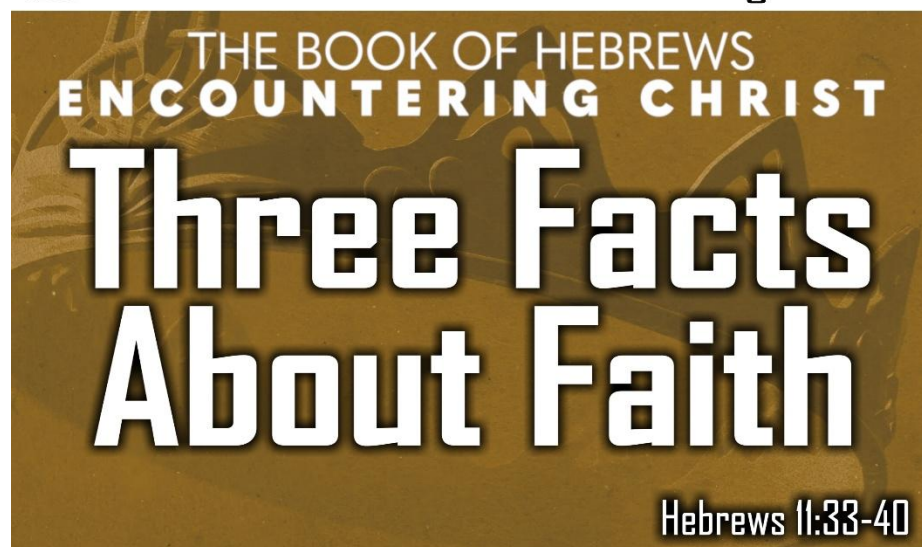




DR. JOE K. TAYLOR, SENIOR PASTOR, SOUTH RENO BAPTIST CHURCH, RENO, NV • OCTOBER 11, 2026

ALL SCRIPTURES ARE PRINTED VERBATIM WITH TRANSLATIONS NOTED • CHAIR BIBLE PAGE # 176 (NT SECTION)

IN SOME PLACES, GOD'S WORD IS UNDERLINED WITH DOTS WITH PASTOR JOE'S COMMENTARY IN THE BRACKETED, LIGHTER FACED TEXT.

A. Three Facts about Faith

Fact #1. Faith Sometimes Conquers

Hebrews 11:32b–40, NASB95 – ³²...and the prophets [OT leaders] ³³ who by faith [this not a listing of military skills, it is a list of “faith actions”] conquered kingdoms [**David** (1 Sam.) Took on Goliath as a very young man. David conquered because he believed God, obeyed God, and depended on God. **Joshua** (Joshua 1) God had given him the Promised Land, he obeyed strange commands, God said, “I will be with you” 1:5, and he learned from his failures. **They conquered because: God spoke, they believed, they obeyed, God acted.], performed acts of righteousness [**Samuel** (1 Samuel 7) Samuel “brought forth righteousness” by restoring worship, teaching truth, confronting sin, and leading Israel back to God’s standards for living. **The Judges** [The book of Judges] The 12 Judges “Brought forth righteousness” by delivering Israel from evil and restoring God’s rule. **They made God’s standards the nation’s standards.** After each deliverance, Israel returned to: God’s laws, God’s worship, God’s**

covenant, God’s moral standards.], obtained promises [**Abraham** (Genesis 15ff) Abraham received God’s promises by faith expressed in obedience. He left when God said “go,” he waited 25 years for Isaac, and he almost offered Isaac on the mountain. Abraham received God’s promises by believing, obeying, waiting, and surrendering. **Israel** (They were freed from Egypt, they passed through the Red Sea, followed God’s promises in the wilderness, they entered the Promised Land, they saw God fight their battles in the Promised Land and trusted God in those battles. Israel received God’s promises by stepping out, following God, obeying God, and entering what God had prepared. **Abraham and Israel received God’s promises because they trusted God enough to obey God—and God kept His word.], shut the mouths of lions [**Daniel** (Daniel 6), He obeyed God and prayed even when it was dangerous to do so, he maintained integrity under pressure, and saw God intervene. **Daniel “shut the mouths of lions” by trusting God enough to obey God—no matter the cost.], ³⁴ quenched the power of fire [**Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego** (Daniel 3) They refused to bow to the king’s idols, they trusted God with the consequences, they saw God’s intervention and God got the glory. The miracle was not just deliverance. The miracle was God with them in the fire. **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego quenched the fire not by strength, but by faith—obedience put them in the flames, and God met them there.** Faith doesn’t always keep you out of the furnace, but it keeps you safe in it.], escaped the edge of the sword [**Elijah** (1 Kings 17-19) After confronting 450 prophets of Baal, Elijah should have been killed by Jezebel. Instead, God told him to hide and God turned the nation’s heart and protected His prophet. **Elisha** (2 Kings 6) Elisha’s ministry was also filled with danger. He escaped not by cleverness but by God’s supernatural protection. **Elijah and Elisha escaped the sword not by running from danger, but by running toward God—faith obeyed, and God protected.** Faith doesn’t guarantee a life without danger, but it guarantees God’s presence in danger.], from weakness were made strong [Gideon (Judges 6) the Bible paints Gideon as profoundly weak in courage, confidence, faith, and numbers. God made Gideon strong by His power, His presence, His promises. **Gideon was made strong not because he was fearless, but because he trusted God in his fear—and God turned weakness into strength.** God does not look for strong people to use; He makes weak people strong when they trust Him.], became mighty in war and****

put foreign armies to flight [**Jehoshaphat** (2 Chron. 20)

Jehoshaphat was outnumbered, outmatched, and afraid. Jehoshaphat became mighty, not by military strategy, but by spiritual posture—He put His faith in God. He sought God first, confessed total dependence on God alone, and obeyed God’s strange command to put the choir in front of his army to sing God’s praises. He sent singers ahead of soldiers. Praise became the battle plan. **Jehoshaphat was made mighty in war, not by weapons, but by worship—not by his army but by his people raising up praises to God.**].³⁵ **Women received back their**

dead by resurrection [The widow of Zarephath’s Son (1 Kings 17) **Elijah**—a picture of intercession—took a widow’s dead son and prayed three times “O LORD my God, let this child’s soul come back to him again.” This was faith expressed in prayerful intercession. God answered the prophet’s prayer. **Elisha** (1 Kings 4) received the Shunammite widow’s son back to life. These two stories represent the first and second resurrection stories in the OT. The child was dead. The mother was devastated. The journey was long (200 miles in one day—just to pray). Two grieving mothers received their sons back. **Faith meets suffering with hope.** NOTE: These miracles are *descriptive, not prescriptive*. They do foreshow the resurrection of Jesus Christ.]

Fact #2. Faith Sometimes Suffers

³⁵...and others were **tortured**, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; ³⁶ and others **experienced mockings and scourgings**, yes, also **chains and imprisonment**.³⁷ They were **stoned**, they were **sawn in two**, they were **tempted**, they were **put to death** with the sword; they went about in **sheepskins**, in **goatskins**, being **destitute**, **afflicted**, **ill-treated...**³⁸ (*men of whom the world was not worthy*), **wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground**.

Faith is not proven by outcomes but by faithful endurance.

Fact #3. Faith Always Wins

³⁹ And **all these, having gained approval through their faith** [Faith is not believing God will *do what you want*—faith is believing **God is who He says He is**

and **He will do what He says He will do**, no matter what happens], **did not receive what was promised,**⁴⁰ **because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect** [Hebrews 11 ends by saying their story is incomplete without us. God is still writing his “faith story in us!].

Faith is victorious whether it conquers or suffers because its reward is not in this world but in Christ—both right now and in Heaven.



B. An Expanded Definition of Biblical Faith

Faith is expectant reliance on God alone that is accompanied by immediate obedience. Faith is believing God is who He says He is and that He is on mission to bring about what He wants done—for His Glory.

Hebrews 11:39–40, TLB -³⁹ And these men of faith, though **they trusted God and won His approval**, none of them received all that God had promised them; ⁴⁰ for God wanted them to wait and share the even better rewards that were prepared for us.

Faith is the foot of the soul by which it marches along the road of God’s commandments...Hebrews 11 celebrates a faith that moves, hears, obeys, and endures—rooted in the certainty of God’s character and the confidence that He will fulfill His purposes.

– Charles H. Spurgeon