

Hebrews 11 – 12:3 – Faith & Faithfulness

December 2015 – New Year’s Retreat

Theme: Faith chapter; Faith in Action; Faithfulness in Action

Faith... What is it:

1. BBC: Verse 1 is not really a formal definition of faith; rather it is a description of what faith does for us. It makes things hoped for as real as if we already had them, and it provides unshakable evidence that the unseen, spiritual blessings of Christianity are absolutely certain and real. In other words, it brings the future within the present and makes the invisible seen.
 Faith is confidence in the trustworthiness of God. It is the conviction that what God says is true and that what He promises will come to pass.
 Faith must have some revelation from God, some promise of God as its foundation. It is not a leap in the dark. It demands the surest evidence in the universe, and finds it in the word of God. It is not limited to possibilities but invades the realm of the impossible. Someone has said, "Faith begins where possibilities end. If it's possible, then there's no glory for God in it."
2. Hebrews 11 is full of evidence of God’s faithfulness.

A little context before chapter 11:

1. Heb 10:16-39
 - a. v16 covenant (i.e. promise)
 - b. v19 boldness
 - c. v22 full assurance of faith
 - d. v23 hold fast... He is faithful
 - e. v24 provoke one another unto love and good works
 - f. v30 vengeance is mine
 - g. v32 call to remembrance
 - h. v36 ye have need of endurance/patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.
 - i. v38 the just shall live by faith.

Hebrews 11 Intro:

1. V1 Assurance! (assurance == guarantee; conviction == proof)
2. Examples, testimonies, of those who trusted in God’s word & His Faithfulness
3. For most of those mentioned, we observe that they:
 - a. Faced shame, suffering, difficulties, or opposition... from without or within.
 - b. Took God at His word, and trusted Him to do what He said.
 - i. Evidence (of their faith) that is seen or heard (James 2:14-26)

Individual(s) witnesses	Difficulty/Challenge	Promise/assurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We 11:3 • Gen 1:1-31 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abel (v4) • Gen 4:3-5, v7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal sacrifice will be accepted.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enoch (v5) • Gen 5:22-24; Jude 14,15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preaching judgement to ungodly men. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lord would come again.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without _____ it is impossible to _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noah (v7) • Gen 6:13-22 • 2 Peter 2:5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building an ark. • Preacher of righteousness to sinful men. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lord would destroy the earth. He & his household would be saved through the flood.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abraham (v8-10) • Gen 12:1-7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving country, family, & father’s house at age 75. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great nation; name great; all families of the earth will be blessed; land of canaan (promise)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah (v11-12) • Gen 21:1-5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bearing a child beyond childbearing age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promise of Isaac & innumerable descendants.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • V13-16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not see promises physically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saw promises by faith! (Discuss different “see” words.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abraham (v17-18) • Gen 17:19; 22:1-18) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered up Isaac as sacrifice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promise of Isaac & innumerable descendants through Isaac.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaac (v20) • Gen 25:23 • Gen 27:26-40 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jacob deceived Isaac in obtaining blessing (poor vision). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaac took that as from the Lord and the blessing will stand. • God’s covenant continues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jacob (v21) • Gen 48 & 49 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally eldest is blessed over youngest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blessing Ephraim & Manasseh. Younger would be greater •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joseph (v22) • Gen 50:24-25 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living and dying in Egypt. • Sold by brothers etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God would take care of his brothers and return them to the land of promise.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moses (v23-29) • Ex 2:1-15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrath of Egyptian king. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing Him who is unseen. Identified w/people of God.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They/Israel – Red Sea (v29) • Ex 14:10-31 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egyptian army vs Red Sea. Murmuring frightened people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand and see the salvation of the Lord! 14:13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They/Israel - Jericho (v30) Josh 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly fortified enemy city. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord said, I have given Jericho into your hand! 6:2,16,27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rahab (v31) • Josh 2:1-21; 6:22-25; Jas 2:25 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing with God/Israel against her own city. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2:9 I know that the Lord has given you the land. • 2:11 Your God is God of heaven.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, prophets (v32-v38) Judg 6:11; 8:32 – Judg 4:6-5:31 – Judg 13:24-16:31 – Judg 11:1-12:7 – 1 Sam 16-17 1 Sam 7-10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary described in 32-28 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary described in 32-38
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You & Me 12:1+ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encumbrance, weight, entanglements, hostility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus! • Joy set before Him (and us)

Hebrews 12:

1. Cloud of witnesses.
 - a. Who are the witnesses?
 - b. Witnesses of what?
 - c. How does this cloud of witnesses help and encourage us?
2. What challenges do we face?
3. What do we need to lay aside?
4. Run with endurance... what does that mean?
5. Fixing our eyes on whom? Why?
6. What promises can we hold onto?