

UPRISING 03

Faith is a Person... Almost!

The most popular scripture about faith is Hebrews 11.

It opens with a verse many of us are familiar with...

Hebrews 11:1-2

Now faith is the ^asubstance of things hoped for, the ^bevidence of things not seen. ² For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony.

- **No other text stirs us up in matters of faith than this**, detailing the great exploits that the men and women of old accomplished through faith.

A few astounding examples stand out...

Hebrews 11:4

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.

- **It takes faith to offer a more excellent sacrifice.**

Hebrews 11:5

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.

- **It takes faith to believe you are pleasing to God and to not suffer death**

Hebrews 11:7

⁷ By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, 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.

- **It took faith to prepare for rain when there had never been any!**

Hebrews 11:8-10

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

- **It takes faith to leave an inheritance you can see and go look for an unseen one. It takes faith to live as a pilgrim in a place your own.**

Hebrews 11:11

¹¹ By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she ^[a]bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

- **It takes faith to conceive in old age**

Hebrews 11:24-26

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the ^[a]passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶ esteeming the ^[b]reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures ^[c]in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

- **Moses saw the reproach of Christ thousands before it occurred.**

Hebrews 11:31

³¹ By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who ^[a]did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

- **It took faith to believe that the spies would win against a mighty city**

And then he reaches my favorite part...

Hebrews 11:32-35

³² And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

- **What a Hall of Faith!!!**

And yet, a quick browsing through the book of Hebrews reveals that it is NOT about faith, but rather it is about the PERSON OF CHRIST.

- Christ our new High Priest
- Christ the new Tabernacle
- Christ the new Sacrifice
- Christ our Rest
- Christ the Mediator of the New Covenant

That is all the way from chapter one to ten, and then all the way from 12-13.

He sets forth clearly what it is that he is writing about.

Hebrews 1:1-4

1 God, who ^{1a}at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the ^{1b}worlds; ³ who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had ^{1c}by Himself ^{1d}purged ^{1e}our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

- **Why would chapter eleven almost seem like another book that was just smuggled into the text, except if we are not reading something aright.**

He (CHRIST) is both the SUBSTANCE and the EVIDENCE of our faith.

The men of old, walked by faith and performed miracles in the name of the One of whom they had neither evidence nor substance, but simply walked by faith.

It's a bit like knowing that one of your great-grandchildren will be the president of the nation one day, and you start moving around with bodyguards and living like a VIP.

Hebrews 11:39-40

³⁹ And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

- **Whereas they lived by faith and performed astounding miracles, only seeing from afar that which was to come, our case is different.** We have something better.
- **Christ is no longer at a distance. He is IN US, and we are IN HIM.**

Colossians 1:27

²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: ^{1a}which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Ephesians 1:7

⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

Let us look unto Him

Hebrews 12:1-2

12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the ^{1a}author and ^{1b}finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- **He is. He is the author and finisher. He's the beginning, the end and the middle.**
- **Having HIM, we have EVERYTHING we need for faith. Go for it!**