

Faith

The religious system of the first-century Judaiser was one of the works of the individual that gives salvation. A pastor explained Judaism as an ethical cult. How is one to gain the privilege of entering into the presence of God? So, we see through the book of Hebrews that it is through the sacrifice of Christ. However, we see in **James 2:19**, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.” So, we will look today at the character, the evidence, and the illustration of true faith.

Hebrews 10:38 is a fascinating New Testament quote from an Old Testament passage proving God’s redemption of man was always to be through the means of faith in God’s grace. “Now the just shall live by faith.” **Habakkuk 2:4** “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.” William MacDonald explains the verse in this way “Because the soul of the king of Babylon was lifted up with pride, he would die, but the godly remnant of Israel would live by ... faith. Verse 4c is quoted three times in the NT. The three parts of the verse—the just—shall live—by faith, go well with the emphases of the three contexts where they appear: Romans 1:17 emphasizes “the just;” Galatians 3:11 emphasizes “faith;” Hebrews 10:38 emphasizes “shall live.” In Habakkuk’s context, the literal rendering is, “By his faith the just shall live.” It could also be paraphrased as “the justified-by-faith one shall live.”

I. The character of faith (**Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.)

A. Faith is the assurance of our expectations. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for:” We all hope for things we expect to happen. The *anticipation* of a particular day, a vacation, or of a birth of a child can be almost as exciting as the actual event. When you have a great vacation, or date, or birthday, you may say that was everything I imagined, or it was better than I imagined.

1. The assurance of the faith (“Now faith is the substance.”)

a. Faith’s energy (**Galatians 5:6** For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.)

b. Faith’s end or goal (**2 Peter 1:1** Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.)

2. Our expectation in our assurance of faith (“of things hoped.”)

a. Faith makes patience because we understand God’s promises (**Hebrews 6:12** That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.)

b. God’s promises build our expectation. (**Hebrews 6:13-20** For when God made promise to Abraham because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, **14** Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. **15** And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. **16** For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. **17** Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: **18** That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: **19** Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; **20** Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.)

B. Confidence to do what we can’t physically see (“the evidence of things not seen.”)

II. The evidence of faith (**Hebrews 11:2** For by it the elders obtained a good report.)

III. The illustration of faith (**Hebrews 11:3** Through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.) The verse we are reading gives the foundation of our faith through the framing of God in His creation and through His creation.

We, as humans, are made in the image of God. Therefore, God takes particular care of His people. We will see this through this chapter; however, I want to take the time to look at the foundation of God's care, and that is Genesis one through three.

A. The breakdown of the verse

1. The Word of God framed the worlds.

2. The things which are seen were not made out of things which are visible. "Energy is invisible; so are atoms, molecules, and gases to the naked eye, yet they become visible in combination. The fact of creation as set forth herein in Hebrews 11:3 is unimpeachable. It has never been improved on and never will."

<p style="text-align: center;">Operational Science <i>Scientific Method</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Origin Science <i>Legal / Historical Method</i></p>
<p>The use of observable, repeatable experiments in a controlled environment to understand how things operate or function in the present physical universe to find cures for diseases, produce new technology, or put a man on the moon</p>	<p>The use of reliable eyewitness testimony (if available) and observable evidence to determine the past, unobservable, unrepeatable events which produced the observable evidence we see in the present</p>

A. The foundation of belief

1. For the evolutionist, their faith is set in the geological record; the evolutionist believes the rock layers determine the earth to be 1.5 to 5 billion years old from the first cell to modern man. The modern-day evolutionist puts their faith in their interpretation of the rock layers.

a. Catastrophist view: many sudden catastrophes determine the geological record.

b. Uniformitarian view: slow uniform changes over millions of years define the geological record.

2. The foundation of faith for a Christian is the Word of God. (**Genesis 1:1** In the beginning, God created -- the heaven and -- the earth. **5** And -- the evening and the morning were the first day. **8** And -- the evening and the morning were the second day. **13** And -- the evening and the morning were the third day. **23** And -- the evening and the morning were the fifth day. **31** And -- the evening and the morning were the sixth day. **2:2** And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.)

B. Why do so many Christians believe in the evolutionist's viewpoint of the world's origin?

1. The history of the compromise

a. Compromise in creation

1) Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), a Presbyterian minister. In 1804 came up with millions of years between Genesis 1:1 (In the beginning God created -- the heaven and -- the earth.) and Genesis 1:2 (And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.)

2) George Faber (1773-1854), an Anglican minister, also Hugh Miller (1802-1856), a Scottish Presbyterian layman and zoologist (day-age theory) (**2 Peter 3:8** But, beloved, be not ignorant -- of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.)

b. Noah's flood

1) William Buckland (1784-1856) Geology professor at Oxford, Adam Sedwick (1785-1873) Anglican pastor and Geologist professor at Cambridge University. They said the flood was global, but geologically limited, and that "it just affected the earth's surface, not the rock layers."

2) John Fleming (1785-1857) Presbyterian minister and zoologist (peaceful global flood.)

3) John Pye Smith (1774-1851) Congregational theologian who believed in a (local flood.)

c. Liberal Theology

1) Claims that Genesis 1-11 is mythology

2) Early 1800s Compromise with Old-Earth Geology

3) 1810 Gap Theory (Chalmers)

4) 1820 Day-Age Theory (Faber)

5) 1830 Local Flood (Smith)

2. World view conflict (**2 Corinthians 10:4-6** (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) **5** Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; **6** And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.)

a. Deism "God created the universe but put His laws of nature in the universe, so everything works according to those natural laws. He left the universe alone after creating it, and the law of nature is what sustains the universe. No virgin birth, no miracles, just natural laws."

b. Atheism

c. Biblical creation. God is above and beyond His creation, but the Bible also says God is imminent and upholding His creation.

d. We see the compromise in James Hutten: "The history of our globe must be explained by what can be seen to be happening now... No power to be employed that is most natural to the globe, no action to be admitted except those of which we know the principle. "But surely general deluges form no part of the theory of the earth; for, the purpose of this is evidently to maintain vegetable and animal life, and not to destroy them."

Charles Lyell "I have always been strongly impressed with the weight of an observation of an excellent writer and skillful geologist who said that 'for the sake of revelation as well as of science—of truth in every form—the physical part of geological inquiry ought to be conducted as if the Scriptures were not in existence'."

The problem is there are two Biblical accounts of history written in the most literal tone that demands the Christian to use the Bible in their geological findings. First, on day three of creation, dry land rises above the water, causing a significant deal in the earth's crust, and Noah's flood explains the fossil record.

e. Uniformitarian naturalism says:

1) Nature is all that exists.

2) Everything can and must be explained by time plus chance plus the laws of nature working on matter.

3) Process of geological change has continually been operating in the past at the same rate, frequency, and power as today.

3. Compromise causes shipwreck. (**1 Timothy 6:20-21** O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: **21** Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.)

a. Examples

1) C.H. Spurgeon. In 1855, at age 21, “Can anyone tell me when the beginning was? Years ago, we thought the beginning of this world was when Adam came upon it. Still, we discovered that thousands of years before that, God was preparing chaotic matter to make it a fit abode for man putting the races of creatures upon it who might have died and have the marks of his handiwork and marvellous skill; before he tried his hand on man.”

2) C. I. Scofield (1843-1921) reference Bible of 1904- places a note between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, “The first creative act refers to the dateless past and gives scope for all the geological ages.”

3) John Collins (instrumental in the ESV notes) in his book *Science and Faith* wrote, “I conclude, then that I have no reason to disbelieve the standard theories of the geologist, including their conclusion of the earth. For all I know, they may be wrong, but if they are wrong, it isn’t because they have smuggled philosophical assumptions into their work.” (p. 250)

4) Wayne Gruden. “Although our conclusions are tentative, at this point in our understandings, Scripture seems to be easily understood to suggest but not to require a young earth view, while the observable facts of creation seem increasing to focus on. An old earth view.”

5) Millard Erickson Christian theology. “At present, the view I find most satisfactory is a variation of the age-day theory. There are too many exegetical difficulties attached to the gap theory, while the flood theory involves too great a strain upon the geological evidence.”

6) Norman L. Geisler. *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* says, “The problem deepened by the fact that there is prima facie evidence to indicate that the days of Genesis are indeed twenty-four-hour periods. Most scientific evidence sets the age of the earth at billions of years.” (p. 270, 272)

b. Illustration of compromise weakening other's faith from Princeton Seminary

1) Charles Hodge (1779-1887) Old Earth

2) A.A. Hodge (1823-1886) Theistic evolution

3) B.B Warfield (1851-1921) Theistic evolution

4) Charles Templeton (1915-2001) Atheist

In 1940, Charles Templeton’s faith was damaged; he goes to Princeton to get answers, leaves, and in a few years leaves the ministry and becomes a journalist. In his book *Farewell to God*, he writes, “I believe that there is no supreme being with human attributes, no God in the biblical sense, but that life is a result of timeless evolutionary forces having reached its present transient state over millions of years.”

4. Conclusion: Christians have allowed the world to define the terms of origin science. The world has focused its guns on the foundation of faith, and that is creation. (**Psalm 40:4** Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. **Proverbs 29:25** The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.)