

FAITH

Part I

FAITH

- **The writer of Hebrews defines faith as follows:**
 - **Heb 11:1 (NASB) Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.**

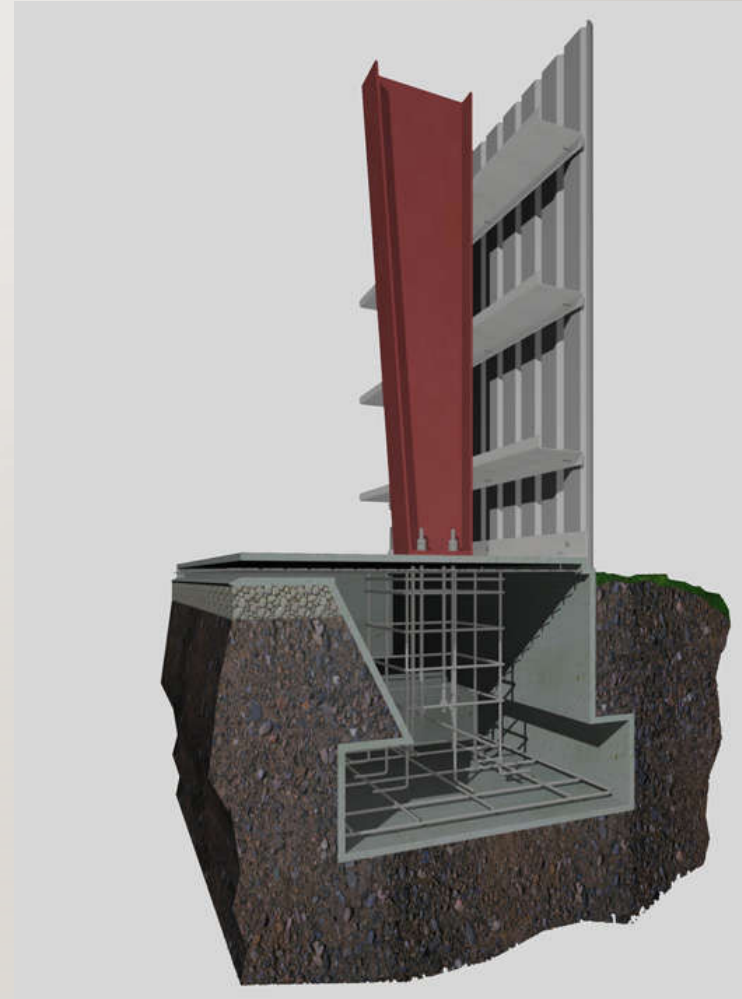
- The KJV and NKJV render Hebrews 11:1 as follows, “Now faith is the **substance** of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
- Kenneth Wuest (1893–1962), noted professor of NT Greek at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago wrote, “The word ‘substance’ deserves careful treatment. It is **hupostasis**, made up of stasis ‘to stand,’ and hupo ‘under,’ thus ‘that which stands under, a foundation.’ Thus, it speaks of the ground on which one builds a hope.” *



* K. S. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: Eerdmans or Logos

(I) A FOUNDATION

- ‘Hupostasis’ was a very common word among ancient Greek authors, especially from Aristotle onward. It was used to describe that which stands under anything such as a building, a contract, a promise.
- **Faith is to a Christian what a foundation is to a house:** it gives confidence and assurance that he will stand. (Warren Wiersbe)



- Hupostasis is used 5 times in the NT.
 - 1) 2 Cor 9:4 (NIV) For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we--not to say anything about you--would be ashamed of having been so **confident**.
 - 2) 2 Cor 11:17 (NIV) In this self-**confident** boasting I am not talking as the Lord would, but as a fool.
 - 3) Heb 3:14 (NIV) We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the **confidence** we had at first.
 - 4) Heb 1:3a (NIV) The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his **being** (hupostasis)...
 - 5) Heb 11:1 (NIV) Now faith is **being sure of** what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.



(2) CONFIDENCE

- Heb 11:1 (Barclay) Faith is the **confidence** that the things which as yet we only hope for really do exist. It is the **conviction** of the reality of the things which as yet are out of sight.
- **But it is not self-confidence; it is confidence in God.**

(2) CONFIDENCE

- By defining faith as “assurance” and “conviction,” the author indicates that biblical faith is not a vague hope grounded in imaginary, wishful thinking. Instead, **faith is a settled confidence that something in the future—something that is not yet seen but has been promised by God—will actually come to pass because God will bring it about.***

* ESV Online Study Bible Crossway or Wordsearch

- “When you get to the end of all the light you know and it’s time to step into the darkness of the unknown, faith is knowing that one of two things shall happen: either you will be given something solid to stand on, or you will be taught how to fly.”
(Edward Teller)



(2) CONFIDENCE

FAITH

is the

PRESENT ASSURANCE

of a

FUTURE REALITY

(3) A TITLE DEED

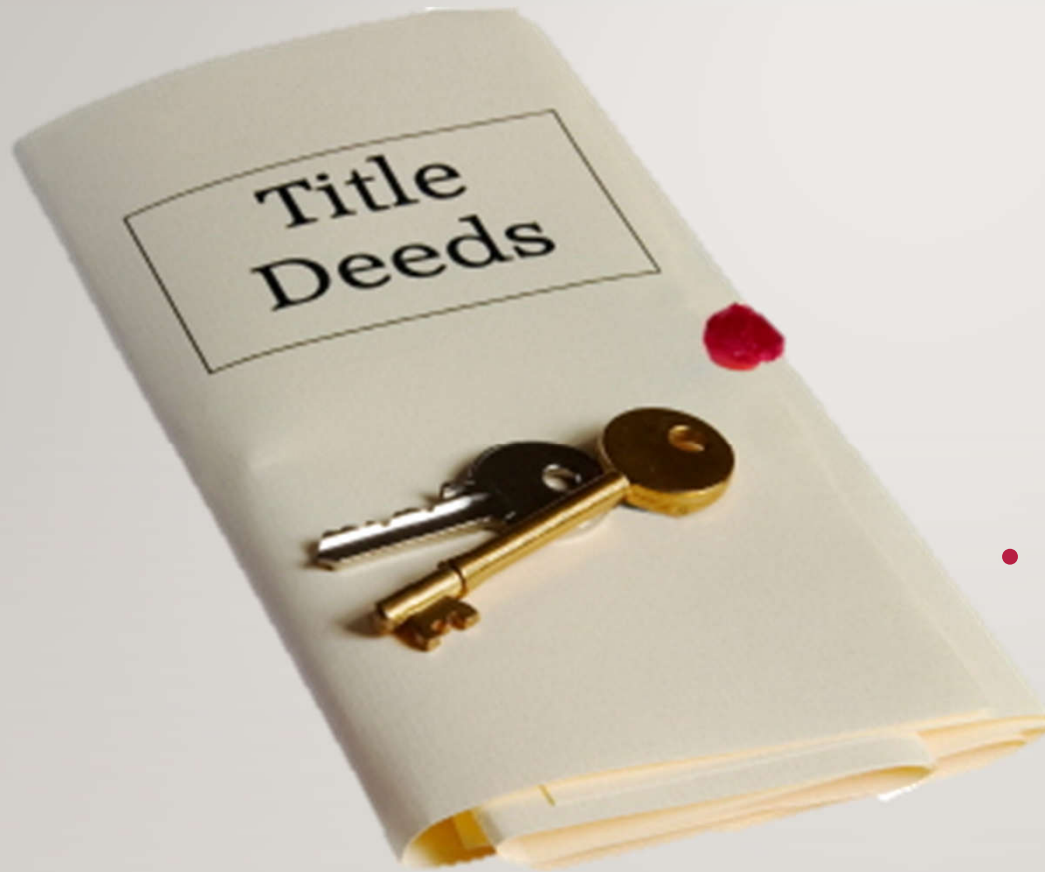
- ‘Hupostasis’ was also commonly used in ancient Greek business documents as the **basis or guarantee of transactions** or with the meaning of a **title deed**.
 - Heb 11:1 (Amplified) Now faith is the **assurance** (the **confirmation, the title-deed**) of the things [we] hope for, being the **proof** of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality — faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses.
- Faith does not put all its confidence in the present and the visible. Faith is to our hopes what a deed is to a piece of property. The deed guarantees ownership for the owner. (George Brooks)



(3) A TITLE DEED

- Vine's Expository Dictionary – hupostasis lit., “... In Hebrews 11:1 it has the meaning of “confidence, assurance” (RV), marg., “the giving substance to,” AV, “substance,” something that could not equally be expressed by elpis, “hope.” It also may signify a **title-deed, as giving a guarantee, or reality.**
- Moulton and Milligan say of these varied uses of ‘hupostasis’ that “in all the cases there is the same central idea of something that underlies visible conditions and **guarantees a future possession.**” They suggest the translation, “**Faith is the title-deed of things hoped for.**” *

*“Vocabulary of the Greek Testament”



(3) A TITLE DEED

- Heb 11:1 Now faith is the **title deed of things hoped for**, the proof of things which are not being seen. (Wuest)
- The Holy Spirit energized act of **faith** which a believer exercises in the Lord Jesus **is the title-deed which God puts in his hand, guaranteeing to him the possession of the thing for which he trusted Him.***

* K. S. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: Eerdmans or Logos



(3) A TITLE DEED

- To substantiate this usage, we have the true story of a woman named Dionysia. It seems that she had lost a case in a local court over a piece of land to which she laid claim. Not satisfied with the decision of a lower court, she determined to take her case to a higher court in Alexandria. She sent her slave to that city, with the legal documents safely encased in a stone box.*

* [http:// hopefaithprayer.com/ faiht/ faiht-is-hebrews-III-hupostasis](http://hopefaithprayer.com/faiht/faiht-is-hebrews-III-hupostasis)



- On the way, the slave lost his life in a fire, which destroyed the inn where he had put up for the night. For 2,000 years, the sands of the desert covered the ruins of the inn, the charred bones of the slave, and the stone box.
- Archaeologists have recently uncovered these remains. In the box, they found the legal documents. They read the note, which this woman had sent to the judge in Alexandria, “In order that my lord the judge may know that my appeal is just, I **attach my HUPOSTASIS.**”

(3) A TITLE DEED



(3) A TITLE DEED

- That which was attached to this note, she designated by the Greek word translated “substance” in Heb. 11:1. The attached document was translated and found to be the title-deed to the piece of land, which she claimed as her own possession, the evidence of her ownership.
- This sheds light on this teaching regarding faith. The act of exercising true faith as one prays, or as one leans on the resources of God, is itself the title-deed or evidence of the sure answer to our prayer or the unfailing source of the divine supply.

(3) A TITLE DEED

- It is **God's guarantee in advance that we already possess the things asked for.** They may still be in His hands, awaiting the proper time for their delivery, but they are ours.
- If the answers to our prayers are not forthcoming at once, let us rest content with the title-deed, which God has given us, namely, a Holy Spirit energized act of faith. We may be absolutely certain that our God will honour this title-deed at the right moment.

FAITH

**SEES THE
INVISIBLE**





SEES THE INVISIBLE

- Just as our physical eyesight gives us evidence of the visible, material world, faith gives us evidence of the invisible, spiritual world.
- Heb 11:1 (NLT) Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us **assurance about things we cannot see.**

SEES THE INVISIBLE

- Corrie Ten Boom:
Faith sees the
invisible, believes
the unbelievable,
and receives the
impossible.





SEES THE INVISIBLE

- Heb 11:27 (NIV) By faith he [Moses] left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.



SEES THE INVISIBLE

When the Syrian king wanted to capture Elisha and his army surrounded the city:

2 Ki 6:16-17 (NIV) “Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

SEES THE INVISIBLE

- In our materialistic world we might be tempted to conclude that the only real things are those which we can experience with our five senses.
- Yet “there are things we cannot see: things behind our backs or far away and all things in the dark.” (C. S. Lewis)



SEES THE INVISIBLE

- Physical eyesight produces a conviction or evidence of visible things; faith is the organ which enables people to see the invisible order. (F.F. Bruce)
 - **2 Cor 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.**
- Faith is to the spiritual realm what the five senses are to the natural realm. The writer of Hebrews says that faith is “the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). By faith we recognize the existence of the spiritual world and learn to depend on the Lord for His help in our daily life. Our goal, then, as George MacDonald once said, is to “grow eyes” to see the unseen.*

* [http:// preceptaustin.org/ hebrews_111-2.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/hebrews_111-2.htm)

- Faith is a kind of spiritual “sixth sense” that enables the believer to take a firm hold upon the unseen world and bring it into the realm of experience. All our senses do this. The eye takes hold upon the light waves that pulsate through space and make real to a person the things he sees. The ear picks up the sound waves and translates them into hearing. But there is a whole spectrum of waves beyond the range of the senses. We cannot see them or hear them or taste them or smell them or feel them. But they are real, nevertheless, and, with the aid of modern instruments, we can pick them up and translate them into phenomena that our senses can handle. Faith reaches out into the spiritual dimension and gives form and substance to heavenly and spiritual realities in such a way that the soul can appreciate them and grasp them and live in the enjoyment of them. (The John Phillips Commentary Series)

SEES THE INVISIBLE

SEES THE INVISIBLE

A photograph of a church interior. On the right, a wooden staircase with a white railing leads upwards. On the left, a blue padded bench is visible. The background is a light-colored wall.

“Faith isn’t the ability to believe long and far into the misty future. It’s simply taking God at His Word and taking the next step.” (Joni Erickson Tada)

Faith is taking
the first step
even when you
don’t see the
whole staircase.

(Martin Luther King, Jr.)

SEES THE INVISIBLE

- A.W. Pink uses the analogy of two men standing on the deck of a ship, looking in the same direction. One sees nothing, but the other man sees a distant steamer. The difference is, the first man is looking with his unaided eye, whereas the second man is looking through a telescope. **Faith is the telescope that brings the future promises of God into present focus. Faith enables us to see the unseen world that the natural man cannot see.** *



* An Exposition of Hebrews [Ephesians 4 Group], p. 652
[http:// preceptaustin.org/ hebrews_111-2.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/hebrews_111-2.htm)

THINGS NOT SEEN

- **Faith is similar to electricity. With an electric globe you can't see the electricity, but you can see the light (the evidence of things unseen).**



THINGS NOT SEEN

- Faith apprehends as a real fact what is not revealed to the senses. It rests on that fact, acts upon it, and is upheld by it in the face of all that seems to contradict it. Faith is real seeing. (Kenneth Wuest)
- There is an unseen quality about faith. You don't use faith when you can use your senses. If I hear your voice behind me, I am not exercising faith when I come to the conclusion that you are there.*
- Faith is the vision of the heart; it sees God in the dark as well as in the day.

* [http:// preceptaustin.org/ hebrews_111-2.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/hebrews_111-2.htm)



THINGS NOT SEEN

- There is another realm of reality, just as actual, just as factual, just as substantial as anything we see, hear, touch, taste, or smell in this world. It exists all around us—not out there “somewhere,” but “here.” *
- There are legions of angels helping us, for which the world has no counter-measures (Hebrews 1:14) ... We cannot see God nor His angels with our natural eyes. But they are there, whether we see them or not. *

* [http:// preceptaustin.org/ hebrews_111-2.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/hebrews_111-2.htm)

BELIEVING IS SEEING

**The sceptic says:
“Seeing is believing”;
God says:
“Believing is seeing”.**

BELIEVING IS SEEING

- Augustine: “Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.”



BELIEVING IS SEEING

- Thomas is the classic example of those who say that “seeing is believing” – but that kind of belief is not faith. Jesus told Thomas, “blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed”.
- John 20:24-29 (NIV) Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”



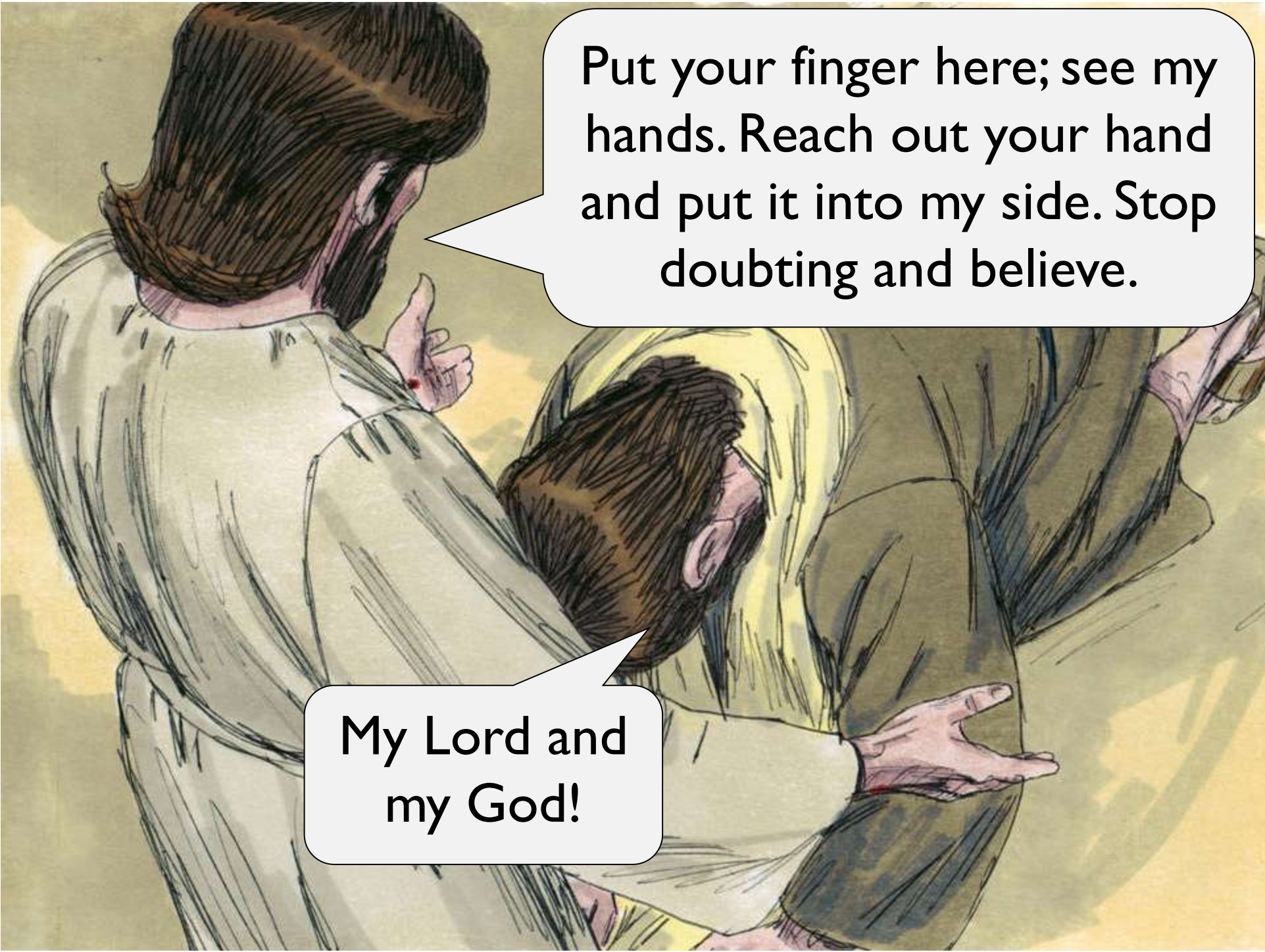
BELIEVING IS SEEING

Thomas said, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.”



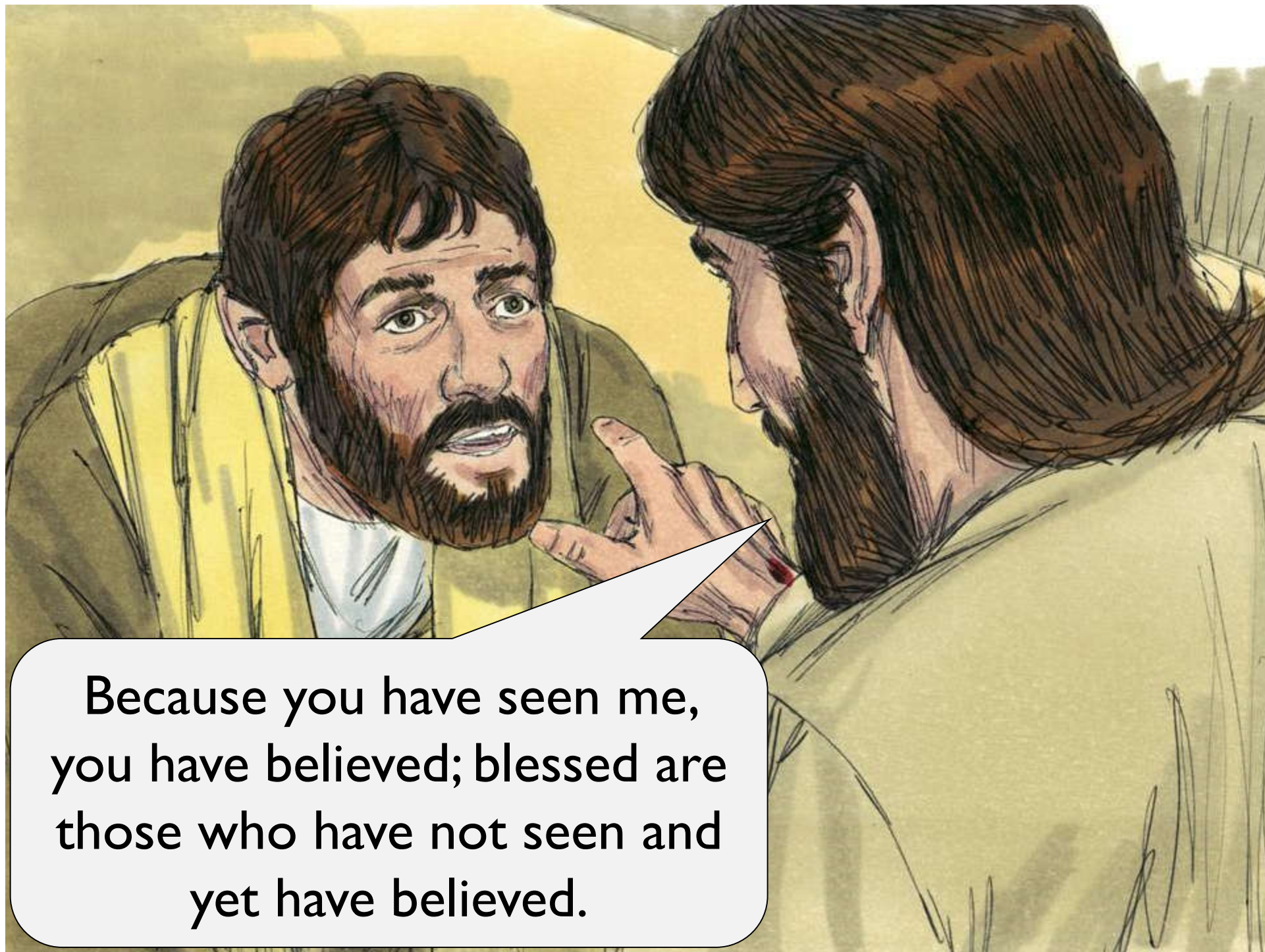
BELIEVING IS SEEING

A week later his
disciples were in the
house again, and
Thomas was with them.
Though the doors were
locked, Jesus came and
stood among them ...



Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.

My Lord and my God!





THINGS NOT SEEN

**I am not moved
by what I see. I
am not moved
by what I feel. I
am moved only
by what I
believe. (Smith
Wigglesworth)**

BELIEVING IS SEEING

- **Once you have seen, it is easy to believe. Real faith is believing without seeing.** It is the conviction of things not seen. And it is living on the basis of that conviction... Christians believe God to the point of banking their lives upon His promises. *

* [http:// www.angelfire.com/ nt/ theology/ Heb11-01.html](http://www.angelfire.com/nt/theology/Heb11-01.html)



THINGS NOT SEEN

- Reason cannot produce faith. Although it is always consistent with reason, yet reason cannot produce faith, in the scriptural sense of the word. Faith, according to Scripture, is 'an evidence,' or conviction, 'of things not seen.' It is a divine evidence, bringing a full conviction of an invisible eternal world. (John Wesley) *

* The Case of Reason Impartially Considered (Sermon 70) - 1 Cor 14:20

THINGS NOT SEEN

- For centuries the islands of New Zealand were unpopulated. No human had ever set foot on them. Then the first settlers arrived. They were Polynesians from other Pacific islands who had sailed a thousand miles in outrigger canoes (Maori). The Polynesians came with the purpose of settling in New Zealand. How did they know the land was there? How did they know they would not simply sail across empty seas until food and water ran out and they perished?
 - The Polynesians had known for generations that land was there because their voyagers had seen a long white cloud on the distant horizon.*

* Robert C. Shannon, 1000 Windows, (Cincinnati, Ohio: Standard Publishing Company, 1997)

THINGS NOT SEEN

They knew that when a cloud stayed in one place over a very long period of time, there was land beneath it. They called New Zealand the Land of the Long White Cloud. Faith is like that.

It is voyaging to an unseen land, journeying to an unknown future. But it is not mere guesswork, or chance, or superstition. There are facts behind faith, facts that suggest conclusions.



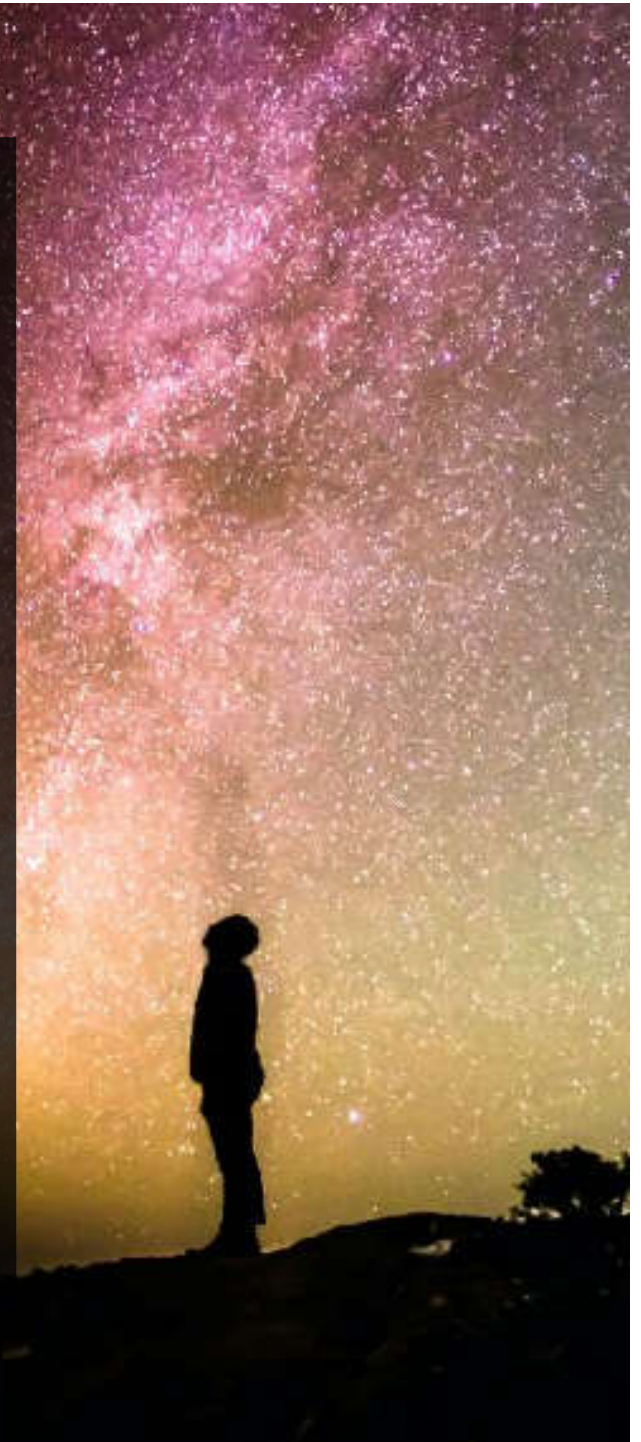
THINGS NOT SEEN

- Heb 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.
- We believe in creation based on faith in an event at which we were not present. We have faith because nature shows evidence of design and hence a Creator.
 - Rom 1:20 (NIV) For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.



THINGS NOT SEEN

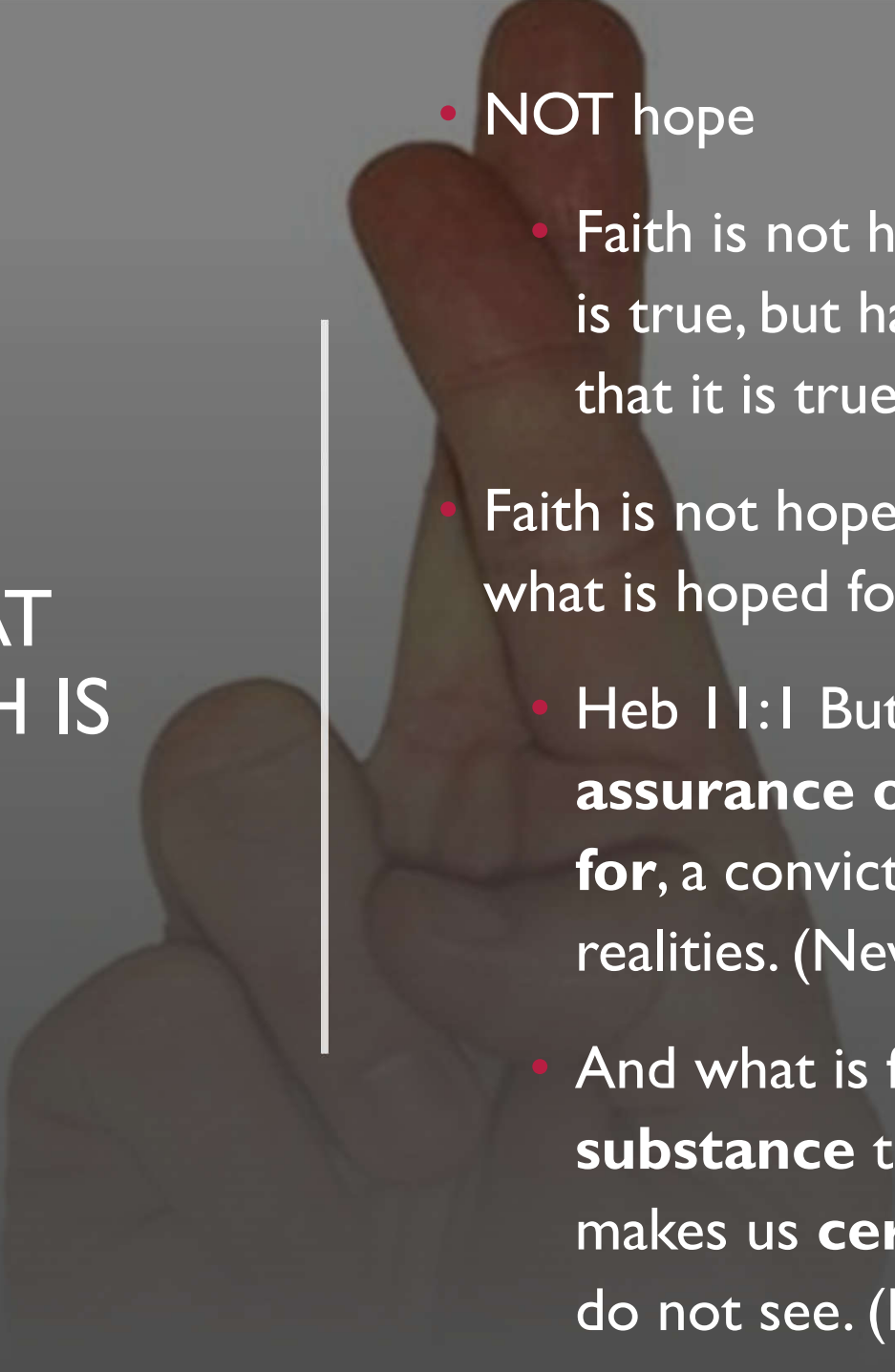
- Ps 19:1 (NIV) The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.



WHAT FAITH IS NOT

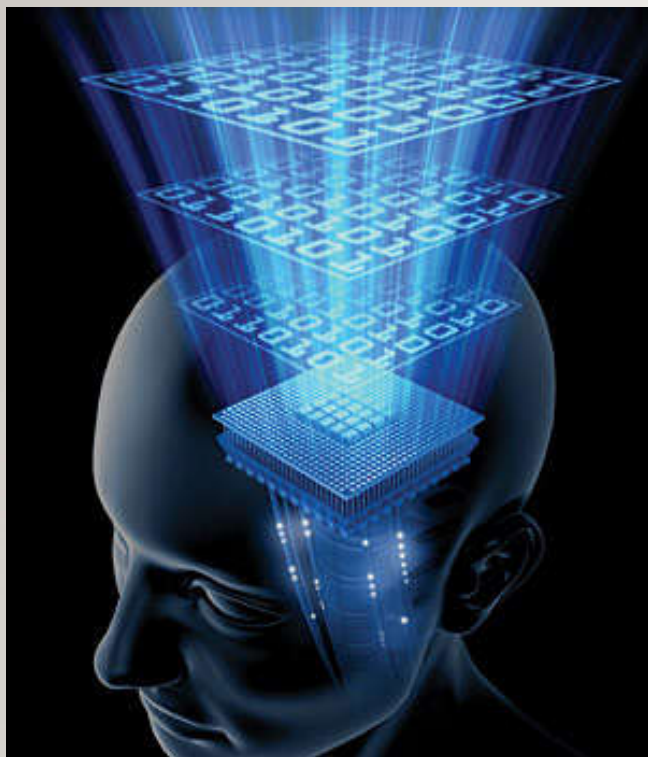
- NOT presumption
 - Faith has a backward look. It declares that God has done mighty acts in days gone by. Faith also has a forward look. It declares that He can be trusted for the future.... **Faith is the firm assurance, the conviction, that God will do what He has promised to do.** It would, of course, be presumption to insist that He must do what we want done. Many Christians grow disillusioned in their Christian lives because God does not conform to their wills. Faith takes God at His word; faith does not insist that He conform to our ideas.*

* Ibid



WHAT FAITH IS NOT

- NOT hope
 - Faith is not hoping that something is true, but having a firm conviction that it is true.
- Faith is not hope but “an assurance of what is hoped for”:
 - Heb 11:1 But **faith is an assurance of what is hoped for**, a conviction of unseen realities. (New Berkeley)
 - And what is faith? Faith gives **substance** to our hopes, and makes us **certain** of realities we do not see. (NEB)



WHAT FAITH IS NOT

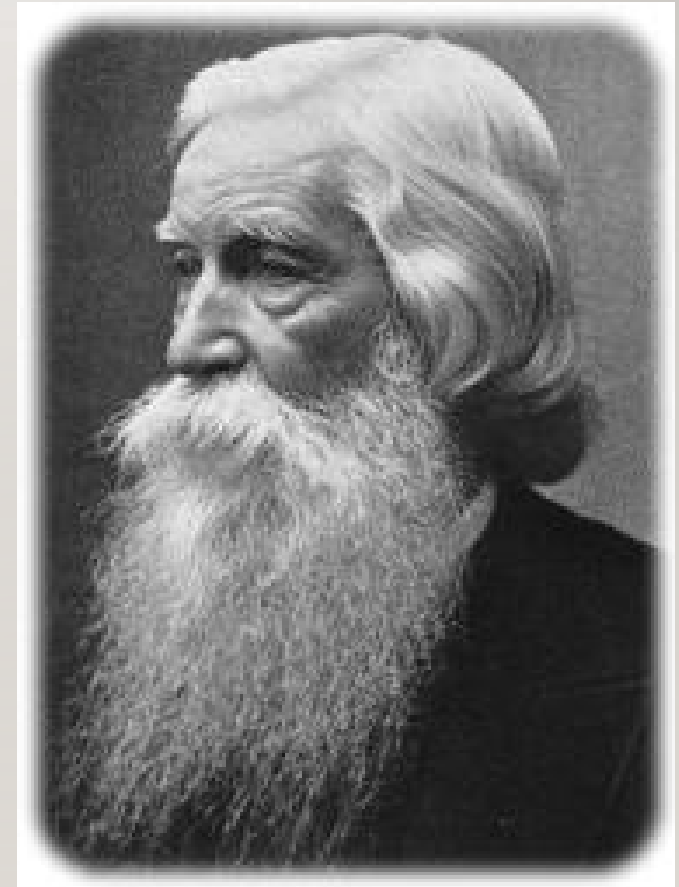
- NOT Positive thinking
- The guiding principle of the Christian

life is faith. This is not simply a psychological factor, however. To some people faith means believing that you can do a job better than you have done it in the past, or believing that a loved one will rise from his bed of sickness.... this is not the meaning of faith. True Biblical faith has God as its object. We believe God and trust His Word.*

* Pfeiffer, C. F. The Epistle to the Hebrews. Chicago, IL: Moody Press

OBJECT OF FAITH

- When missionary John Paton (1824-1907) was translating the Scripture for the South Sea islanders, he was unable to find a word in their vocabulary for the concept of believing, trusting, or having faith. He had no idea how he would convey that to them. One day while he was in his hut translating, a native came running up the stairs into Paton's study and flopped in a chair, exhausted. ¹



¹ [http:// preceptaustin.org/ hebrews_111-2.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/hebrews_111-2.htm)

OBJECT OF FAITH

- He said to Paton, “It’s so good to rest my whole weight in this chair.” John Paton had his word: **Faith is resting your whole weight on God.** That word went into the translation of their New Testament and helped bring that civilization of natives to Christ. Believing is putting your whole weight on God. If God said it, then it’s true, and we’re to believe it.*

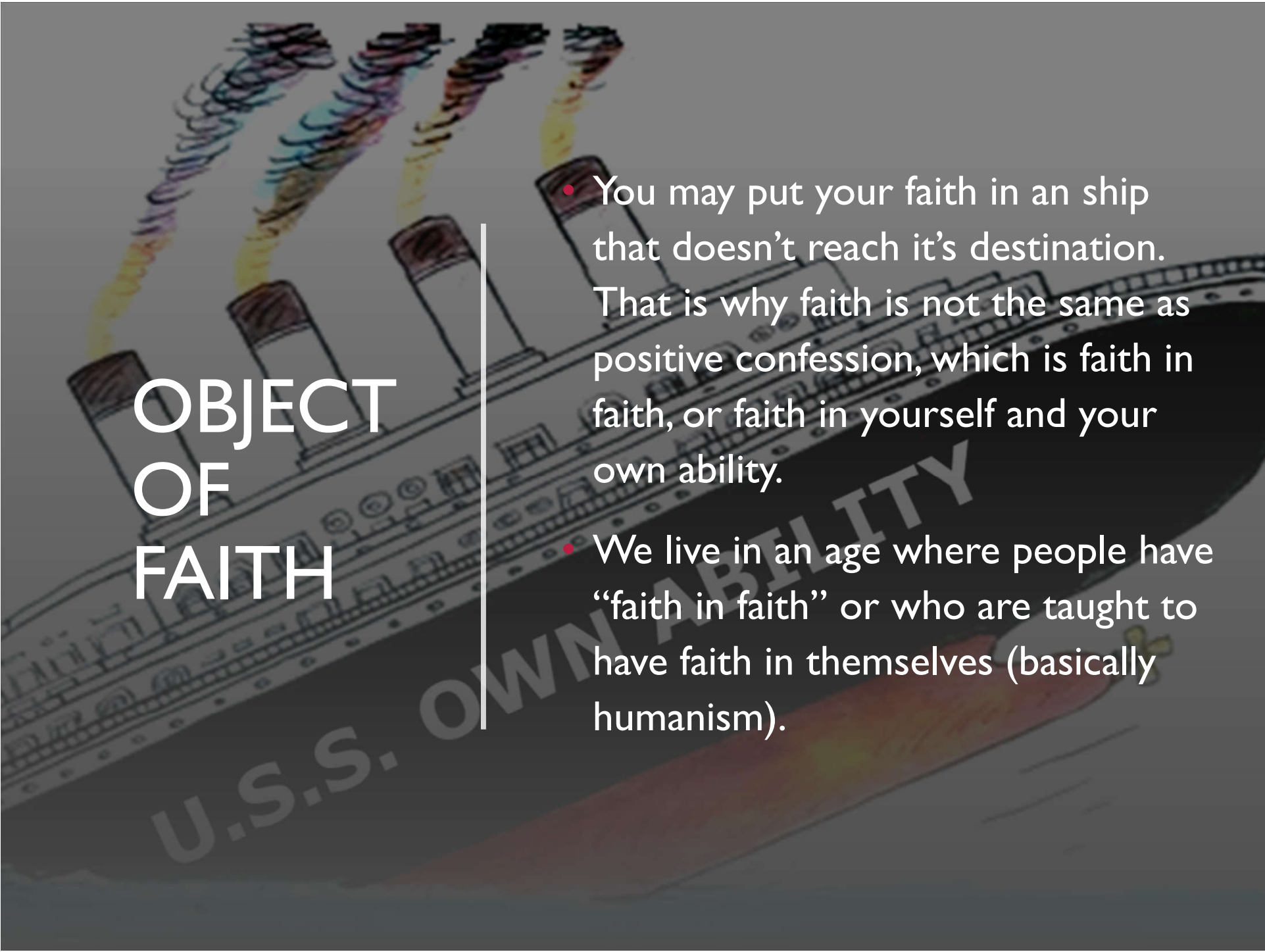
* Ibid



OBJECT OF FAITH



- Faith always has an object – i.e. that which you put your faith in.
- In order for faith to be of any value, you must have a worthy object for your faith.
- You might (like Goldilocks in the fairytale) put your faith in a chair which breaks when you put your whole weight on it.



OBJECT OF FAITH

- You may put your faith in an ship that doesn't reach it's destination. That is why faith is not the same as positive confession, which is faith in faith, or faith in yourself and your own ability.
- We live in an age where people have "faith in faith" or who are taught to have faith in themselves (basically humanism).

OBJECT OF FAITH

- But true Biblical faith has God as it's object.
 - Mark 11:22 “Have **faith in God**,” Jesus answered.
 - Acts 20:21 ... have **faith in our Lord Jesus**.
 - 2 Tim 3:14 ... salvation through **faith in Christ Jesus**.
 - Jesus speaks of “those who are sanctified by **faith in me**.” (Acts 26:18)
 - Gal 3:26 You are all sons of God through **faith in Christ Jesus**...



OBJECT OF FAITH

- Eph 3:12 In him and **through faith in him** we may approach God...
- Rom 3:22 This righteousness... comes through **faith in Jesus Christ**...
- Rom 3:26... the one who justifies those who have **faith in Jesus**.
- Phil 3:9 ... righteousness... which is through **faith in Christ**...
- And the 'saving faith' is specifically in Jesus' substitutionary sacrifice:
 - Rom 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through **faith in his blood**...

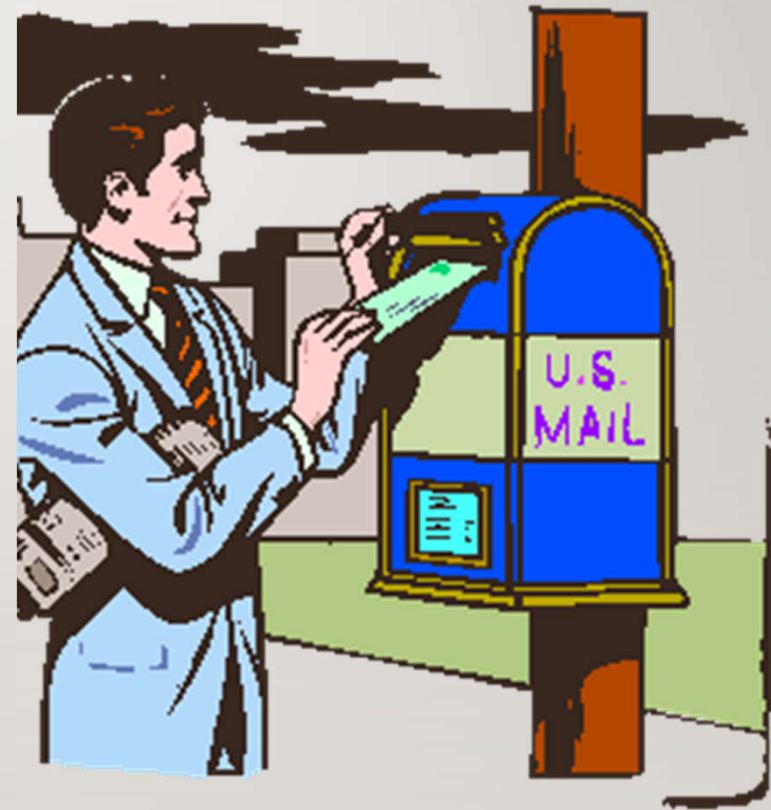


OBJECT OF FAITH

- Society rests on the faith which man has in man. The workman, toiling through the week for the wage which he believes he will receive; the passenger, procuring a ticket for a distant town, because he believes the statements of the time-tables; the sailor, steering his bark with unerring accuracy in murky weather, because he believes in the mercantile charts and tables; the entire system of monetary credit, by which vast sums circulate from hand to hand without the use of a single coin—all these are illustrations of the immense importance of faith in the affairs of men. Nothing, therefore, is more disastrous for an individual or a community than for its credit to be impaired, or its confidence shaken.*

*“Way Into the Holiest” - F.B. Meyer’s detailed exposition of the book of Hebrews

- Whenever I mail a letter, it's an exercise of trust. When I write to a distant friend, it's impossible to deliver the letter myself. I need the help of the postal service. *
- But for them to do their part, I have to drop my letter in the mailbox first. I can't hang on to it. I have to place it in the mail slot and let go. Then I must trust the postal service to take over until my letter is delivered to my friend's home. *



**FAITH IS
“LETTING GO”**

- Although I can't see what happens to it, my faith in the postal service assures me that my letter is as good as there!
- Likewise, whenever we're faced with a problem, our faith is challenged. Knowing that it's impossible to resolve the difficulty ourselves, we recognize our need of God's help. First, though, we must go to Him in prayer. Until that moment, we're still holding on to our problem.
- We know the situation won't get resolved until we let go and commit it into God's hands. Once we let go, we then must trust God to take over until the problem is resolved in His way. Although we can't see what He's doing, our faith is "the evidence of things not seen" (Heb 11:1), the assurance that His work is as good as done! *

TRUST

- When we have God as the object of our faith, we develop a relationship (which implies trust) with God.
- Faith is in general the persuasion of the mind that a certain statement is true (Phil 1:27; 2Th 2:13). **Its primary idea is trust.** A thing is true, and therefore worthy of trust. **
- Faith has two kinds of objective, first a person, and secondly a statement. When we are drawn powerfully towards a person, so as to feel able to entrust our soul, our destiny, our most precious possessions to His care, with an inward feeling of tranquility and certainty that all is safe with Him, and that He will do better for us than we could do for ourselves, that is faith.*

* Ibid ** Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary)

TRUST

- F.B. Meyer says:
- “Faith is the power of putting self aside that God may work unhindered.”
- There seem to be three necessary preliminaries in order to faith. First, some one must make an engagement or promise.*
- **Second, there must be good reason for believing in the integrity and sufficiency of the person by whom the engagement has been made.***

* “Way Into the Holiest” - F.B. Meyer’s detailed exposition of the book of Hebrews

TRUST

- Third, there follows a comfortable assurance that it will be even so; in fact, the believer is able to count on the object promised as being not less sure than if it had already come into actual possession. *
- And this latter frame of mind is precisely the one indicated by the writer of this Epistle, when, guided by the Holy Spirit, he affirms that faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the persuasion or conviction of things not seen... These three conditions are fulfilled in Christian faith. *

* Ibid.

FAITH

FORWARDING

ALL

ISSUES

TO

HEAVEN

AUTHOR:

Gavin Paynter

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