

Study Hints for Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

Hebrews 11:1-3, 6; Psalms 46:1-3, 8-11

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be answers to the discussion questions, but hints a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What is the difference between “I believe God exists” and “I hope God exists”?

Many people say, “I believe God exists,” but it does not appear by their actions that they believe the God of the Bible exists; for the God of the Bible requires believers to live differently from the world. An atheist says, “I do not believe in God,” and many atheists act hatefully toward the God they say they do not believe in and toward the people who say they do believe in God. Some people may not believe in God, but they hope God exists. Those who hope God exists may be open to thinking about God and the truths about God in the Bible. They might be open to hearing the good news about Jesus and also open to believing the good news of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

2. What is the difference between “I believe God exists” and “I believe God”?

Someone may say that they believe God exists, but that God has very little if anything to do with our world or with them personally. Those who say, “I believe God,” live day-to-day on the basis that what God has promised and requires is true.

3. Why is faith essential to pleasing God?

Faith includes believing in God and believing that what God has revealed about himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is true. When we trust anyone to do what they have said, we please them. When we act before God as people who trust what God has said, we please God. If we do not have faith in God and believe what God has revealed in the Bible about how God expects us to believe, think, and live, it is the same as calling God a liar. We cannot please God if we are calling God a liar by the way we act and live.

4. How is “faith” “the assurance of things hoped for”?

Jesus has promised that if we believe in Him then He will grant us eternal life. We hope for eternal life and we hope to enjoy the place that Jesus has prepared for us. Faith in Jesus gives me the assurance that what I hope for as revealed in the Bible will be given

to me because Jesus is completely trustworthy. I know that what Jesus has promised me He will give to me. Jesus is my assurance for the things I hope for.

5. How can we exalt God among the nations today?

We can speak and act according to what God has revealed to us and taught us in the Bible. We can give a reason or an honest interpretation from the Bible when we explain to someone what we believe and why we do what we do. We can tell as many as possible in every way possible to us about God's love for the world through Jesus Christ, and we can tell everyone that Jesus plans to come again, and may come again soon.

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