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Message Series: Hebrews: Greater Than**Message Title: Trusting the Unseen God by Faith****Scripture: Hebrews 11:1-2, 23**

Hebrews 11 is often called the Hall of Faith and is frequently taken out of the broader context of the whole book of Hebrews. However, Hebrews 11 naturally follows Hebrews 10:39, where the preacher reminds his listeners, *"We are the faithful ones, whose souls will be saved."* Hebrews 11 is a list of illustrations used by the preacher to remind his audience of the old stories (in the Old Testament) and how people lived by faith.

Faith is the drumbeat of Hebrews 11, with the noun "faith" appearing 24 times, and the verb "believe" or "have faith" appearing once. Overall, the preacher uses the noun "faith" 32 times throughout the sermon, the adjective "faithful" five times, the verb "believe" twice, and the noun "unbelief" twice. Lack of faith prevented the wilderness generation from reaching the promise (3:12, 19: 4:2). Only those who have faith inherit what has been promised (6:12), draw near to God (10:22), and are saved (10:38-39). Jesus serves as both the example and the source of faith (12:2).

What Faith Is (11:1-2)

Hebrews 11:1 defines faith:

Faith shows the reality of what we hope for (11:1a)

- The word "reality" in the NLT can also refer to assurance, confidence, or a solid foundation. Faith isn't wishful thinking; it is grounding your life in the future promises of God, as if they were already here.
- Faith is rooted in the certainty of God, not the certainty of circumstances. Faith looks forward because God's character and actions in the past give the believer confidence that what is hoped for will become a reality. Hope in the Bible isn't weak or uncertain; it's a confident expectation rooted in God's character.
- The preacher of Hebrews sees faith as a firm foundation. It is trust in God, based on divine revelation, that results in tangible expressions of obedience.
- In the examples cited by the preacher, faith is forward-looking. Noah based his actions on "things that had never happened before" (v.7); Abraham "was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God" (v. 10); he and other faithful Israelites were "looking forward to a country they can all their own (v. 14); Isaac blessed Jacob "for the future" (v. 20); Joseph "said confidently that the people would leave Egypt" (v. 22); Moses in faith "was looking ahead to his great reward" (v. 26).

it is the evidence of things we cannot see. (11:1b)

- "Evidence" means proof or conviction. Christian faith is not blind; it's spiritual sight. Faith doesn't deny reality; it trusts in a greater reality not seen by the eyes. This definition of faith dances between the tangible and the supernatural, the seen and the unseen.
- The preacher remembers the ancients for their faith, which looks beyond the visible world to the invisible spiritual realities that transcend this world. Christians believe that when the world was created,

“what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen (v. 3); Moses “kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible (v. 27).

Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation. (11:2)

- Faith in Hebrews describes the fundamental posture that one must have to enter God’s presence and, ultimately, his promised rest. It refers to the disposition toward God, the basic response to God that leads to faithfulness. *“It is impossible to please God without faith” (3:6).*
- God commended these people, and his voice affirmed their faith and faithfulness. Faith is the currency of heaven. God’s approval doesn’t come through success or status but through trust.
- Faith is a mental belief, an active trust, a willing obedience, and an enduring loyalty.

What Faith Does (11:23)

It was by faith that Moses’ parents hid him for three months when he was born. They saw that God had given them an unusual child, and they were not afraid to disobey the king’s command.

- Exodus 1-2 is the background of this brief verse. Exodus opens with tragedy as a new Pharaoh arises who did not know Joseph. He enslaves the Israelites, fearing their growing numbers. In desperation, he commands that every Hebrew boy be thrown into the Nile.
- In that dark moment, two ordinary people, Moses’ parents, Amram and Jochebed (Exodus 6:20), face an impossible choice. Do they obey Pharaoh or trust God?
- They see that their child was “unusual” or “beautiful,” meaning special, marked by God for a purpose. But that recognition doesn’t remove fear; it requires faith.
- So they hide him, not recklessly, but faithfully. They craft a tiny ark of reeds, coat it with pitch (just like Noah’s ark), and set it afloat on the Nile, an act of desperation and devotion all at once. They couldn’t control the outcome. They could only entrust their child into the river of God’s providence.
- We know the result of this bold act: Pharaoh’s daughter finds the baby. Moses grew up in the palace. God used Moses to deliver his people from Egypt. But none that was visible to Moses’ parents when they hid him and placed him in the Nile.
- Moses’ parents “were not afraid to obey the king’s command.” That doesn’t mean they felt no fear; it means faith ruled over fear. They acted as if God’s unseen protection was stronger than Pharaoh’s visible power.
- That’s what faith does. It sees the invisible. It looks back at God’s faithful character, while looking forward with confidence into the future. It obeys the impossible. It trusts the unstoppable God.

How Faith Lives

- In 1837, Dwight L. Moody was born to a poor family in Massachusetts. His father died when he was four, leaving his mother, Mary Moody, to raise nine children alone. She worked tirelessly, prayed constantly, and read Scripture daily. Her faith built the foundation for her son’s. D.L. Moody would become one of the greatest evangelists of the 19th century, leading hundreds of thousands to Christ, yet he always credited his mother’s steadfast, unseen faith.
- For parents: Amram and Jochebed remind us that you don’t have to be famous to be faithful. You just have to trust God with what’s in your hands: your children, your home, your daily obedience.
 - Pray over your kids like their future depends on it, because it does.
 - Live your faith out loud at home, so your children learn what unseen trust looks like.
 - Don’t let fear dictate your decisions. Pharaohs still speak, but God still reigns.
- For everyone: Faith is a way of life. Faith is living today as if God has already kept his word.
 - When you can’t see the outcome, act as if God’s promise is already true.
 - When fear shouts loud, let faith, your trust, obedience, and endurance speak louder.
 - When the future is uncertain, remember the God who is unseen but ever-present.