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**HEBREWS 11 - “Hall of Faith”**

**Last chapter:**

**Hebrews 10:25** “[Let us] not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

*“Let us not giving up meeting together…”*

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of coming to church. Your presence in the body is invaluable and irreplaceable. Attending church is so much more than experiencing the worship and hearing a sermon. Your presence in the body is vital whether you know it or not. The people you greet and fellowship with, the relationships you reinforce and check in on, the opportunity to see, hear, and be part of whatever the Holy Spirit has planned for that day, cannot happen unless you are present to experience it.

Even online church is not an adequate replacement for coming to fellowship in-person.

* *One person said it’s like watching a fireplace on TV. It looks good, but it doesn’t have the look, feel, smell, and warmth of a real fire.*
* *A thriving fellowship is like a campfire. We rely on the heat that comes from the convection and radiation of each other. If you remove one coal from a campfire, it would* likely grow cold and grey while the rest of the fire remains blazing

**HEBREWS 11** is one of the most unique chapters in the entire Bible because it specifically defines, discusses and gives examples of “faith” more than any other chapter. The first verse alone is both a poetic, and descriptive presentation of Faith. It is well worth memorizing and taking time to study.

**HEBREWS 11:1** ”Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for,

the evidence of things not seen.” (Heb. 11:1 KJV)

( *\*\*\*Memorize this verse\*\*\*)*

**1. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for…”**

* **“Substance”** in the original Greek is *hypostasis*, which can mean **foundation**, **assurance**, or **reality**.
* In simple terms: **Faith gives what we hope for a solid foundation—it makes our hope real even before it’s fulfilled.**

**Think of it this way:** Faith is like the **title/deed** to a house you bought but haven’t taken possession of yet. Once you close on it, it’s yours.

**Examples:**

* *Taking our kids to the closing of our house in a lawyer’s office, explaining to them, “we bought a house. And now we own it!”*
* *If you’ve ever bought something online, you pay for it before you see it. Your confirmation email is the “substance” of what you’re waiting for. You trust it will arrive, (if know the company is reliable.)*

Likewise, **our faith is based on God's character, and reliability**, not what we see or feel in the moment.

**2. “…the evidence of things not seen.”**

* **“Evidence”** here means **proof or certainty.**
* **Faith serves as proof** of what our physical eyes cannot yet see.

**In other words:**  
Faith doesn’t *ignore reality*—it **acknowledges a greater reality.**  
It’s the confident inner conviction that *what God says is more true than what my eyes can currently see.*

***Example:*** *Imagine a farmer planting seeds. He can’t see the fruit yet, but he knows—by faith—it’s growing underground. He waters and waits, trusting the process. It’s not just “baseless hope”, it’s faith in God’s reliability. That’s how biblical faith works.*

**HEBREWS 11:2-3 “**This is what “the ancients” were commended for. **3**By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, *so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”*

This is a profound philosophical and theological statement: **Everything we can see, touch, or measure came from what “could not be seen”.** God didn’t simply rearrange materials that were already lying around**, He brought everything into existence “out of nothing” (**ex nihilo**).**

***“TRUST” IS THE VERY ESSENCE OF FAITH!***

“Faith” and “Trust/Trusting” are identical words in the Greek (*pistis*)

Faith sounds more *religious*, and trust sounds more *relational.* If you have faith in God, it basically means that you “Trust Him”.

***Hebrews 11:1-4******(CJB****) 1“****Trusting****is being confident of what we hope for, convinced about things we do not see.****2****It was for this that Scripture attested the merit of the people of old.* ***3****By****trusting****, we understand that the universe was created through a spoken word of God, so that what is seen did not come into being out of existing phenomena.”*

The rest of the chapter, the author goes through the Bible and picks out several men (and women) who are commended for their faith.

**This is why it’s called the “HALL OF FAITH”** *(I’m just the “curator”.)*

These heroes in the Hall of Faith, did what they did, endured what they endured, and received what they received by Faith *(a.k.a. “by Trusting”).*

**HEBREWS 11:4 “**By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.”

This refers to Abel and Cain, the sons of Adam and Eve. Abel was a shepherd who offered God the best of his flock in faith, while Cain, a farmer, offered just crops without true faith. God accepted Abel’s offering but not Cain’s. Abel is remembered as righteous, and his faithful example still speaks today.

**HEBREWS 11:5-6“**By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: “He could not be found, because God had taken him away.” For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.”

This refers to Enoch, a man from Genesis 5 who walked faithfully with God. Because of his close relationship with God, he was taken to heaven without dying. “Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.” (Gen. 5:24) : )

***HEBREWS 11:6“****And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him*.” *(we will explain verse 6 later)*

**HEBREWS 11:7“**By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.”

This refers to Noah who believed God’s warning about a coming flood, even though it had never rained before. By faith, he built the ark as God commanded and saved his family (and two of every animal).

**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. **9**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. **10**For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.**11**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. **12**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.”

The section highlights the faith of Abraham and Sarah from Genesis 12–21. Abraham obeyed God’s call to leave his homeland, trusting in God's promise of a new land and a future nation. He lived as a foreigner, looking ahead to a heavenly city built by God. Sarah, though barren and old, trusted God’s promise and miraculously bore a son. Through their faith, they became “the ancestors of countless descendants”.

**HEBREWS 11:13-16“**All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. **14**People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. **15**If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. **16**Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.”

Each one of these people had a “relationship with God”, He was not just a religious concept or an unknown deity whom they paid homage to, they were *“looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God, … Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a place for them.”*

Their relationship with Him was built upon that fact that they TRUSTED Him.

**Hebrews 11:17-19 “**By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, **18**even though God had said to him, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” **19**Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.”

This refers to Abraham (Genesis 22), who, in faith, was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac when tested by God. Though Isaac was the promised heir, Abraham trusted that God’s promise *included Isaac*, so He could even raise him from the dead if needed.

**Hebrews 11:20**“By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future.”

In his old age, Isaac blessed his sons Jacob and Esau, speaking prophetic words about their future. Though imperfect, Isaac acted in faith, trusting God’s promises for the next generation.

**Hebrews 11:21“**By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.”

This refers to Jacob (Genesis 48), who, near death, blessed Joseph’s Egyptian-born sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, passing on God’s promises.

**Hebrews 11:22“**By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his bones.”

This refers to Joseph (Genesis 50), who, before dying, prophesied Israel’s future exodus from Egypt and asked that his bones be taken to the Promised Land. This showed his faith in God’s promise to deliver His people.

**Hebrews 11:23“**By faith Moses’ parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict.”

This refers to Moses’ parents (Exodus 2), who hid their newborn son despite Pharaoh’s order to kill Hebrew baby boys. They believed in God’s purpose for Moses and acted in faith, unafraid of the king’s command.

**Hebrews 11:24-28 “**By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. **25**He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. **26**He regarded “disgrace for the sake of Christ [Messiah]” as of greater value than the “treasures of Egypt”, because *he was looking ahead to his reward*.**27**By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king’s anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. **28**By faith he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.”

This section highlights Moses' faith. Though raised in Pharaoh’s palace, Moses chose to identify with God's people, rejecting Egypt’s wealth and sin. He valued suffering for God’s sake more than earthly treasures, looking to his eternal reward. By faith, he left Egypt, endured opposition, and led Israel in keeping the first Passover, which is a symbol of Jesus blood and redemption.

**Hebrews 11:29 “**By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.”

This refers to the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14). By faith, they walked through on dry ground, trusting God’s deliverance. When the Egyptians pursued them without faith, they were drowned.

**Hebrews 11:30 “**By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the army had marched around them for seven days.”

This refers to the fall of Jericho (Joshua 6). By faith, Joshua and the Israelites obeyed God’s unusual command to march around the city for seven days. When they did, the walls miraculously collapsed, giving them victory.

**Hebrews 11:31 “**By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.”

This refers to Rahab, a prostitute in Jericho (Joshua 2). By faith, she hid the Israelite spies, trusting in Israel’s God. Because of her faith and actions, she was spared from destruction when the city fell. *She became an ancestor of both King David and Jesus!*

*The next two sections are in stark contrast with one another, but both exhibit Faith.*

**Examples of Prosperity by Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:32-35a“**And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, **33**who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, **34**quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. **35a**Women received back their dead, raised to life again.”

This section showed how God’s people, by faith, found victory and prosperity in each of their situations.

The *last* section however, highlights men and women of faith who endured hardships, even death because of their faith, the writer tells us that the world was not worthy of them, and they receive an even better, more perfect reward to come.

**Examples of Suffering by Faith:**

**Hebrews 11:35b-40”** There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. **36**Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment.**37**They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— **38**the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground.” ***“****These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised,****40****since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.” <>. (This ending is a lead-in to Chapter 12…)*

*“None of them received what had been promised” here on earth,* however, they were all welcomed into the city *“the whose architect and builder is God.”*

This is the same celestial city in heaven where Jesus said; *“I go to prepare a place so that where I am, you may also be”.*

God’s ultimate promise is that we will all betogether there with Him, and with all these we just read about, whom he calls a *“Great cloud of witnesses”.*

**Remember:** ***“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Heb. 11:1)***

*Back to verse 6:*

**HEBREWS 11:6“**And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

We don’t have the option to please God without Faith (Trusting). Faith is in some ways God’s *“love language”,* He is pleased by our Faith when we Trust Him, and is displeased when we don’t. He rewards those who earnestly seek him, by faith.

But, when we rely completely on our own intellect and understanding and *disbelieve* or *distrust* His word, we are not acting in faith and are not trusting Him. That is called *sin.*

All sin is an act of distrust, or disbelief. From Adam and Eve on, every sin was based on a lack of faith that God’s; *ways, will, and word* was better than our way. Those who disobeyed His word, did so out of lack of Faith in God’s goodness, wisdom, and love.

Even today, when we are tempted, it’s as if we are faced with the same choice that Adam and Eve faced in the garden of Eden when the serpent said; *“don’t trust what God said, He doesn’t know what’s best for you, He doesn’t really care about you, your own way is better, not His…”* **Don’t give in to those temptations!**

**Sometimes our faith is tested, but if we trust in God, we will persevere.**

**Example:** Planting the church. The first year, things did not go well right away. We were forced out of each location we tried planting in. Many of our core people left. We had little to no staff, and could not afford much. Then we got hit with the Pandemic/Lock-downs in our second year. God was faithful to provide when we persevered not just in hope, but in the “substance of things hoped for” – Faith!

*We are all called to do that, not just in the “big” things, but in every area of our lives.*

***Trust Him, walk in Faith and live like you believe. Don’t be discouraged and give in to doubt and distrust.***

**Closing thought: *If you knew that ALL your prayers for God’s promises would be answered TOMORROW, how would you live TODAY? Live like that!***