



Church of the Resurrection

Date: Oct. 28th, 2012

Theme: "Experiential Faith"

#14 in the Series on the Book of Hebrews

1. Faith is...
 - a. Believing God
 - b. That which keeps us looking beyond what we can see with our natural senses.
 - c. Not seeing the tangible; looking beyond what our eyes see.
 - d. The long parentheses between the undeniable appearances of God's glory.
 - e. A substance.
2. Faith does.
 - a. Faith can do extraordinary things because it emancipates our will to do what we previously thought we could not do. It frees us to be and to do what had been impossible prior to salvation.
 - b. Demonstrates what's happening on the inside.
3. Distinguishing "*saving faith*" from "*experiential faith*."
 - a. Saving faith; Eph. 2:8-9, "*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*"
 - i. Believing God in the context of Christ's death and resurrection.
 - ii. Makes us fits for heaven.
 - iii. No amount of good works "*saves*" us; saving faith is seated in the heart, passive, seeing what Christ has already done for us.
 - iv. Saving faith is "*invisible*"
 - v. We don't "*do*" good works to prove we're saved, we do them because they're released through faith.
 - b. Experiential faith; James 2:17-18, "*Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.*"
 - i. Continuing to believe in God opens vast possibilities that may be experienced right here and right now.
 - ii. Makes us fits for earth. "*We are not ready to live until we're ready to die.*"
 - iii. Salvation produces works; experiential faith is seated in our will, active, exploring unlimited possibilities through faith once we are persuaded God loves us.
 - iv. Experiential faith is the demonstration of the invisible saving faith.
 - c. The stigma of faith.
 - i. We believe that God created everything out of nothing; creation *ex nihilo*.
 - ii. Called to believe without, or even despite, the evidence. Sadly, many feel the foolish need to prove faith in order to establish faith.
 - iii. Understanding comes as we believe in God; "*the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...*" By believing God, there comes a breakthrough to knowledge and understanding.
4. Yesterday's faith
 - a. Abel
 - i. First man of faith

- ii. Sacrifice of works (Cain) versus faith (Abel)
- iii. Cain was warned and still fell. (cf. Heb. 10:26)
- b. Enoch
 - i. Jude 1:4-5, *"Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, 'Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.'"*
 - ii. There were two Enochs; one the son of Cain who had a city named after him, the other *"walked with God"* and was seen no more. Which one is remembered today? Pleasing God comes with greater benefits.
- c. Noah
 - i. Moved by fear
 - ii. Walked with a stigma for 100 years.
- d. Abraham
 - i. Went not knowing where; sojourned
 - ii. Inherited a promise, not any land; dwelled in tents
 - iii. Trusted for inheritors, beyond what is naturally reasonable.
 - iv. Tested and proved.
- e. Sarah
 - i. Told that she *also* believed.
 - ii. Despite what we read of her unbelief, she's remembered for her faith. From laughing *at* God (cf. Gen. 18:12) to laughing *with* Him. (cf. Gen. 21:6)
- f. Isaac
 - i. Blazing beginning, quiet ending.
 - ii. The seed of Abraham is posterity of faith, a posterity only made possible because of divine intervention.
 - iii. *"The Fear of Isaac"*; Gen. 31:42, *"Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night."*
 - iv. Story of well digging
- g. Jacob
 - i. Checkered past leads to a life of faith.
 - ii. Having once stolen a blessing, he ends his life by freely giving his blessing.
- h. Joseph
 - i. Gen. 50:20, *"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."*
- i. Moses
- j. The Hebrews
- k. Walls of Jericho and Rahab
 - i. 2 Cor. 10:4-5, *"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ..."*
 - ii. The prostitute whose belief gained her entry into Jesus' genealogy.
- l. Gideon; continually asked God for signs, but walked into an amazing miracle.
- m. Barak; recognized his own weakness and never wanted the fame for himself.

- n. Samson; his death was his finest hour.
 - o. Jephthah foolish vow.
 - i. Shunned by family
 - ii. Knowledge of Jewish history, but Jewish law.
 - p. David
 - q. Samuel
5. Persecuted faith
- a. Subdued kingdoms
 - b. Dead raised to life
 - c. Tortured, not accepting deliverance
 - d. Trials of mocking, scourging, chains and imprisonment
 - e. Stoned, sawn in two
 - f. Wandered in sheepskins, destitute
6. Of whom the world was not worthy.
- a. This faith is not for a generation, it's for all time and all peoples who call on Christ.
 - b. True faith is original; it's different for each person depending upon their circumstances and challenges. It will often times be unprecedented, transcending our own expectations.
 - c. True faith is unlimited in potential; it transforms lives and changes nations. Faith has vision.
 - d. True faith does not expect reward.
 - i. Dan. 3:16-19, *"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.' Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated."*
 - ii. Luke 17:10, *"So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"*