

Preserved by Purpose – Now Faith and Right Now Praise

One of my favorite passages of scripture is Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen," which encourages believers to have faith in the things that we do not see. When I hear most people read it, they read it with a pause after the first word Now, as though there is a comma there. Because I'd always heard it read that way, I was surprised when I looked in three different versions and noticed that there wasn't a comma there.

The word "now" is an adverb that means at the present time. As an adverb, it describes or qualifies verbs, adjectives and other adverbs by typically answering the questions of why, where, how and when. Keeping all of that in mind, it appears as though the word "now" is describing faith. I've always thought of faith in that sentence as a noun. However, doing a grammatical breakdown of the sentence made me look at it as not a passive noun but as an active verb - faith. So the word "now" isn't just describing a specific time, it is also describing a specific kind of faith.

It's so fascinating to me how one word gives a hint on what might be hindering Christians from completely trusting and believing God. Sometimes it's focusing on the wrong things and people. At other times, it is not holding on long enough to God's promises. It's not always the devil that keeps us from achieving God's best. Sometimes we block our own blessings because we choose to focus on fear and not faith. And all because we don't have a "now" faith.

Often, our faith is the "yesterday" faith that looks ahead with hope but only as far as our memory of what God has done for us in the past. We might have "future" faith, which sees the impossible and expects the incredible. This kind of faith sometimes foolishly looks past certain present day circumstances (and God's hand in them). God wants us to have the "now" faith because it is that unique point in time where God's will for our lives meets with our desire for change.

Gospel songwriter Jonathon Nelson song "Right Now Praise" reminds us that there is something powerful in a "right now" praise when he writes, "I am just one praise from my breakthrough...So I must reach down inside into the depths of my soul and bring forth a right now praise that's already in me." It's a "now" faith and a "right now" praise because it's already inside of us; we don't have to wait for it. It is our "now" faith that allows us to connect with God in the present and sustain as we wait with expectancy for our future breakthrough.



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