

Building Our Faith....

....By the example of others

Introduction

1. We are continuing our study of faith so as to be able to have confidence in our God and steadfastness in our work for Him.
2. Let's keep the object of these lessons ever before us:
 - A. To show that faith in God's promises has been in all ages the means of perseverance in true religion and consequently salvation!
 - B. To show there is power in faith to keep the mind and heart, in midst of trials and tribulations, having examples before us, to adhere steadfastly to the profession of our faith.
3. We have learned over the past 4 weeks that a strong faith is a faith that is one which will suffer, remain steadfast, will persevere, and be obedient for the cause of Christ as we learned in the character examples of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Moses.
 - A. We have learned the following:
 - 1) **Hebrews 11:1**
 - 2) **Hebrews 11:6**
 - 3) **Abel - Suffering - "he being dead, still speaks"**
 - 4) **Enoch - Steadfastness - "he pleased God"**
 - 5) **Noah - Perseverance "moved with godly fear"**
 - 6) **Abraham - Obedience "obeyed when he was called"**
 - 7) **Moses - Dedication "choosing rather to suffer affliction"**
4. This morning we will now look at the faith of others which showed a true dedication to God.

Hebrews Remarks Concerning Others

Hebrews 11:11, 20-22, 30-34

- In order to gain more strength in our faith, we look now at some of these other Bible characters from the past worthy to be mentioned in this chapter.

1. SARAH (11)

- A. One might initially wonder, “why was Sarah said to have faith, when she laughed?”

Genesis 18:11-15

- 1) The Hebrew writer does not touch on this point. Therefore, I believe the emphasis has to be put on the “because” at the conclusion of the verse.
- 2) It seems that here was a case where all human probabilities were against what was predicted, and where there must have been simple trust in God.
 - a. In other words, there was nothing left but faith which could have led her to believe that in her old age she would have a son.
 1. Her unbelief is pardoned and forgiven. Her faith prevailed and is recorded by this writer. “She judged him faithful, who had promised.”
 2. When things seem to be against “all odds” our faith must kick in full steam ahead.

2. ISAAC (20)

A. The blessing described here is recorded in Genesis.

Genesis 27:26-40

- 1) He pronounced a blessing on them in respect to their future condition.
- 2) This was by faith in God who had communicated it to him, and in full confidence that he would accomplish all that was predicted.
 - a. Isaac announced what God revealed to him. He could not see into the future, but rather was acting solely on faith, that if God said it, then it must be fulfilled.
 1. When God reveals, we must act by FAITH!

3. JACOB (21)

A. In Genesis, chapter 48, we have the blessing of the sons of Joseph.

- 1) No doubt, having confidence in God, Jacob bestowed his blessing upon these two.
- 2) He knew that God would provide.

4. JOSEPH (22)

A. We find in this passage another example of a man's complete faith (confidence) in God.

1) Notice what is said in Genesis 50:24-25;

Genesis 50:24-25 And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."

2) How could he make such a request, such a prediction, unless he based it solely on faith?

a. There were no events then occurring which would be likely to lead to this, and nothing which could be a basis of it being so.

3) In Genesis 50:25, he had such a firm belief that they would possess the land of promise, that he asked them to make an oath that they would take his remains with them, that he might be buried in the land of his fathers.

a. Again, he had a firm faith that what God had spoken would be performed.

B. In the examples of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, we see men that had such a firm faith in God, that they made arrangements for the future because they knew it would happen ---- God said so!

1) Are we making arrangements for the future? God has promised and the "just shall live by faith."

5. THE WALLS OF JERICHO (30)

- A. Joshua 6:12-20** records this historical event.
- 1) There was no physical force in the marching and shouting of the Israelites to bring down those walls.
 - 2) The power of God brought them down, however:
 - a. It would not have been done, had they not obeyed.
 - b. They had to have faith in God, and then act on that faith.
 - 3) God would not have used His power, if the people had lacked faith to obey Him.
- B. A deep, abiding faith will bring down walls of doubt and worry.**
1. **God will always keep His promise!**

6. RAHAB (31)

A. A true faith is a faith that saves.

- 1) Rahab hid and helped the messengers of God because she had faith, she believed in God.**
- 2) She was rewarded for her faith. Her life was spared.**
- 3) This is remarkable to most, that such a person of this reputation to be included in the “hall of faith.”**
 - a. But it serves to show us, that we can’t judge character solely on outward appearances or on one’s past life style.**
 - b. She could have easily been one that would have exposed the spies, but she had “faith” in God that caused her to jeopardize her own life for the saving of these men.**

B. God uses people from all walks of life to show that faith in Him can be realized when one decides to do His will

7. OTHERS (32-34)

- A. It begins with **“what more shall I say?”** After talking about all these previous examples of faith, he shows us that there are even more that have exhibited worthy faith.
- 1) No doubt the writer could have continued with some other names, but these were sufficient for our understanding.
 - 2) May we simply learn from the faith of these individuals so that we can gain a deeper, far reaching faith toward God.
- B. Wouldn't it be good if others could say of us: **“What more shall I say?”** When we exhibit trusting and abiding faith, it will be evident. Paul said:

1 Timothy 4:8-10 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

Key Thought

Endurance

1. All encountered tests of life, yet they endured it. They looked to the promises of God. Their life was faith exemplified!

Next Week:
Reflecting on what we have learned from their examples

