Encouragement For All The Saints

Hebrews 11:1-2,6-10,17-19,23-26, 32-34 & 12:1-3; 2 Corinthians 5:7

In 1859, French _____ Charles Blondin crossed Niagara Gorge on a tightrope 160' above the water. He _____ the cable could hold him. Once, he carried his manager on his back. He believed the cable could hold them both, AND Charles could carry him. So he went for the _____. Our actions show our beliefs.

Last week we considered why we should give _____ for the saints before us. Today we recognize the encouragement they provide for us. We see they did what they did due to their _____. They had a faith that enabled them to make decisions and take _____ they wouldn't have otherwise.

Noah built an enormous _____
Abraham left his entire life behind for a _____ he hadn't known
Moses was hidden, chose his people and oppression over _____ and his privileges
Rev. A. H. Klamt _____ close to an hour or more to a tiny group
Rev. B. F. Kurzweg worked 18 hour Sundays for a _____ at 3 small congregations

But we would be _____ if we used this as an opportunity to simply "talk up" the saints themselves. They were not special because they had better faith than others. They simply knew the object of their faith better than we do. They knew the _____ in whom they trusted. Not all were vindicated in their life times, but many were! The One in whom they placed their trust _____.

Hebrews 11:1 says, "*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*." The Greek behind "assurance" is a compound word that means "*something that stands underneath*." It's a _____ solid foundation. It's support. "Conviction" comes from a word used to describe _____ or evidence. Faith is not a _____. Faith is not blind. Faith is not strengthened by failing to _____. Faith is the rock solid foundation that results from studying, examining and meditating on the proof of God's _____.

Fix your eyes on _____, the only One who is truly a _____ in and of himself. Believe it or not, Jesus had _____. Jesus believed the promises of his _____. Jesus trusted that God would keep those promises. He came to earth believing that. He prayed, "...not my _____, but yours be done…" because he believed that. He suffered the _____ of betrayal, abandonment, scourging, crucifixion, and even _____ because he had faith in his Father.

That faith was vindicated! Jesus did not stay dead! His death was not meaningless. You ARE _____! All of your sins are paid for by Christ. This life is NOT all there is. Death is NEVER the end of the story. There truly is _____ impossible with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we consider Noah, Abraham, Moses, Revs. Klamt and Kurzweg, the tiny group that met for 25 years, the larger group that built the first building, the countless others over 100 years, we have to ask ourselves some tough questions:

How is the God of saints past calling us to trust him and step out in faith?

How is the Holy Spirit offering us proof of God's enduring faithfulness?

How is the Holy Spirit asking us to truly believe things we may have only paid lip service to before?

What action is the Holy Spirit leading us to take for the sake of this congregation and for God's mission?