

Discussion Guide: Hall of Fame of Faith – Part 5

Let us examine the Scriptures like the Bereans who "received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." Acts 17:11 (NIV)

July 6th, 2003: "Hall of Fame of Faith - Part 5" by Pastor Kimber Kauffman, Senior Pastor College Park Church. Pastor Kauffman continued his series on faith based on Hebrews 11 with a focus today on a persevering faith even when it is hard by looking forward to eternal reward. He ended by reading a letter to stretch our concept of faith and supported his earlier assertion that "true faith does not just agree with God's Word, it acts on it".

Pastor Kim spent much of his time reviewing the first 10 chapters of Hebrews. There is a clarion call through out the chapters building up to the "hall of fame of faith" that warns us not to drift away, shrink back, neglect our salvation, or the fervent love of one another. Added to the theme of perseverance was the focus on a great reward if we endure by faith. We are not to think that we are beyond being motivated by what is to come. Christ endured even the cross for the joy set before Him.

By faith we know that we are created by God for a purpose. By faith Abel sacrificed a blood offering to God, which pointed to Christ's sacrifice for us. By faith Enoch walked and fellowshiped with God, which is what God desires of us. Faith made all the difference in both cases. God made a covenant with Abraham and Sarah that had a promise of a multitude coming from a barren womb. In the new covenant He again uses the womb of a woman but this time salvation was born to all men. Each received some rewards on earth but the greater significance came after their death.

Kimber challenged us not to take our faith for granted and not to be a careless Christian. Marching through the book he camped out on verses like Hebrews 5:11-14 which exhorts us to keep growing and to mature. Like the reverent fear of Noah that brought about faith to build a boat a long way from water and having not seen rain we are reminded that we should fear being dulled and losing the will to repent. Hebrews chapters 6 and 10 were cited as God's Word warns about falling away.

Discussion Questions

Read Hebrews 11: 7-12 to start off the teaching application time.

1. What are some ways you can hang on to faith when it is hard?
2. What have you done by faith this week?
3. As brothers and sisters in Christ what is our responsibility to one another when it comes to building our faith?
4. Memorize one verse in the first 11 Chapters of Hebrews to live off of this week to encourage your faith and share it with the group.
5. Has there been "spiritual drift" in your life? What is one thing you could do this week to pay closer attention to what you have heard and how might you apply it?

"Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." James 1:22

Background Information

Here are the scripture references used on the overheads as Pastor Kimber took us on the journey of persevering faith: Hebrews 2:1, 2:3, 3:14-15, 4:1-2, 4:6, 6:1-6, 10:26-31, 10:35-39, 6:10-12. Note: Pastor is now using the *English Standard Version* (ESV) because he finds it more accurate than the NIV. For example, Hebrews 11:11-12 is translated...

11 By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

The *English Standard Version* Bible is published by Good News Publishers in Wheaton, IL. and is available on-line at <http://www.gnpceb.org/esv>.

Key phrases used by pastor throughout the journey: Don't give up and turn back...keep the faith. Persevere and keep going. Put faith in what you hear from God's word. Faith believes and then acts. A life of faith is important. The faith that saves is a faith that endures. Faith believes it is worth it all.

Scripture that relate promises with rewards: Hebrews 10:35b, 11:6, 11:6c, 11:26, 12:2, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, Romans 8:18. Our challenge today is the same...be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (Hebrews 6:12).

Here is the special chart presented at the end of the sermon:

Abrahamic	----- Covenant -----	New
Abraham/Sarah		Joseph/Mary
God promises children as numerous as the sand.		God promises salvation.
That promise not even phased by the fact that the couple called were past age.		This promise comes through an even more amazing Birth, a virgin conceived!
God's promise is good no matter how impossible it may seem.		Again God's promise is good no matter how dark the times or how impossible it may seem.
God's promise is always true but often slow. For example, <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many years Isaac• More years Jacob & Esau		God's promise is always true but often slow.
Soooo, the key is a faith that endures the hard times.		Soooo, the key is a faith that endures the hard times.

Concluding thought and challenge: Remember, God loves to help you determine his will for your life. ***What does God want you to do by faith?***

Remember to fill out your "By faith..." statements and place them in the boxes in the sanctuary.

Statements of Faith

By faith statements, based on what has happened, or is happening, in my life.

By faith statements, based on what I feel God may be leading me to do.