

# JESUS IS BETTER: letter to the Houstonians

Sermon Study Guide | Part Seven: Better than the World | 10/22/17 | @thetoryhouston @pastorerichuffman

## PURPOSE OF THIS SERMON SERIES

1. To become more familiar with the Bible through a study of Hebrews
2. To convey the stark differences between the Gospel of Jesus and religions of men
3. To inspire people to believe Jesus (as opposed to just “believing in Jesus”)

## BYE, FAITH

Mark Twain famously defined faith as “believing what you know ain’t so.” What do you think about that definition? How do you think the average person today would define *faith*?

The common dictionary definition of faith is something like “strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual apprehension rather than evidence.” What do you think about the idea that faith is blind, or *belief without evidence*?

Everybody goes through crises of faith. Share about a time in your life when you gave up on faith?

## KEY TEXT: HEBREWS 11:1

*Now faith is confidence in what we hope for  
and assurance about what we do not see.*

How is this author’s definition of faith different from the common definitions of faith today?

## TWO ROADS DIVERGED IN A WOOD

Read these two quotes about faith (out loud if you’re in a Chapter), then answer the questions below.

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

*A casual stroll through the lunatic asylum shows that faith does not prove anything.*  
- Nietzsche

What do you think are the best reasons for people to have faith?

What do you think are the best reasons for people to have no faith?

**What are the differences between the two worldviews Eric talked about: empiricism on the one hand, and faith on the other? Which worldview do you espouse most often in your daily life?**

## **GREAT THINGS HAVE SMALL BEGINNINGS**

**In Matthew 17, Jesus' disciples were frustrated because they seemed unable to replicate Jesus' miracles. They went to Jesus for advice, and he said, "You lack faith. If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" (v.20). What do you think Jesus meant by that?**

**Have you ever witnessed how just a little bit of faith can accomplish something great?**

### **KEY TEXT: HEBREWS 11:8-12**

*By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.*

**How did Abraham's faith reflect the "mustard seed effect" of faith?**

## **PLANTING THE SEED**

**On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the strength of your faith today?**

**What factors or doubts stand in your way of *increasing* your faith?**

**What do you think are the "next steps" in your faith development?**

### **KEY TEXT: HEBREWS 11:39-40**

*These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.*

**What's the difference between "believing in Jesus" and "believing Jesus"? Why is this important?**