

Called to Faith

All right. Good evening, everyone. Welcome back to Church of the Bible. We are wrapping up our study through Hebrews. So we've got this week and next week will be our last week in the book of Hebrews. We will do, we're going to go through chapter 12 next week, and we'll cover at the end of the service next week, briefly, 13. We're not going to dive deep into 13. Instead, we're going to just take a look at few of the closing commands of chapter 13 at the end of 12, next week. So we are wrapping up, it's been a journey. We have learned over the last two and a half to three months, that Jesus is better. We went deep into all the various and different ways that Jesus is better; what He's better than. And Hebrews is not over yet. There are still three chapters, three chapters of Hebrews left. So we're going to spend this weekend next week, looking at how we should respond. We've established that He's better. And now that we know that He's better and we... we've established that He is better, how should we respond to the fact that He is better? How should we... How should we look at Him and look at life?

So if you have your Bibles with you turning them with me to Hebrews, chapter 10. While you're turning there, we'll briefly discuss the last half of the 10th chapter of Hebrews where the author moves on from the theme to then talk about what we should do. Now to sum up chapter 10, the last half of chapter 10, the author of Hebrews calls us into faith. Because Jesus is better, we are called into faith. Chat... verse 19, tells us having therefore brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. So because He is better, He's the better priest, better sacrifice, He's the creator, He's better than the prophets, because we've established that He is so much better, and that He is for us. We are called to have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Now to have boldness we're being called into faith, we know He is better, so we should have faith, we should enter into the holiest, we should have a new and living way, which Jesus had consecrated for us. We should draw near, if we look at 22, we should draw near to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith. We should hold fast the profession of faith. If we've professed Christ, then having established He is better we should hold fast to that; we should have joy. So the author calls the reader into faith. Having heard that Jesus is better let us have boldness, let us have faith, let us hold fast, and be firm.

So this week, we show define what faith is. If we're called into faith, we need to know what it is we need to know how faith operates, and even look at some examples of people who operated on this principle. So Hebrews chapter 11, verse one, everyone should be there by now, says that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This is the definition of faith right here. Faith is the substance of what we hope for by the evidence of things not seen and this tells us a few things. Okay, faith is a substance. Faith is not just a plain.... Faith is not just blind. Faith is not just a hope. Faith is what drives us. It's what sustains us, it's our confidence. Faith is the confidence of the things that we hope for, or the substance, or the essence, or the things that we hope for. Faith is our driving force. Faith is how we operate. There's a reason that Jesus when talking to the 12, told them that they had the faith of a mustard seed, because faith is substance. It may not be physical, it's spiritual, but it's substance. It is what drives us. But it's not blind. Faith is not just complete trust in whatever we are putting our trust in with no reason. But it is by the evidence of things not seen. So there is evidence for our faith. And I don't mean evidence that we have faith, but there is evidence that our faith is based

upon. Now there should be evidence that you have faith; there should be evidence in your life that you have faith and don't think otherwise. But our faith is based upon evidence. Now, because it's based on evidence of things not seen, that also means there are things we do see, right? There are things that we can see or can experience that we can feel that gives us this substance, to have a hope. What are the things that we've seen, we've seen the Lord, give us provision. We have seen a multitude of biblical prophecies come to pass. We have seen the power of God at work in our life.

So there is substance, evidence, that we can look to, that we've seen and experienced, that then gives us hope for the things not seen. Hope for example of Genesis 3:15. By the way, in the Bible, in the book of Revelation, we see Genesis 3:15, played out, but that still future from today. But there is a prophecy in Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." So we have a prophecy here of a pardon, a prophecy here that the enemy shall be destroyed. This is the first prophecy in the Bible. The entirety of Isaiah chapter 53, is about this provision of pardon, which by the way has happened. Isaiah 53 is fulfilled today. 'Kay, we have promises of a kingdom of heaven; promises of a resurrection; promises that Jesus is coming back. And that is a faith that we profess, and we hold on to, but that faith is secured through faith by the evidence of what we have seen, because God has been faithful in the things that we can see and look at the evidence, we have faith and a hope for the rest.

'Kay, we have we have promises a provision for example, Exodus 15:26, "And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee." See, we have a promise of provision here. He will... He heals. Have we not seen the healing power of God? I've experienced it in my life, maybe not in all the ways I want. But I've experienced... we've experienced provision just recently, when Shawnee and I were getting ready to head out to... to Texas, I had a rotate my tires, getting them balanced and discovered, I instead needed to replace my tires and get a alignment. A \$600 bill that we were not prepared to pay. And within... I think it was within an hour of coming up with that bill, that God had paid it for us with no money out of our own pockets. I'm not making this up, we have the... the... what did it come through Venmo? Came through Venmo? We have all the Venmo transactions to show that God just sent the money to us. It didn't cost us a penny. We've seen provision and you know I point to our life a lot because this is what drives my faith. And you have to look for the provision in your own. But we saw provision when Shawnee lost her job at the beginning of 2021 and was out of work for two months. And there was provision. All the way through that we saw provision. I've pointed to the story many times, we saw provision when our basement flooded, and then we totaled our nice vehicle. And we saw how God worked that out to be a much better and much more favorable circumstance for us. So the proof of faith is what God has already done. Faith is not blind. It's not irrational. But it's based upon the fact that God has always followed through with what He said that He would do. Here's the other thing: faith is the hope for what things not seen. So faith is not the substance of things that we hope for that we've already witnessed and experienced and God's already given us. Why would we need faith if that were the case? We wouldn't need faith, if that's how it worked. So our driving power behind the faith is evidence of what we have seen, but faith itself while not blind, is geared toward the hope and promises of things that we have not seen as of yet. So this tells us that faith will believe in God and what He promises us before we see it. We have faith that we will resurrect,

but we have never seen anybody resurrect. But we know people, or of people I should say, who have. We know 500 people that saw the resurrected Lord. Or know of them, I don't know them personally. There's a certain person in the Bible by the name of Lazarus who knows what it's like to come back from the dead. And if I were Lazarus, I would have been very upset because he knows he had to die again. He wasn't resurrected, he was just called back. But we have this promise of a resurrection that we believe in, even though we've never seen a resurrected person, even though we've not been resurrected. We have faith in the kingdom of heaven, which we have not yet seen, because of what is prophesied. We have faith that Jesus is coming back, He's returning. He will once again walk on this rock despite the fact that it's been 2000 years roughly, and the world has still not physically seen him. So faith believes before it sees. We have a hope of these things, that they will come. Now, there are many people, and we'll get to them by the end of this chapter, it tells us who never saw the things that they had faith in. But it will come. So what is faith? It's believing in God even though we have not seen him. Okay, faith is making the impossible become possible because God can do all things. Faith accepts that God's Word, we don't doubt His word because of what the science says or what the skeptic says or what some other Joe shmo says. But we have faith in His Word. We accept it as truthful. If you're the Israelites, faith is trusting God to divide that Red Sea so you can cross on dry ground. And if you're an American faith is trusting that God can do it if you need it.

Faith is trusting that God would make the walls of Jericho to fall. If you're Noah, faith is building a gigantic Ark, huge boat, because of a rainstorm that the world has never seen. They'd never even seen rain. But he built the, the Ark anyways. How about walking on water when Christ says to come? If you're Abraham being willing to offer your son as a sacrifice. Abraham was promised that Isaac would be the promised child and then he was told take him and, and sacrifice him on the altar to Me. He had to have faith, that God would resurrect him and bring him back, or in some other way fulfill the promise that was made. It is by faith according to verse two here, go back to verse two, for by it, the elders obtained a good report. We just talked about some of these elders who had obtained a good report. These fathers of all the people we read about in the Bible, what made them famous? Kay, look at King David, is he famous for because he was such a great and awesome person? No, not really. But he is famous because of his faith in the Lord. Because when an entire nation would not go against a man named Goliath, he took his sling and picked up a couple of stones off the ground, and said I will. He is famous because of his faith in God. Abraham, what made Abraham so famous? Was his faith in God displayed multiple times to leave his country, to sacrifice his son. I don't want to talk too much about Abraham. We'll talk about him more. What made Noah famous? Noah is famous only for the ark. Daniel, what made Daniel famous? He went into the lion's den. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. What made them famous? You can toss us into that fiery furnace, and if God so desires, we know that he will take us out. He will walk us out of there unharmed. And if he so desires he'll take us home to him either way, it's okay by us. It was faith. They were made famous for their faith. And if you look at most of them, most of them were faithful through problems. Talk about a famous man for a moment, for a moment. He goes by the name of Job. A very, very faithful man. We saw him faithful during pain. He lost all that he had. And yet he did not complain. And in the first chapter of job, he says that the Lord gives and the Lord takes away, talk about faith. He was firm. We see this in Job 13:15. He says about God, though he may slay me yet will I trust in him, but I will maintain my own ways before him. He says that even if God were to slay me, to strike me down, I would follow him. Job shows us that through all he went through, remember when his friends were, were trying to talk him down and talk him out of his

faith in several different ways. He says that I know that my Redeemer liveth and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And then what happened? Okay, Job is a great example of faith and it won't always happen this way. I can't I'm not going to preach this as some prosperity gospel that it will always always play out in this exact same way. At least here in this life on the, in this reality on this earth. But he lost everything, was faithful through it all and Job 42:12, So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning, for he had 14,000 sheep and 6000 camels, and 1000 yoke of oxen and 1000 She asses.

Okay, verse 13, he also had seven sons and three daughters, he was restored because of his faithfulness. But that restoration, you know, he had faith that God would do something bigger and better and grander and lead him. But the faith came before the results, before he saw. We see people have faith in God during their prayer, we can talk about Elijah. Think about Elijah when he went up before the prophets of Baal. Before the wicked men. We talked about Elijah in depth about a year ago. He went before the prophets of Baal and he told them, whoever can call fire down from heaven, was the prophet of the true God. And we see as the prophets of baal circle and dance and chant and cut themselves and do all sorts of things, and then you see his faith when he says, Fill the moats up. Over, overflow them, drench the wood, the stone, the Earth, the sacrifice drench it all. And he calls upon God and it rains down fire. Elijah had never seen anything like that. But faith came before seeing, we always have faith before we see. Then we talk about the power of faith. In verse three, it says, Through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were made of things which do appear, were not made up things which do appear. See if I can actually say that correctly in the right order. So where does wisdom come from? Comes from faith, comes from God. It is by faith that we understand how the world was made. Science, I love science. I love looking at, at things from a scientific perspective when done properly, because the scientific perspective requires observation. For science to work you have to observe, and you cannot prove a theory without observation. The Big Bang, for example, is a sucky theory, because you will never be able to prove it without witnessing it. But through faith we understand. How the world was created. Faith is not science. But faith accepts that what God says is true. And we receive understanding. So we know according to Genesis 1:1, that in the beginning, God made the heavens and the earth, not a big bang, not a magical explosion. I mean, to us, even God was, it was a magical explosion at that moment, let there be light. And there's light exploding forth from his mouth. But not, not this physically impossible mechanism where no matter on its own exploded into all of this matter, and where this chaos created this organized, and yet still somehow chaotic universe that we live in, but that God created it. And because our faith is based on evidence of things, of what we've seen, we've observed that God is honest and trustworthy and faithful. And so we also know that He created the world. By faith we know not just that God, some mystical being created the world, but that Jesus Christ of Nazareth, created the world. John 1:3 says that all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made.

By faith, we understand and have hope in God's control over the universe. Colossians 1:16 tells us that not only did God create all things but he controls all things. Look at this: for by him were made All things, by Him are all things created that are in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible. But look at this, whether they are thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things are created by Him and for Him. So there is no power, no dominion or throne outside of his control. It is by faith that we understand how the world operates. And I don't, I don't mean to say that we understand how the

tectonic plates move, and, and what dry, what creates the magnetic field of the Earth, how solar radiation and electronics work, I'm not saying that by faith, we understand all of that. But we understand that the Earth operates exclusively in the hands of God, exclusively, at his will and desire, and that what he says will happen. We're called into faith as believers of God. As people who know that Jesus is better, we are called to worship. We are called to be bold, we are called to be steadfast and to hold. And so we have to define faith, to hold to it. And then once we grab hold of that faith, we have to hold on to it because Hebrews 11:6 tells us that without faith, it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. You cannot please God without faith, your good works cannot please God, without faith. Living morally upright is not enough. Why? Because you cannot come to God without first believing that there is a God. You cannot come to God without first knowing who he is. It's not enough to just know that there is a power, a Divine power out there a divine deity, person, whatever, but you have to know who the person is. Otherwise, how shall you go to him? How shall you seek Him? So without faith, you can not please the Lord, you cannot go to him, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. But then, what we know when we have faith in God, we believe that he is. And we believe that He is all powerful, that he knows all things that he's present in all places at the same time, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. So now that Jesus, now that we've established Jesus is better, we've established he is the revelation of God's Word. He's better than the prophets. We've established, he's better than the priests, but he is a high priest forever. We've established that he is the better sacrifice and mediator of a better covenant. And because of that, we are today called into faith. Let us have faith that Jesus is better. And let us follow after him. Let us obey and let us look to what he has promised us in the future. He's promised us eternal life. He has promised us no more pain and sorrow, no more affliction, but that we shall live in an everlasting kingdom, that is ruled by God. He says, We shall no more cry. We shall no more be hungry or thirsty, but we shall be filled. And all of this is possible because of one man, Jesus.

I have to, I have to say that if you trust in God, then you have faith for the future. Our politics don't matter. The crumbling world around us does not matter. We don't have to worry about what the future holds because we know. But I also have to say that if you cannot trust God for the small things, if you can't trust Him for provision, if you can't trust him for protection, if you can't trust him to lead you, then how can you trust Him for the larger things? How can you trust Him for the resurrection and for eternal life and for the Kingdom? We are called into to faith. But we understand that faith only sees the answers. It does not see the circumstance, however we get there. So if you are hearing this for the first time today, you've heard me say a few times that Jesus is better. And let me tell you something, he is better than life. He's better than this life. He is better than all the pain, sorrows, the sufferings and afflictions that you are going through. He is better than this rut of sin that you are living in, if you would just believe in him. If you would just say, Lord, I want you, and I want to follow you. Now I've done, I've done the hard part for you today. I told you, you cannot please Him, whom you A: do not believe in and, and B: do not know. But we've identified the person that you need to believe in today. So if you would like to grab hold of these promises, that we're telling you the Bible gives to us, the promises of a pardon, a provision of peace, the promises of life everlasting, then you need to first admit that you are a sinner and cannot save yourself. You need to believe that Jesus Christ is the creator of the universe, and that he stepped into this creation, to live without sin, so that he could take your sin away from you. And you need to believe that after he died, he rose from the grave, and in doing so, gave victory over

sin and death. And if you can believe those things, he says, if you would confess Me before your fellow man, I will confess to you before the Father. So I'm going to give you a chance right now in the closing prayer, to confess Jesus as your Lord, and to ask Him into your heart. And I'm going to call you right now, into faith. Grab a hold of this faith because, there are promises to hope for and evidence to suggest that we should believe in God. Just repeat the first portion of this prayer with me; Father, Lord, I admit that I am a sinner and cannot save myself. Lord I know that my ways are not your ways, and my ways are wrong and lead to damnation, and to into eternity in the pits of fire that we call hell. But I also know that your Word gives promises of a pardon, of salvation, of eternal life. And that your word says it is through Jesus Christ alone, and that no other man can enter the kingdom but by Him. So I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is He Who created the heavens and the earth. And he who stepped into it, lived perfectly, He who was crucified for me, and rose again. And I confess Him as my Lord and my God. And I will follow him for the remainder of my days. I thank You, Lord, thank You, Father, for this precious gift. Lord, I pray that as we depart, that we hold on to this faith, that we remain steadfast in the faith that we have claimed, and that we can look through our life and through the world and, and everything and see your finger showing up everywhere. Because there is evidence of You and that this evidence will give us a strong hope and foundation for the things which You have promised. Lord, I pray that through this faith, we will please you, we will glorify you, and that we will be able to participate not only in being in your kingdom, but in building it. We thank You, Lord Jesus, amen. Amen.