

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 23

Examples of Faith

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The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word.

Objective To finish Hebrews chapter 11 and demonstrate to the students that believers throughout the ages have been able to show great faith, just as the heroes of Hebrews 11.

Key Verses

Hebrews 11:32-40—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Philippians 1:27

“Let your conduct be worthy of the Gospel of Christ.”

Hook

Review last week’s lesson, Psalm 24:8.

The philosopher George Santayana famously said, “Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” Ask the students what they think this quote means. Ask how we can learn from the lives of other people; then ask how we can learn from the lives of people in the Bible.

Remind them that Hebrews 11 is called the “Hall of Faith.” Its purpose is for us to look at those who have gone before us so that we can learn from them how to hold firm in the faith during difficult circumstances.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Hebrews 11 finishes with a sweeping statement about unnamed heroes of faith. It effectively tells us that there isn't enough time to talk about the thousands of people throughout the years who have trusted the Lord under the most trying circumstances. This section tells us that those who have gone before us have shown faith in victory (turning away enemy armies, stopping the mouths of lions), but also in defeat (being stoned, tormented, destitute, exiled). We are told to look back at how the saints have stood firm in the faith and to learn from them, so that no matter comes against us, we too can trust God and stand upon the promises of His Word. We are instructed to consider the heroes of Scripture, and also the saints who have come after the Bible was written, in order to be prepared for whatever this world might throw against us.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

Hebrews 11 has highlighted given us the opportunity to study through the lives of some of the great biblical heroes. We have been able to look through the Scriptures and see how they, in their own unique ways, showed great faith in the Lord. The final section of Hebrews 11, however, lifts up a host of unnamed heroes of faith, showing us that even after the Bible was finished there are lessons we can learn from the lives of Christians who have gone before us. Today we will look at lives of some of these saints, and see what lessons we can learn from them.

Perpetua

In the year 202, the Emperor of Rome decreed that it was illegal to become a Christian. In Carthage, a Roman city in North Africa, this was particularly difficult as many people were converting to Christianity, meaning the persecution that came after this law was introduced was intense. One young woman (22 years old), a mother who was pregnant with her second child, felt the call of the Lord on her life and gave herself over completely to her new Savior. Her name was Perpetua. Because of her new faith in Christ, Perpetua was arrested and thrown in prison with her infant son. Her father pleaded for Perpetua to renounce her faith (which means to stop being a Christian and to worship her old, false gods), so that she could be freed. Rather than turning her back on God, Perpetua said to her parents, "Be gone from me, enemies of God, for I know you not."

LOOK (Continued)

Perpetua's punishment for becoming a Christian was execution. On her last day before going to Heaven, Perpetua and the other Christians she was with were "more concerned about their worthiness, their loyalty to Christ, than about the suffering ahead of them." In fact, right before her death Perpetua witnessed to a prison guard, a man named Pudens, who himself was saved and converted to Christianity.

Even though she was a brand new Christian, Perpetua showed incredible faith in God. She stood with and for the Lord, knowing that she would lose her life, but in the midst of that was able to minister to others and to point others to His wonderful grace and mercy.

Jim Elliot, Nate Saint, Peter Fleming, Ed McCully, Roger Youderian

In 1947, the five young men listed above felt called by God to the mission field of the South American jungles. Their great desire was to witness to people who had never heard of Jesus before. One particular tribe in the jungles of Ecuador became a particular burden to them. The tribe was called the Aucas, and they had never had contact with white people before. Every time the Aucas had been approached in the past, they had attacked and wounded the people who were coming to them, but this did not stop Jim Elliot and his friends. They were determined to meet with and share the gospel with the Auca Indians.

Knowing that they might be putting their lives on the line, the young men flew into Auca territory and made contact with the Aucas. The Auca Indians attacked, and even though the missionaries carried rifles, they did not fight back. All five men were killed.

Two years later, Elizabeth Elliot and Rachel Saint, the wives of Jim and Nate, went back to the people who had killed their husbands. They began to minister the grace of Jesus Christ to the Aucas, and forgave them for their husbands' deaths. The tribe was converted to Christianity and the saving grace of Jesus Christ was poured out on the Auca Indians.

These young men and their wives believed that God wanted to save the Auca Indians. They trusted that even if they lost their lives, that eventually, there would be Auca Indians standing at the throne of grace with them worshipping their father.

We can learn a lot from the believers who have gone before us. Because of the faith of martyrs like Perpetua, we know that we can stand up for God, and worship Him, even if the world around us is telling us not to, and even threatening us if we do. Because of missionaries like Jim and Elizabeth Elliot, we know that sharing the good news of Jesus Christ is never done in vain, that God desires that all people in all places should not perish but have everlasting life. We know that we too can demonstrate God's love and forgiveness, even to people who have hurt us in terrible ways.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class memorize, Philippians 1:27.

To wrap up the class, and Hebrews 11, ask the students what they have learned from the Heroes of faith in Hebrews 11, or if there are lessons they have learned from other believers. Discuss those things with the class.

Pray: Thank the Lord for the lives of those who have gone before us. Ask Him to bring their stories to our memories when we are faced with difficult situations ourselves.

Parent Question: How do the stories in the Bible help us to have faith in God?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Hebrews 11:32-40 by David Guzik

8. (32) Other heroes of faith.

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:

a. **Gideon**: He boldly destroyed idols and was mightily used of God to defeat a much larger army of Midianites (Judges 6-7). Yet he was also a man who doubted God's Word to him at first and repeatedly asked for confirmation.

b. **Barak**: He led the people of Israel in a dramatic victory over the Canaanites (Judges 4). Yet he hesitated and went forward only when Deborah encouraged him.

c. **Samson**: He was used mightily of the Lord to defeat the Philistines. Yet he never lived up to his potential and had a tragic ending to his life after being enticed by Delilah (Judges 13-16).

d. **Jephthah**: He was used of God to defeat the Ammonites. Yet Jephthah made a foolish vow and stubbornly kept it (Judges 11).

e. **David**: The great king of Israel was a remarkable man of faith. Yet he also failed with Bathsheba and with his own children.

i. Each one of these were men of faith, yet had notable areas of failure in their life. Still, Hebrews 11 commends their faith and lists them in the "Hall of Faith." This shows that weak faith is better than unbelief, and you don't have to be perfect to make it into God's "Hall of Faith."

9. (33-35a) By faith, some were victorious *over* circumstances.

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 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. Women received their dead raised to life again.

a. **Subdued kingdoms**: Some of these were David, Joshua, King Asa, Jehoshaphat, King Hezekiah, and King Josiah.

b. **Worked righteousness**: Some of these were Elijah, Elisha, and the other prophets in general; King Josiah also.

c. **Obtained promises**: Among these we could include Caleb, Gideon, and Barak.

- d. **Stopped the mouths of lions:** These include Daniel, David, and Benaiah (one of David's mighty men).
- d. **Quenched the violence of fire:** Among these are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
- e. **Escaped the edge of the sword:** David escaped the sword of Goliath and the sword of Saul; Moses escaped the sword of Pharaoh; and Elijah escaped the sword of Jezebel.
- f. **Out of weakness were made strong:** Among these are Sarah, Gideon, Abraham, Esther, and King Hezekiah.
- g. **Became valiant in battle:** Some of the many in this description are David, King Asa, and Jehoshaphat.
- h. **Women who received their dead raised to life again:** The Old Testament mentions at least two who fit this description, the widow of Zarepheth and the Shunamite woman.

10. (35b-38) By faith, some were victorious *under* their circumstances.

And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in dens and caves of the earth.*

- a. **Tortured:** This is a brutal word in the ancient Greek language. It carries the idea "to beat with a stick or a baton."
- b. **A better resurrection:** As Jesus said in John 5:29, there is a resurrection unto life *and* a resurrection unto condemnation. These worthies received the **better resurrection**.
- c. **Trial of mockings:** Isaac endured the cruel mocking of Ishmael, and Samson was mocked at the feast of the Philistines.
- d. **Chains and imprisonments:** Joseph was cast into prison for his faith, and the evil King Ahab imprisoned the prophet Micaiah.
- e. **They were stoned:** Zechariah was stoned to death between the altar and the temple and Naboth was stoned to death by Jezebel's henchmen.
- f. **Sawn in two:** According to reliable tradition Isaiah was **sawn in two** and killed.
- g. **Were tempted:** Among these terrible physical tortures, the writer brings up being **tempted** in the same context. Some think the text was corrupted here and the writer to the Hebrews originally wrote, "branded," "burnt alive," "mutilated," or "strangled." But for those who know the pain of temptation, it is not unreasonable to think that the writer regarded overcoming temptation as a true triumph of faith.
- i. " 'They were tempted': it does not say how. If one form of temptation had been mentioned, we should have surmised that they did not suffer in other ways, but when the statement is, 'they were tempted,' we shall not be wrong in concluding that they were tried in any and every form." (Spurgeon)
- h. **Were slain with the sword:** Such as the eighty-five priests murdered by Doeg, or the prophets murdered in Elijah's day.
- i. **Wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins:** Such as Elijah, who wore this kind of humble clothing and

did not mind the humility or the discomfort.

j. **Of whom the world was not worthy:** The world is not necessarily friendly to people of faith, and the world isn't necessarily **worthy** of them either.

i. "The despised and ill-treated group of servants of God was of greater real worth than all the rest of humanity put together." (Morris)

k. **In dens and caves of the earth:** David, Elijah, and prophets under the leadership of Obadiah were all forced to flee and hide in caves.

11. (39-40) Conclusion: We have even more reasons for faith, more reasons to hold on to faith, than these heroes of the faith did.

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

a. **Having obtained a good testimony through faith:** Though they obtained this good testimony, they **did not receive the promise**, the testimony of the completed work of the Messiah on their behalf. If these followers of God were steadfast without receiving the promise, those who have received the promise have even more reason to continue on through trials and difficulty.

b. **God having provided something better for us:** We are **provided something better** (seeing and enjoying the completed work of Jesus on our behalf) and therefore have *much more reason* to hold on to faith, and to not let discouragement and tough times defeat us.

c. **They should not be made perfect apart from us:** The idea of **perfect** is "complete." They could not be made complete until the work of Jesus. They looked forward to Jesus and to His work, we look at it from behind - and enjoy the fruit of His work.

i. Their faithfulness makes our faith a little easier. The writer to the Hebrews began this chapter speaking of faith in the *present* tense: *Now faith is . . . By faith we understand* (Hebrews 11:1 and 11:3). The end of the chapter reminds us that faith *is* and it is for *we* who follow in the footsteps of the faithful men and women of previous ages.