

Hebrews 11:1-7 It Can Be Done, Part 1

A few yrs ago Denise and I were invited to Washington for a special meeting of Pastors- meet with Key Ministry leaders and Politicians

A) While there, we visited the Vietnam War memorial – WWII Memorial

B) Sobering to look at all those names – Men and women who had given up so much for our country! – HEROES

C) **Something happens in you** – a tingling in the spine / a warming in the heart – **Realize what they did.**

D) Same affect reading a biography of some part of Christian History -

1) Or you watch some movie that depicts the efforts of those who gave their lives in order to/ Establish our Faith

D) As you watch their heroic efforts it causes something to RISE W/ IN U !!

1) That is what Hebrews Ch. 11 is intended to do w/ in our hearts

HEBREWS 11 – THE Hall of Faith -

Faith is the key:

A) Ch.10 v. 38 **“The just shall live by faith!”**

B) The Just are those who have been Justified or declared righteous by the blood of Christ – sacrifice of Christ -

C) Those who were in the OT were Justified because – They looked ahead to the Messiah – looked ahead to the Cross. {Coming work of Christ

1) We are justified because we look back to the cross – the Finished work of Christ.

Those who are justified live, walk with God, follow God, by faith

A) Ephesians 2:8,9 **“We are saved by grace, through faith, not of works lest anyone should boast.”**

B) James tells us that true saving faith is a faith that works – it is evidenced by our works. James 2:14 **True faith is a working faith!**

Hebrews 11 has been called the great Hall of Faith It illustrates those who walked w/ God / who had faith in God.

A) Hebrews 11 is meant to testify to us that It can be done! The life of faith and Holiness is Possible

B) Even thru the most difficult of circumstances & living in difficult days

C) Heb 11 is a chorus of ENCOURAGEMENT for every believer who has come after them

The American philosopher Henry David Thoreau is famous for the remark "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer."

D) That is a good description of the men and women listed here. They marched to another drumbeat with others because of their faith in God.

Now we could literally spend a couple of months breaking down these stories but that is not my intent.

A) Really was hoping to take the big picture approach today – look at all 40 verses –

Aa) but the more I studied – more – saw impossible – 40 min time frame

B) So here is what we are going to do – three weeks – 3 big broad strokes –

1) See what we can learn from these examples about living the life of faith in all different circumstances.

C) Today we are going to look at V.1-7 – Divide the text into 4 parts

V.1-3 The definition of Faith.

V.4 The Priority of Faith

V. 5,6 The Passion of Faith Faith

V. 7 The Perseverance of Faith.

Faith Defined!

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Two words in Hebrews 11:1 summarize what true Bible faith is: *substance, and evidence,*

A) The word translated “substance” means literally “to stand under, to support.”

B) Faith is to a Christian what a foundation is to a house: **it gives confidence and assurance that he will stand.**

1) Building – dig deep pour the slab – sturdy – the Higher the building the deeper the foundation

C) Faith is only as strong as the Object of your Faith!
1) Object of our faith is the Living God – who created the worlds – that which is seen from that which is not seen. – Atoms and Molecules

The word *evidence* simply means “conviction.”

A) This is the inward conviction from God that what He has promised, He will perform.

B)The Living Bible is Helpful here : *¹What is faith? It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead.*

C)V.1 described in this way *faith is living in the absolute confidence that what God has said He will do even when the fullness of the promises aren't seen Yet.*

1) OR AN inward assurance that results in an outward confidence
even when can't see what future holds.

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, accepts the impossible!

C) V.2 The life of faith – is the only way to obtain a good testimony

D)faith is the only way to obtaining a good testimony it is the only way any of us will ever hear

1) *Well done my good & faithful Servant enter into the Joy*

Now as we come to v.4 – begins to focus on various Characters – Abel, Enoch and Noah – In these three Characters we see a natural progression to faith.

A)Worship, walking and working- Faith grows – develops

B)The story of Abel reveals for us the Priority of Faith

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

The story of Cain and Abel takes place in Genesis ch.4 – two brothers who were the first two children of Adam and Eve.

A)Abel was a shepherd and Cain was a farmer – they both came to worship the Lord.

B)Here we are simply told that Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain

C)Now what was the deal with these two offerings? Why was Abel's considered an offering of Faith?

The best Commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself.

A)Romans 10:17 “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”

B)Faith is going to have it's priority in the fact that it is based in God's word.

C)Now we know that in the book of Genesis in Ch. 3 after Adam and Eve sinned ate the forbidden fruit – Naked, ashamed, hid themselves.

God came looking for them – Seeks after sinners – Not a Cosmic Cop – but a heart broken father.

A) God found Adam – made provision for his sin – sacrifice of an animal - Probably a lamb.

B) Provision for his nakedness – Animal skins – instead of **Itchy fig leaves**

C) There God in the very beginning – established that without the shedding of Blood there would be no remission of sins

Innocent victim would pay the price for Man's failure.

A) Now I believe this method of Sacrifice was passed down from Adam and Eve to their Boys – which is why Abel brought a Lamb –

B) Abel's **sacrifice was according to the revelation of God** – His faith was connected to God's word – God declared him righteous as a Result.

1) The lamb that Abel brought pointed to the **THE LAMB OF GOD WHO WOULD COME**

C) **Scarlet thread of redemption** { Big picture – God keeps pointing to in this Chapter – Examples hinge around the promise of a Redeemer.

1) He would create a vehicle for Salvation

D) So Abel's sacrifice was accepted because it was according to the revelation of God – A lamb would pay the price.

Cain on the other hand – brought that which represented the works of his hands – His crops – Grain offering had not been established yet

A) Look what I grew – look what I made.

B) Cain represents the heart of the person who says – My efforts will be enough – What offering can I bring – what can I make God?

C) I will make it to God based on my own efforts -

Now This is the Foundation of Faith & the basis of all true worship! It has to be Scriptural

A) Speaking – scheduling conflict -Pilot – asking questions – what about this / The Bible says –

B) True faith has as it's priority – foundation – Scripture – True worship scriptural

Bb) in Jesus' day John 4/ Samaritan Woman at the well discussion about worship: *Jerusalem or this mountain outside of Samaria*

1) Jesus said to her the place really doesn't matter / The way

JOHN 4:23 ,24 *"the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him."God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

C) Jesus says something amazing here: God is seeking after those who will worship Him / seeking worshippers
1)Approach Him by faith – not blind faith – but faith that **has substance – truth** – attached to the word of God
2)Heart - Sincere IN Spirit –

So Abel teaches us about the Foundation of faith – that it is going to be Built upon the word of God

A)True worship is going to be according to the Word of God – In Spirit & in truth

B)The Blood of Abel still speaks -

C)Abels are always being ridiculed by Cains Those who want to say **IT CAN'T BE THAT EASY**

1)They want to ignore scripture, add to scripture – as the basis for Faith

Next we come to Enoch in v. 5,6 / The Passion of Faith!

5 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Enoch's life pictures the next natural progression of Faith – Starts with a revelation of truth – Sinner – Savior – Jesus came to Save me!

A)First born again worship is the natural response – so thankful that sins are forgiven / that my guilt is removed - / going to heaven: Praise the Lord

B) But there needs to be the progression where those times of worship become a Lifestyle – where My passion is to Walk w// God – Know Him

Walking speaks of fellowship / companionship

A)This is what the Lord desires of us Fellowship He wants us to know Him / walk w/ Him each day / spend time in His Word! Jn 17:3

B) Now in Gen 5 we are told that Enoch walked w/ God for over 300 yrs

1) He walked w/ the Lord thru good times & bad times / gained a testimony that He pleased God

C) Finally after 300 plus yrs God said – *Enoch we have been walking together for a long time now – closer to my house than yours just come home w/ me* – { **Enoch walked w/ God and was not – God took Him** }

V.6 Declares that without faith it is impossible to please God

A)those who come to Him - must believe that He is - (He is God) - and rewarder of those who diligently seek Him!

B) Enoch's life reveals to us that God rewards us by giving Him more of Himself.

C) Diligently – **Pelicans and Paul** – Passion – Reckless abandonment

D) The reward is more of Jesus!

1) Enoch – ultimate reward – come on home

The message of the Life of Enoch is a little deeper than that because we learn that He lived for over 300 yrs in the mist of a wicked society

A) But in the midst of that wicked society – Enoch had this testimony that He pleased God.

B) Sometimes in the midst of the darkness that surrounds us we can feel like it is too hard to please God. –

1) Always bombarded with temptation - Walk is like a roller coaster

C) Or we want to **hunker down** and isolate ourselves from the world and the only way to really walk with God is to withdraw

D) Sometimes in our walks we can feel like we can't go another day in this wicked world – we long so desperately for the Lord to return / take us

If I have to read or listen to one more News report – depicting another Child being molested / another mass murder / Political scandal

E) Enoch rises off the pages of scripture & Testifies that it can be done / we can live a life that is pleasing to God
1) Walking with Him *one day at a time* Enoch modeled that for over 300 yrs

Then He moves to NOAH – v. 7

7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, { Never rained} moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Next natural progression – Worship to walking to working – or serving

As we move from Enoch to Noah we see another man who walked with God! But who also called to a special work!

A.) Both lived during a very wicked time in the history of world

B.) Described in the book of Gen as time of great wickedness where the intents of man's thoughts and heart was continually evil!

1.) *All day long - evil and wickedness!*

C) It was during this time that Enoch and Noah walked w/ God that God called Noah to a special project!

1) Enoch home / Noah called to a work – Parallels Church & Israel in Trib

Notice a few things here about Noah Great Illustration of the Perseverance of faith.

A)God called Noah to a special work – Noah was called to create **a vehicle of Salvation BOAT** – that would take 120 yrs to build.

B)Noah was 100miles from the ocean – but moved with Godly fear

C)Noah had a reverence for God – Deep respect for God.

Faith that is motivated by a deep reverence for God – will lead you to do things that seem – illogical.

A)Greatest times of Ministry – Conf in Yugo – War – embassy closed

Pastor Chuck: great time - Pastor – Not going – My wife – Go!

B)**God poured out His spirit** – didn't get stopped at one check point

1)Amazing

C)Noah moved with Godly fear – doesn't question – Rain – water – ocean - Are you sure?

Noah Persevered for 120 yrs

A)Imagine the ridicule – what you doing Noah – Boat! – Flood – water sky

B)Noah's faith teaches us that it is possible to walk with God and stand for God even when the rest of the world thinks we are fools.

C)And **Noah's faith teaches us that we can continue to serve the Lord even when there doesn't seem to be very much fruit**

1)120 yrs only 6 converts

D)Pastor Chuck - 17 years - little visible fruit! Now - we are all recipients

So Noah rises up off the pages of Scripture in the face of these circumstances / circumstances that are similar to what we face today

A)And Noah **TESTIFIES** to us that it **CAN BE DONE**, the life of faith & Holiness can be **LIVED – THE RACE CAN BE WON!!!!**

B)**Scarlet thread of redemption** – Noah was called to build a vehicle of salvation { A wooden Boat} to escape coming Judgment –

1)God sent Noah to preach – call pp to repentance – Proclaimer

Today we have an ark {wooden Cross} that we are pointing people to the vehicle of salvation - Jesus! – Repent, turn – escape coming Judgment

A.) All called to be an influence on family, friends, neighbors, people at work

B) Three examples of faith -

1) Priority – connected to God' word -

C) Passion – Fellowship

D) Persevere {God keeps His promises

Cling to Him today – His word

Passionately pursue

Patiently persevere – He is faithful