t exist as a “private, individual spiritual experience,” but as a radical alternative way of life and view of the world.
- “Faith” is often thought of as a mental state I work myself into so that I can “believe” in something I can’t quite be sure of. We often hear things like, “if you just have enough faith everything will be alright,” as if “faith” is some magical mindset that will fix your problems. This is simply not Biblical Faith, and we noted earlier this year a better macro word for understanding how we respond to the Gospel is “Allegiance” - that I commit my exclusive loyalty and thus obedience to King Jesus. Faith is only as good as the person you put your faith in, but modern ideas of faith place faith in faith itself.
- We noted this week that Christian Faith is made up of both reason and action. Faith starts with reason and assessment of the evidence and is completed by action in light of the reasoning. Faith then is an experience (reason and action together) that puts you in touch with the “substance or reality” of that which we hope for - the Kingdom of God (Heaven on Earth). Jesus is both our evidence of the coming of the Kingdom of God and our taste of this future as we walk in relationship with him. We now walk in faith by living and acting in light of this future reality (empowered by the Holy Spirit).
- As you reflect upon this question - compare and contrast different notions of faith in different contexts as compared to Christian Faith according to the Scriptures. What I have noted above is just one notion of “faith” in our current United States context.

Sermon Summary (Elder Yin):

什么是基督徒的信心
洪牧师。12/5/20

“信就是所望之事的实底，是未见之事的的确据。古人在这信上得了美好的证据。我们因着信，就知道诸世界是借神的话造成的；这样，所看见的，并不是从显然之物造出来的。亚伯因着信，献祭与神，比该隐所献的更美，因此便得了称义的见证，就是神指他礼物作的见证。他虽然死了，却因这信，仍旧说话。以诺因着信，被接去，不至于见死，人也找不着他，因为神已经把他接去了；只是他被接去以先，已经得了神喜悦他的明证。人非有信，就不能得神的喜悦；因为到神面前来的人必须信有神，且信他赏赐那寻求他的人。挪亚因着信，既蒙神指示他未见的事，动了敬畏的心，预备了一只方舟，使他全家得救。因此就定了那世代的罪，自己也承受了那从信而来的义。亚伯拉罕因着信，蒙召的时候就遵命出去，往将来要得为业的地方去；出去的时候，还不知往哪里去。他因着信，就在所应许之地作客，好像在异地居住帐棚，与那同蒙一个应许的以撒、雅各一样。因为他等候那座有根基的城，就是神所经营所建造的。因着信，连撒拉自己，虽然过了生育的岁数，还能怀孕，因她以为那应许她的是可信的。所以从一个仿佛已死的人就生出子孙，如同天上的星那样众多，海边的沙那样无数。这些人都是存着信心死的，并没有得着所应许的；却从远处望见，且欢喜迎接，又承认自己在世上是客旅，是寄居的。说这样的话的人是表明自己要找一个家乡。他们若想念所离开的家乡，还有可以回去的机会。他们却羡慕一个更美的家乡，就是在天上的。所以神被称为他们的神，并不以为耻，因为他已经给他们预备了一座城。亚伯拉罕因着信，被试验的时候，就把以撒献上；这便是那欢喜领受应许的，将自己独生的儿子献上。论到这儿子，曾有话说：「从以撒生的才要称为你的后裔。」他以为神还能叫人从死里复活；他也仿佛从死中得回他的儿子来。以撒因着信，就指着将来的事给雅各、以扫祝福。雅各因着信，临死的时候，给约瑟的两个儿子各自祝福，扶着杖头敬拜神。约瑟因着信，临终的时候，提到以色列族将来要出埃及，并为自己的骸骨留下遗命。摩西生下来，他的父母见他是个俊美的孩子，就因着信，把他藏了三个月，并不怕王命。摩西因着信，长大了就不肯称为法老女儿之子。他宁可和神的百姓同受苦害，也不愿暂时享受罪中之乐。他看为基督受的凌辱比埃及的财物更宝贵，因他想望所要得的赏赐。他因着信，就离开埃及，不怕王怒；因为他恒心忍耐，如同看见那不能看见的主。他因着信，就守逾越节，行洒血的礼，免得那灭长子的临近以色列人。他们因着信，过红海如行干地；埃及人试着要过去，就被吞灭了。以色列人因着信，围绕耶利哥城七日，城墙就倒塌了。妓女喇合因着信，曾和平平地接待探子，就不与那些不顺从的人一同灭亡。我又何必再说呢？若要一一细说，基甸、巴拉、参孙、耶弗他、大卫、撒母耳，和众先知的事，时候就不够了。他们因着信，制伏了敌国，行了公义，得了应许，堵了狮子的口，灭了烈火的猛势，脱了刀剑的锋刃；软弱变为刚强，争战显出勇敢，打退外邦的全军。有妇人得自己的死人复活。又有人忍受严刑，不肯苟且得释放，为要得着更美的复活。又有人忍受戏弄、鞭打、捆锁、监禁、各等的磨炼，被石头打死，被锯锯死，受试探，被刀杀，披着绵羊山羊的皮各处奔跑，受穷乏、患难、苦害，在旷野、山岭、山洞、地穴，飘流无定，本是世界不配有的人。这些人都是因信得了美好的证据，却仍未得着所应许的；因为神给我们预备了更美的事，叫他们若不与我们同得，就不能完全。”

希伯来书 11:1-40

降临节是等待君王，是主动的等待。等待耶稣再来时，天国完整的显现。庆祝耶稣第一次来临，思想他在这世界上所遭受的，让我们反思基督徒应该如何生活在这世上。如何来等待他的再来。

“受造之物切望等候神的众子显出来。因为受造之物服在虚空之下，不是自己愿意，乃是因那叫他如此的。但受造之物仍然指望脱离败坏的辖制，得享神儿女自由的荣耀。”罗马书 8:19-21
说到等候，希伯来十一章也讲到以前的圣徒等待再来。耶稣再来。

主题：信心是思维和行为体现

一，什么是基督徒的信仰

不是现在人说的信心，世人是个人坚持到底。

圣经里是效忠和服从基督。

希11:1定义，二种不同译本：

-信心是对盼望的事有把握，对还没有看见的事很确定

-信心是所望之事的实底，未见之事的的确据。

不是思想或意志而是真有的经历，特别是对不确定的事，能够活出和行出信心信仰，可以让周围人看见对新天新地的希望。

寒冷的芝加哥三月，看到早春花开，有人会穿短裤，因为他们知道过了春天夏天就会到来。因为有经历，所以有行动表示出来。基督徒能够活出信仰时，他的行为和信仰相称。

11:11: 撒拉。认定，回想过去神的应许，有经历，有信心，11:17-19亚拍兰因信而行，知道有深思和推理对神有把握，信仰理性，加上经历，

11:8-10亚伯，思考和行动当神呼召他，他的行为展现了他的信仰，信仰由理性和顺服两面。

二，信仰成长的养分是什么

历史见证：基础是过去的见证人，旧约和新约，犹太在一世纪的历史学家Josephus 也作了证据。耶稣的真实性，门徒的见证，跟随者的殉道，特别在开始三世纪的时候，后来中世纪和现代很多为耶稣殉道，如果为耶稣死，人们一定为有很好的理由。

似乎芝加哥的早春，春暖花开之际，有人会穿短裤，因为有证据夏天不久会来。虽然还会有下雪天但能给我们一些夏天的感觉。根据古令无数的见证人，证明耶稣会再来。天国会来也让我们有盼望。我们现在可以感受到一切天国的味道，象三月的芝加哥春暖花开的时候。世界有一天一定会有改变，耶稣会再来。

如何活出我们对耶稣再来的信心？就是要主动的来等待，也就有行动来等待。遵守服从神的旨意来生活，活出神的样子。没有婚前性行为，容易来愿凉人，行在义中（阿摩司5:24，“惟愿公平如大水滚滚，使公义如江河滔滔。”，非暴力行为（赛2:4，“他必在列国中施行审判，为许多国民断定是非。他们要将刀打成犁头，把枪打成镰刀。这国不举刀攻击那国；他们也不再学习战事。”），选择慷慨助人。这样众人通过我们能看见一丝天国的样式。

活出基督徒的信仰，降临节等耶稣再来。不是消极而是积极等待，准备，劳动，工作，祷告，流泪，为另一个世界的分娩进入这个世界而努力。

What is Christian Faith

Pastor Will

Hebrews 11

Advent, an intentional period of waiting for Jesus's return.

Anticipation of his second coming

The act of remembrance, to bring His kingdom to the fullness

Celebrating his first coming, and lamenting the living in this cursed world—the

tension of these two lead us to think about how a Christian lives in this world

Since the beginning of advent tradition in the 4-5th century, Christians of all

denominations have anticipated the Advent season

Romans 8:19-21 all creations await for His return, under the curses, waiting to be

liberated

Hebrews 11 listed examples of previous saints who actively waited for Jesus's return.

Primary Claim: faith is an expression of both reason and action.

1. What is Christian Faith?

2. What fuels the Faith?

Modern English definition of "faith" fails short to describe the Faith. faith as an concept of believing something we are not quite sure, this is not biblical, Christian

Faith is about the allegiance, the complete commitment to king Jesus

Heb 11:1 Faith definition

Two different translations:

Faith is the assurance/confidence (substance/reality) of things hoped for the

conviction (evidence) of things not seen

Faith is not about mental status, but a real link of our Hope with the reality.

The translation in the parentheses is closer to the original text. Rather Faith is with action. When we live and act accordingly to our faith, we get a glimpse of the new Heaven and new Earth

Pastor Will gave an example: In the brutal winter of Chicago, snow, no green grass, those dark months make you want to move to the south; but when spring comes, green grass peel out of the snow, then flowers bloom, people start to get out wearing shorts at 47F. They know summer is still long way to go, at least a few months to go. But they know winter will not last forever, this is not a blind faith, w sufficient evidences to support. People make a choice to live in the light of summer.

Action put you in touch w the reality/substance,

Hebrews examples have shown the same faith

Sarah, past child bearing age, w faith, considered Him faithful, chose to act on faith, b/c God is faithful. She didn't have 100 assurance, but chose to acted on Faith Abraham sacrificed Issac, even w promise of generations coming from Issac, he reasoned that God would resurrect Issac.

Same Faith, although not w/ 100 assurance but Abraham thought through, believed God, not blind believing!!

All the biblical examples started w reasons, yet only with action out of believing, bring out true faith

Faith is not just remaining at the stage of reasoning, without actions, not true faith at all

By faith, Abraham went to a foreign land, not knowing where to go, but waiting for a city built by God

He obeyed and went to live on the "future" promise land

In his faithful action, he tasted the future blessings

Reasoning and action in the two sides of a coin, the One calling us is worthy of our faith

What fuels Christian Faith?

We gave good reasons to gather here, worshiping at church, many bet our lives on Jesus as our King. Because so many witnesses of Jesus's resurrection, more than 500 witnesses said Paul to talk/confirm with, b/c many of them were still living at the time of Paul's writing.

Josephus, the contemporary Jewish writer of Jesus's time, wrote about Him as a prominent teacher

Faithful witnesses in the history, especially in the first 3 centuries, then following Jesus meant death, yet were willing to sacrifice their lives, their names are not known today.

What compels people to follow this Jesus of Nazareth, in two millenniums until today a Chinese church in Kentucky?

The life of Jesus is that flower, although got snowed on again in 50F Chicago; the evil in the world will not get the last word in God's creation, even will snow again, will be cold again, but we believe there will be summer, wearing shorts on 50f to give people around us a taste of Heaven coming

The world will be different again one day, so choose to live out the light. When we choose purity in marriage, choose to fight for the oppressed, justice will come as described in Amos

When we choose to forgive people who hurt us, shalom of peace will come

Choose not violence, nor war, Isaiah 2:4 prophecy

Choose radical generosity, the world will flow with the abundant blessings described in Psalms

Act in faith will give people a glimpse of heaven to come!

Celebrate the coming of Christ child, which God has already done; His second coming, His ruling kingdom, is yet to come, but will be fulfilled

Active waiting:

Like an expecting mom waiting the baby, prepare for it, even labor pain,
A world pregnant w hope, wait for god's kingdom to come. We are the midwife of another
world.

Holy communion: waiting for Him to come