

Hebrews 11:1-3

Intro: We are about to enter the Hall of Faith which honors the Heroes of the Faith of the Old Testament. This is the continuation of the argument that the new is better than the old.. For a people (1st century Judaizers) that saw everything as a matter of works, the tendency was to try a fit these new principles into the old works of righteousness. By the time of Christ, Judaism was not a supernatural system. It had been twisted into a works system with all kinds of legalistic requirements. There was no need for faith, it was nothing more than a religious cult built on ethics. Instead of showing people their need for the Anointed One that God had sent, it became a model of self-glorification for those who could do all that was required. Faith is the connection with chapter 10. In the end of chapter 10, vs 38, the author quotes Hab 2:4 "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith. God's requirement has always been faith. Faith is the way to life, it is the way to live, there has never been any other way. The author has spent 10 chapters talking about how the New is better than the Old. What is the same about both is that faith is the operational principle. Faith did not originate with the New, but was active under the Old also. One could say that the "Faith principle" began before the foundations of the earth since God established salvation by faith at that time - Eph 1:4; Rev 13:8.

XXV. What Faith Is

A. The Nature of Faith - vs 1

1. written in a old Hebrew poetic form
 - a. two parallel almost identical phrases
 - b. not a theological definition
 - c. emphasizes certain basic characteristics of faith that are important in understanding it's meaning
2. The assurance of things hoped for
 - a. In the OT, people had to rest on the promises of God
 - i. a coming Messiah
 - ii. A Deliverer that would take away sin
 - iii. Israel would be purified and ruled by a righteous Messiah
 - b. these promised were incomplete and vague
 - c. faith is living in a hope that is so real it gives assurance
 - i. faith is not a wishful longing for something that may or may not come to pass
 - ii. It is certainty in what the world says is unreal and impossible, because God says otherwise
 - d. *hypostasis* - (from *hypó*, "under" and *hístēmi*, "stand") a setting under (support), essence, assurance: confidence, confident, person, substance. Was regularly used of real-estate transactions in the NT period, i.e. "the holding of title" (having a title-deed) for something already "underwritten," i.e. guaranteed (secured) by a definite certification.
 - i. used in Heb 1:3 - the express image of His *person*,
 - ii. used in Heb 3:14 - if we hold the beginning of our confidence *steadfast*
2. The conviction of things not seen - Ro 8:24-25; 2Co 4:18; 5:7
 - a. implies a response, an outward manifestation of an inward assurance
 - b. the just shall live by faith - Hab 2:4; Ro 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38
 - i. his life is committed to what his mind and spirit are convinced is true
 - ii. This chapter is full of people who acted on what they believe
 - c. impossible for the natural man to comprehend

i. **Elegchos** - proof, conviction:--evidence, reproof, inner conviction, focusing on God.

- only used here

- used in Papyri - "inner conviction on a persuasion about a matter."

- often translated "evidence," but more accurately means "convinced by a divinely in-wrought conviction"

ii. already established we all live by faith in the natural realm

iii. Spiritual faith operates in that realm

- different from natural faith in that it is not natural

- spiritual faith comes from God - Eph 2:8-9

B. The Testimony of Faith - vs 2

1. For by it (Faith) the elders obtained a good testimony. - Heb 11:39

a. **martureo** - to be a witness, testify:--charge, give (evidence), bear record, have (obtain, of) good (honest) report, be well reported of, testify, give (have) testimony, (be, bear, give, obtain) witness.

i. passive voice - indicates the verb happens to the subject

ii. could be translated - gained approval, to be well reported of

- whose approval did they seek

- whose good report is important

b. Faith is the only way to please God ;

i. Heb 11:6a But without faith it is impossible to please Him,

ii. Ga 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

iii. Ro 8:4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

iv. Ro 14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin. - Tit 1:15

2. Rationalism and its affects on Faith

a. until the last century, man acknowledged the supernatural;

b. rationalism has denied the existence of the supernatural, especially God

i. prime target is the Bible

ii. higher critics trying to disprove authorship, time of writing, etc.

c. Reduce all knowledge and reality to reason and the empirical realm, that which can be dealt with through the physical senses

i. makes man nothing more than part of a huge meaningless machine

ii. Man can not live with no meaning or purpose

d. Some realized the limits of rationalism and made a place for the supernatural - Kirkegaard

i. a different order of reality

ii. it is experienced by a leap of faith

iii. b/c it can not really be known, each can make god whatever he wants, it is faith in faith

- it is where modern art got its start,

- also affected music

- literature began to question absolutes and standards in literature and spiritual and moral areas as well grinding into relativism

e. relativism leads to meaninglessness and despair

i. since God was ruled out , man has no measure of

- himself

- his world

- ii. theology was most affected
 - a god that may be there
 - may be good
 - may care
 - is hardly a god that inspires devotion or commitment

f. Looking for meaning has caused many to find more in alcohol, drugs, witchcraft, astrology, reincarnation, leaping from one absurdity to another

3. Affects on the church

a. a doubt in the sufficiency of Scripture

- i. a reliance on science
 - theistic evolution
- ii. A reliance on psychology
 - sin becomes sickness

b. a false understanding of who God is and how He operates

- i. God is my co-pilot
- ii. Legalism or license
- iii. Dependence on self instead of the Spirit
- iv. Dependence on reason instead of revelation

C. The Illustration of Faith - vs 3

1. For the Hebrew that has not trusted Christ yet

a. there already is a certain faith in God

- i. By faith we understand
- ii. *Noeo* - to exercise the mind (observe), to comprehend, heed:--consider, perceive, think, understand, to apply mental effort to reach "bottom-line" conclusions

b. they believed in Creation

- i. they had not seen the creator in action
- ii. they had seen creation and knew (believed) there was a creator
- iii. their own scriptures taught it and they believed it

2. Without revelation, the source of basic truth, the best philosophers can do is make verbal squiggles

- a. some are more impressive than others
- b. non can lay claim to truth or ultimate meaning - Col 2:8

3. Science offers answers to the origin of the universe

a. though science is by definition limited to observable, measurable, and repeatable data

b. they persist in using speculation about the origins using data from what can be observed today

- i. the nebula theory - over 100 years old replaced by
- ii. the tidal theory - replaced by
- iii. the steady state theory - replaced by
- iv. the super dense (big bang) theory - replaced by
- v. none gained universal acceptance among scientists
- vi. Theories are still multiplying, none accepted by majority, or proven
- vii. Same is true of evolution

4. discovery of the origins is far outside man's scope of knowledge

a. it is beyond the realm of scientific investigation

b. it is not beyond knowing

- i. if we are willing to be taught by the Word of God
- ii. For the believer, no place for pride, it is a gift of God

iii. 1Co 2:9-10 But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

5. that the worlds were framed - Ge 1:1; Jo 1:3; Heb 1:2;

a. worlds plural not world

i. **aion** - an age; perpetuity (also past); the world; (Jewish) a Messianic period (present or future):--age, course, eternal, (for) ever(-more), (n-)ever, (beginning of the , while the) world (began, without end)

ii. **katartizo** - to complete thoroughly, repair or adjust:--fit, frame, mend, (make) perfect(-ly join together), prepare, restore. to make in good working order, i.e. adjusted exactly "down" to function best.

iii. Designates the physical universe and its operation or administration

b. by the word of God, - Ps 33:6;

i. **rhema** - an utterance, a *spoken* word, (individually, collectively or specially); a matter or topic (especially of narration, command or dispute); with a negative naught whatever:--+ evil, + nothing, saying, word.

ii. By His divine utterance

c. so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

i. **blépō** – behold, beware, lie, look (on, to), perceive, regard, see, sight, take heed, be observant (watchful).

ii. **Ginomai** - to cause to be ("gen"-erate), to become (come into being), arise, be assembled, be(-come, -fall, -have self), be brought (to pass), (be) come (to pass), continue, be divided, draw, be ended, fall, be finished, follow, be found, be fulfilled, grow, happen, have, be kept, be made, be married, be ordained to be, partake, pass, be performed, be published, require, seem, be showed, sound, be taken, be turned, use, wax, will, would, be wrought.

iii. **Phaino** - to lighten (shine), show, appear, seem, be seen, shine.

d. so that the things which are observed in the physical realm did not come into existence out of things which already appeared.