

Faith as Realization and Evidence Sixth Week in Ordinary Time Saturday,
February 18, 2017 8:15 AM Heb 11:1-7; Mk 9:2-13 (BVM) (Hope is holding on
to the promise of God, and faith is being connected to it in a sort of conscious, intuitive way.)

“Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen.”

Faith is a word that is found throughout the New Testament in many different contexts with many different meanings. Here the writer is reflecting on faith as a kind of knowledge but different from, shall we say, certainty. It is a “realization,” so it is something conscious. **It is a conscious awareness of what is hoped for.**

Now the very idea of hope is that **hope is about what isn’t actually fully present.** If something is actually fully present, you don’t hope for it. You can only hope for something that isn’t fully present. Faith is the conscious awareness of that, what is hoped for. So it is **participation in the future in a conscious way**, of being connected to what is yet to come in a real conscious way, in an intuitive way. **This gives a certain sort of vision to the mind and helps us move forward.** If we have no faith and we have no connection to what is coming, then it’s very hard to move forward, it’s very hard to know what to do or what to value, and even worse it’s rather difficult to live without anxiety and fear.

Now when we get into fear we are talking about another use of the term faith in the New Testament, especially in the gospels where **“fear is useless, what is needed is faith,”** often translated trust, the same word *pistis*. **So through this kind of conscious awareness of what is coming we can live without undue anxiety and fear and embrace the future** and move and grow and leave behind what is unhelpful or what was good, but is simply over. Good or bad, the past is over. **We are moving onward now to the future, which is glorious by the promise of God.** And hope is holding on to the promise, and faith is being connected to it in a sort of

conscious, intuitive way that really helps us as we live day after day amid all the turmoils and pressures of life as we know it.

It is also in the very same sentence evidence. Now this is a very interesting concept that **faith is already evidence of things not seen.** In modern philosophy, if you want to call it that, or modern thinking there is a lot of talk about how **faith and reason** somehow are opposed or faith and science or religion and science. People put these as opposites. Well, **they are not really opposites.** Science has its own proper place. Reason is necessary to science, but it's also necessary to faith. **Faith needs reason** too. This was pointed out by Pope John Paul in one of his encyclicals, *Fides et Ratio*. But faith is actually the evidence of what is unseen. So its basic object, if you want to call it that, or **its subject matter is not the visible world that science studies.** That's not what it's about. It's about something more than that. And it's evidence of something more than that. Again, this is all a help to our need to grow and move in our daily lives.