

## "The Walk of Faith"

### Part 1

#### Hebrews 11:1-40

**Introduction:** Tonight we are coming back to Hebrews 11 where the writer is dealing with the subject of FAITH. This chapter is a continuation of the previous thought which the writer expressed in Hebrews 10.

#### Hebrews 10:38

<sup>38</sup> Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

The writer is doing his best to get the Hebrew believers to move forward in their faith and therefore he reaches back into the Old Testament to the book of Habakkuk and he uses a verse which they would have been very familiar with. He reminds them that the JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH. He is speaking here of LIVING faith and not SAVING faith. As the readers faced the persecution and the trials of life he knew how important it was to hold onto FAITH in the promises, the provisions, and the power of God. Their focus had been moved from God and now they were focused upon their trials and for that reason they were struggling.

So that is why we have this chapter which is focused upon the subject of Faith. The writer starts this chapter by defining faith and then he will move on to give examples of faith. Last week in our study we looked at the first part of Hebrews 11:1. Let me refresh your mind for a few moments.

### I. The Definition of Faith

#### Part 2

#### A. The Foundation of Faith

#### Notice Hebrews 11:1a

Last week we looked at how Vine's defines the word "substance". It refers to the; **thing put under, substructure, foundation.**

The idea is that as we come to know and understand the promises of God and we place our faith in them our faith becomes the foundation upon which we stand as we patiently wait for God's promises to be fulfilled.

So in what we looked at last week we were able to see that the greater our faith the greater the foundation is upon which we stand as we wait upon the Lord. It is this foundation of faith which gives to us the stability which we need as we pass through this life.

Notice the words of Warren Wiersbe:

***"True Bible faith is confident obedience to God's Word in spite of circumstances and consequences."***

This now brings us to where we are in our study tonight.

## **B. The Evidence of Faith**

### **Notice Hebrews 11:1**

The word "evidence" here is translated in many ways. Some translations use the word "conviction" and some use the word "assurance". Let me show you how Vine's defines the word:

***"a proof, that by which a thing is proved or tested"***

Vine's tells us the word has the idea of proving something which would be the same as "evidence". So faith then is the evidence of the unseen promises of God. This is very important for us to understand. People around us cannot see the promises of God. To many they are nothing more than words on a page. But when you and I attach our faith to the promises of God then the promises become alive to the unsaved world around us.

The word "conviction" can also be used here because faith is the result of the inner conviction when we believe the promises of God. Faith is the manifestation of that inner conviction. Let me now take you mind back to faith being the "evidence" of things not seen.

True faith changes our lives and it is impossible to suppress true faith.

### **James 2:14-18**

<sup>14</sup> *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?*

<sup>15</sup> *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,*

<sup>16</sup> *And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*

<sup>17</sup> *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*

<sup>18</sup> *Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*

True faith will be seen within our lives and the more we exercise our faith as we pass through this world our faith is a very important part of our witness. People can refuse our invitations to church, they can refuse to listen to our words of witness but they cannot ignore the way we live out our faith. The people around us should be able to see our faith in the way we live our lives.

### **1 Peter 3:15**

<sup>15</sup> *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

If people are going to ask about the hope we have with our lives then they must be permitted to see our hope. This is only possible as we walk by faith and we allow our faith to be the evidence of things not seen.

Let me show you how faith should be manifest in the life of the believer:

#### **1. Faith endures/perseveres.**

### **Romans 8:24-25**

<sup>24</sup> *For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*

<sup>25</sup> *But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*

The word "patience" here means "to have endurance". So when we exercise faith in the promises of God our faith then allows us to endure the painful times of life here because we have faith there is something far better that awaits us when we get to heaven.

#### **2. Faith will resist the pleasures of sin.**

### **Hebrews 11:24-25**

<sup>24</sup> *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;*

<sup>25</sup> **Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;**

Moses chose the path of affliction over the path of sin and pleasure because he had faith that God had something far better as he walked by His side.

**Psalm 16:11**

<sup>11</sup> *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; **at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.***

**3. Faith chooses righteousness over life and the world.**

**Hebrews 11:36-39**

<sup>36</sup> *And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:*

<sup>37</sup> *They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;*

<sup>38</sup> *(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*

<sup>39</sup> *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:*

All of this is the EVIDENCE of things not seen. These examples found in God's Word are still seen as evidence of faith after thousands of years. So let us keep in mind that our faith is a powerful testimony to the unsaved world.

Pink gives an illustration that helps us to see the difference between the saved and the unsaved:

*"Two men stand on the deck of a ship gazing toward the far horizon: the one sees nothing, the other describes the details of a distant steamer. The former has only his unaided eyesight, the latter is using a telescope! Now just as the powerful telescope brings home to the eye an object beyond the range of natural vision, so faith gives reality to the heart of things outside the range of our physical senses. Faith sets Divine things before the soul*

*in all light and power of demonstration, and thus provides inward conviction of their existence."*

Notice the words of Matthew Henry:

*"Faith demonstrates to the eye of the mind the reality of those things which cannot be discerned by the eye of the body."*

### C. The Personal Benefits of Faith

#### Notice Hebrews 11:2

Now at first glance this verse seems to declare that those of the Old Testament who walked by faith had a GOOD REPORT of all those who were around them. This cannot be the meaning! Let me show you why.

#### Hebrews 11:36-38

<sup>36</sup> *And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:*

<sup>37</sup> *They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented:*

<sup>38</sup> *(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*

Here we see that they were stoned, sawed in half, slain with the sword and were tormented and afflicted. So we can be sure that the GOOD REPORT was not from their fellow man.

The "report" which the writer is speaking of here is a WITNESS FROM GOD. Newell says the verse could be translated this way:

***"For therein the elders had witness borne to them."***

Now this "***witness borne to them***" has a twofold meaning which we can see as we search the Scriptures. First of all the Old Testament Saints had external witness that their faith pleased God. We will see many examples of this as we continue to move through this chapter but let me give you an example which is not listed here.

In Joshua 3 we read of Israel crossing the Jordan River.

**Joshua 3:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> *And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the LORD of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap.*

<sup>14</sup> *And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people;*

<sup>15</sup> *And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,)*

<sup>16</sup> *That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.*

<sup>17</sup> *And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.*

God testified of the faith of Israel by stopping the waters of the Jordan River while it was at flood stage. This is the idea of the writer of Hebrews when he writes that they "received a good report". It means that when they stepped out in faith God honored their faith.

For us there is not just an OUTWARD testimony but there was also an INWARD testimony from God.

**1 John 5:9-10a**

<sup>9</sup> *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.*

<sup>10</sup> *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself:*

We have the "WITNESS" within us who is the Holy Spirit. He then testifies when we exercise faith in the promises of God. How does the Holy Spirit testify within us?

1. Peace in the heart.

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2. Strength to withstand the storms.
3. Boldness to face the enemy.

There are many ways in which the Holy Spirit testifies when we walk by faith.

**Conclusion:**

When we walk by faith several things happen:

1. Our faith manifests the unseen spiritual world to the unsaved.
2. Our faith is used by God to open doors. (God's outward testimony)
3. Our faith brings peace, strength and boldness. (God's inward testimony)