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Hebrews 11:1-7

1. “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
2. For by it the men of old gained approval.
3. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.
4. By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.
5. By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.
6. 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.
7. By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”

Hebrews 11 is commonly known as the faith chapter. In this first section of Hebrews 11, that we have read this morning, God gives us His stated definition of “faith”, underlines the necessity of faith to salvation, and gives us several examples of men who had saving faith.

Verse one of Hebrews 11 gives us God’s definition of faith. Quote: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” The word “assurance” used here means “having substance” or “steadiness”. The open Bible likens the term to possessing a title deed. The word “conviction” denotes a certainty that a person would even die for.

Verse 6 of Hebrews 11 gives the priority that God puts on a person’s faith. Quote: “And without faith it is impossible to please God.” Notice also verse 6 goes on to state, “For He who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” Here Biblical, saving faith is further defined--that we believe that the unseen God of creation exists, and He rewards those who seek Him. The person of faith seeks out God actively--it is our personal responsibility to do so.

Then in verse 7, God uses the example of Noah as a person who had this faith. We read: “By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”

Here Noah believed God concerning things not yet ever seen--namely a world-wide flood of water that would cover all land masses, even the highest mountains of the earth. Because he trusted God, Noah spent over one hundred years building a boat as God had commanded him. Verse 7 puts it this way: Noah “in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household.”

In this example, we see that Noah built the ark as an act of faith in God. If Noah would not have built the ark, obviously he and his household would have drowned with the rest of mankind.

In direct contrast, many people today are taught that all you have to do today in order to be saved is believe. And many religious teachers say you are saved by faith alone, and there is nothing that a person can or must do in order to be saved.

My question is this: if Noah believed God that the flood was coming, but chose not to build the ark, would Noah have had true Biblical, saving faith?