

Concluding Remarks

◆ HANDOUT ◆

► This is the final study lesson taken from the list of the faithful in Hebrews 11; The study will be extended to include the first three verses of chapter 12.

► Up to verse 33, the writer of Hebrews named specific people in his list. If he named them, we studied their lives and tried to see how they made the “By Faith” list. But, from verse 33 forward, he just listed categories rather than specific names. The first few categories were very focused and it was easy to see whom the writer probably had in mind. That didn't last very long; the categories became more generalized, creating a situation where any number of people could fulfill the writer's general statement. Trying to determine whom we should study from this vague list became a bit of a challenge, especially since there were multiple persons in the Old Testament, who could represent each general category. In a few cases, those who could fit the description, we had already studied. [Of course there were people in the New Testament who also fulfilled these descriptions, but since the writer of Hebrews confined his examples throughout all of Hebrews 11 to Old Testament persons, it is prudent that we do likewise.]

Of course, in the end, we did select people to study, but, rather than ignore the others who could fulfill the various descriptions given by the writer, the following chart has been created, showing the “Acts of the Faithful” and examples of the various people in the Old Testament who had been involved in these situations.

Victorious Acts of God's Faithful:	Examples of the Old Testament Faithful Ones:
Those who were valiant in battle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the Judges like Samson • King Saul was a valiant warrior • All of David's mighty men. • Gideon was called a valiant warrior • Cush, the father of Nimrod, was called a valiant warrior • Joshua was valiant
Those who were imprisoned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joseph, Jacob's 11th son • The prophet Jeremiah
Those who were tortured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nebuchadnezzar tortured, then killed King Zedekiah's sons while the king was forced to watch. • Samson was tortured and his eyes were gouged out.
Those who were sawn in half	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaiah, according to reliable tradition, was sawn in half by Manasseh
Those who were slain with the sword	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to battle casualties, there are 445 instances in the Bible where the sword was used to kill as a means of judgment.
Those who were stoned to death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zechariah, grandfather of Hezekiah was stoned to death between the altar and the temple. • Naboth was stoned so that King Ahab could turn his

	vineyard into a vegetable garden. • Jeremiah was forced to go to Egypt where Jewish tradition states he was stoned to death because of his unpopular prophecies.
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CONCLUDING SUMMARY BY THE WRITER OF HEBREWS ...

Hebrews 11:39-40 • *These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect [complete].*

Q: What does it mean “yet none of them received what had been promised?”

Q: The writer of Hebrews makes a similar statement regarding Abraham in Verse 10. He said that Abraham was looking forward to the city with a foundation whose architect and builder is God. Is the writer speaking about the same thing in Verse 39?

In verse 10,

In verse 39,

Q: The writer reflects that those on his list of faithfuls did not receive what had been promised because God had planned “something better.” Exactly, what was the “something better?”

Q: What does the writer mean when he says that these ancient faithful will be made “perfect” only when they are “together with us?”

Hebrews 12:1-2a • *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.*

Q: Who or what is the “great cloud of witnesses?”

Q: What did their message of encouragement contain?

Q: Once we have dealt with sin in this manner, what are we to do next?

Q: What exactly is the “race that has been marked out for us?”

Paul said it so well in Acts 20:24 ...

Acts 20:24 · However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.

Q: How are we to accomplish this race?

Q: How is Jesus the “author and finisher” of our faith?

Two Verses that support this statement:

Matthew 28:20 · Behold, I am with you always – [the whole of everyday] – until the end of the world.

Philippians 1:6 · He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

► **Note:** Adding the phrase “the whole of everyday” to the verse in Matthew is the result of a word study on the word “Always.” Jesus wasn't just promising to be around or available to us as we participate in this journey to heaven after our new birth. Jesus was promising to be involved in every aspect of our lives, good and bad, sad and happy, every single minute of everyday as long as we have breath and until He calls us home. He will run the race with us and will be there when we finish.

For the joy ...

Hebrews 12:2b-3 · For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Consider Jesus who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Q: What is the “joy” that was set before Jesus as he endured the cross?

Q: What was the “shame” that Jesus scorned?

Q: The Cross was only part of the shame that Jesus endured for us. What were some of the other shames that were inflicted upon Him, for our sake?

Q: What are the implications from the statement “*He sat down at the right hand of the throne of God?*”

Q: On what basis does the writer of Hebrews say: *Consider Jesus who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart?*”

► **This is one of the themes presented in the book of Hebrews:**

Hebrews 2:14-18 • Because God's children are human beings – made of flesh and blood – the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could He die, and only by dying could He break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could He set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying. We also know that the Son did not come to help angels; he came to help the descendants of Abraham.

Therefore, it was necessary for him to be made, in every respect, like us, his brothers and sisters, so that He could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. Then He could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. Since He himself has gone through suffering and testing, He is able to help us when we are being tested.

► We have now completed Chapter 11 of Hebrews. We have looked at the lives of many persons in Scripture – people who lived their life by faith, or, at least had one significant moment of faith that changed the course of life for them and those around them. We have covered the following:

1	Cain & Abel	12	Barak
2	Enoch	13	Samson
3	Abraham & Sarah	14	Jephthah
4	Isaac	15	Prophet Samuel
5	Jacob & Esau	16	King David
6	Joseph	17	King Asa
7	Ephraim & Manasseh	18	King Josiah
8	Moses	19	Caleb

9	Birth of Israel as a Nation	20	Daniel
10	Joshua & Jericho	21	Elijah & the Widow of Zarephath
11	Gideon	22	The life of the Prophet Jeremiah

Q: Of those we have covered in this study, which one, or ones, seem to best embody the statement that they lived “By Faith?”

Q: Overall, what did you learn from this study that you were able to apply to your daily life?



This completes our study of Hebrews 11 – the Faith Chapter.

