

6-4-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-2

Purpose: Provoke people to have enduring faith during trials and patiently wait until God fulfills His promise.

Truth for Today: Faith that endures becomes faith that receives God's promise.

Text: Hebrews 10:32-39

Topic: Faith, Endurance, Patience

Series Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives

Series purpose: Provoke people to have faith in God that is aligned with His will so we can obediently endure difficulty and receive what He promises in His timing.

## **Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-2**

- I. Introduction: Last week we started a summer Series: Faith Endures; Faith Receives
  - A. Last week we talked about the cultural push to sexualize kids, Pic skittles. This month is pride month for what the world calls, 'sexual minorities'. Listen to last week's message to hear the Biblical position and how Christians should respond. As Christians, we're not fighting people in a war over sexual choices. We believe what the Bible teaches about sexuality and are supposed to love everyone but also tell people what God's Word says. The choice to reject or follow is up to them. However, I believe all adults should do all we can to protect kids from sexual grooming.
  - B. Summer Series: Faith Endures; Faith Receives...a vs. by vs. study through Heb. 11.
  - C. Series purpose: Provoke people to have faith in God that is aligned with His will so we can obediently endure difficulty and receive what He promises in His timing.
  - D. Def. faith: Gk. *Pistis*: trust, confidence in God<sup>6</sup>; To believe God and His Word are true <sup>7</sup>; Faith means we obey God and act on what He says.<sup>8</sup> The word faith occurs 243 times in the NT and is one of the most important words in the Bible and Christianity.<sup>2</sup>
  - E. Today we'll emphasize enduring faith, (See screen graphic). The idea for enduring faith in God during trials is the context in Ch. 10 and 12. It's like a sandwich: ch. 10 ends: endurance; ch. 11: Inspiration from real life historical accounts of people who had faith. Many received miracles while some held on to their faith in suffering; ch. 12. Begins with the example of Jesus' enduring faith as He faced the cross.

- F. Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-2
- G. Truth for Today: Faith that endures becomes faith that receives God's promise.
- II. Context of Ch.11 is Ch. 10: Enduring faith receives. Faith is like a sandwich Pic: The 1<sup>st</sup> piece of bread is endurance, i.e., holding on to faith in God during trials.
- A. Context: The Book of Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians who were wavering in their faith because Jesus had been so long in returning. They were thinking about abandoning Christianity and returning to Judaism. The writer wrote them about the superiority of Christ and encouraged them to stand strong in faith.
- B. [Heb. 10:32–39 (NLT) Think back on those early days when you first learned about Christ. Remember how **you remained faithful even though it meant terrible suffering**. 33...you were exposed to public ridicule and were beaten...and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with **joy**. **You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever**.
1. Sometimes there's a price to pay to be a Christian. Today 250-300 million Christians are being persecuted for their faith particularly by Muslims. It's also happening in America. E.g., (1) Christians have lost their job because of Biblical beliefs about family posted on FB, (2) Catholic news agency, 2 elderly pro-life activists, 73 and 80, were beaten outside of Baltimore Planned Parenthood while praying.<sup>3</sup> (3) Bakers and florists have been fined and sued because they wouldn't participate in a same sex wedding because of religious beliefs.
  2. What motivates Christians to face persecution and suffering? [Vs. 34 You knew there were **better things waiting for you that will last forever**.] Faith in God looks beyond the current trouble to God's promise of eternal life.
- C. [Vs. 35 So **do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord**. Remember the **great reward** it brings you! 36 **Patient endurance** is what you need now, so that you will **continue to do God's will**. **Then you will receive all that he has promised**.]
1. These words express the main exhortation of Hebrews.<sup>2</sup> The challenge when our faith is tested is 'will we keep on doing God's will or will we quit.' There may be a lot of tests between the promise and its fulfillment,

e.g., Abraham waited 25 years after God promised him and Sarai a baby. As they got older it was harder to keep faith strong and tried to help God with Hagar. It was a disaster.

2. Trials can cause us to lose our faith in God but can also make our faith stronger. [Ja. 1:2–4 (NLT) when troubles **of any kind** come your way, consider it an opportunity for great **joy**. 3 For you know that **when your faith is tested, your endurance (ESV steadfastness, NIV perseverance) has a chance to grow**. 4 So **let it grow**, for **when your endurance is fully developed, you will be (NIV mature)...**]

D. [Vs 37 “For in just a little while, the Coming One will come...38 And **my righteous ones will live by faith**. But **I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away.**”]

1. 3x Vs. 34, 35 One of the greatest promises in the NT is the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ. [Acts 1:11 (NLT)...Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday **he will return** from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”] Hebrews was likely written about 68-69 A.D.<sup>1</sup>, 35 years after His Ascension. That’s a long time to wait when you’re being persecuted or pressured to abandon your faith.

2. Trials and the test of time can make us lose faith and turn away from God by backsliding or worse yet apostasy<sup>2</sup>, (no longer believing in Jesus).

E. [Vs. 39 But we are not like those who turn away from God...**We are the faithful ones, whose souls will be saved.**] Why? Because they had enduring, persevering faith. It’s a huge lesson for us not to give up when our faith is tested. Keep following Jesus because one day we will experience salvation, heaven, and eternal life.

III. Hebrews 11 is what’s in the sandwich. Pic, ‘now faith is’ (start this next week)

A. E.g., the faith of Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, David, Rahab, etc. will inspire us. As examples of persevering faith while they waited for God to fulfill His promise.

IV. Hebrews 12 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> piece of the bread of perseverance Pic

A. [Hebrews 12:1–2 (NLT) Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a **huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith,**] The witnesses are people who have walked by faith in ch. 11. The thought is the OT heroes are

watching followers of Jesus “run their race” in our Christian life.<sup>4</sup> Our enduring faith is inspired by the heroes of Ch. 11.<sup>5</sup>

- B. [Vs. 1 let us strip off every weight (*Everything that gets in the way*)<sup>4</sup> that slows us down, **especially the sin that so easily trips us up**. And let us run with **endurance** the **race** God has set before us.] Weights could be distractions like OCD hobbies, disappointment in God or sins. Our Christian race isn’t a sprint; it’s a marathon.
- C. How do we keep going when it’s hard? [Vs. 2 We do this by **keeping our eyes on Jesus...Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured** the cross...Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne. 3 **Think** of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; **then you won’t become weary and give up**.] Jesus is our example of enduring faith, but He is also the One who gives us the Holy Spirit to help us stay strong when our faith is tested.

V. Conclusion: How do I develop enduring, persevering faith?

- A. Spend extra time in your secret place with God in prayer. Jesus before the cross, [Lk. 22:39–46 (NLT)...(*Jesus*) **knelt down and prayed, 42 “Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me**. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.” 43 Then an angel...appeared to him to **strengthen** him.] // HS Jesus found strength in prayer, so can we. Nobody can pray like this for us; we have to do it.
- B. Read God’s word and hear His voice. Context: salvation but the application is broader. [Romans 10:17 (NKJV) So then **faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God**.] Reading God’s word and seeking/ hearing His voice will give us faith to endure, e.g., me anxiety, (1) God speaks to us through the Bible, [Phil. 1:6 (NCV) God began doing a good work in you, and **I am sure he will continue it until it is finished...**] [Romans 15:4 (NLT)...**the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently** for God’s promises to be fulfilled.] (2) I heard God speak to me, ‘when you have returned to me...strengthen your brethren’.
- C. Seek encouragement from strong believers e.g., [1 Thes. 5:11 (NCV)... **encourage each other and give each other strength...**] [2 Cor. 7:5–6 (NLT) When we (*Paul*) arrived in Macedonia, there was no rest for us. We faced conflict from every direction...and fear on the inside. 6 But **God, who encourages those who are discouraged, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus**.] We weren’t designed to live the Christian life alone. We need each other to help us when trouble tests our faith.

## VI. Response

- A. Prayer: You're in a trial and your faith is being tested. Ask God to help you have faith to endure.
- B. Souls

## VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

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## VIII. Supplemental Material

- A. *Witnesses*: a “witness,” at least in the Bible, is not just a passive “spectator” (Br<sup>1</sup>c) but an active “witness to faith” (DuC<sup>2</sup>L, NE<sup>3</sup>B, TN<sup>4</sup>T), more specifically “people who have demonstrated their faith” (SpC<sup>5</sup>L). The thought is that the Old Testament heroes are watching how the writer of Hebrews and his readers “run their race” in the Christian life, since their own salvation is linked with that of Christians (11:40). This *large crowd of witnesses* consists of the heroes of faith recorded in chapter 11.<sup>4</sup>
- B. The overall context, however, favors the meaning to be that their lives have borne witness to their faith. The author’s focus is on the importance of current believers learning from those who have gone before, not on those who have gone before watching current believers. As Moffatt put it, “It is what we see in them, not what they see in us, that is the writer’s main point.”<sup>5</sup>
- C. Catholic news agency, Two elderly pro-life activists, age 73 and 80, were beaten outside of Baltimore Planned Parenthood.<sup>3</sup> “For years, Mark has prayed in front of the Planned Parenthood in Baltimore City to let the scared, young abortion-minded women know that they are loved, that their baby is loved,”
- D. “For years, Mark has prayed in front of the Planned Parenthood in Baltimore City to let the scared, young abortion-minded women know that they are loved, that their baby is loved,”
- E. [2 Timothy 4:7–8 (ESV) I have fought the good **fight**, I have finished the race, **I have kept the faith**. 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.]
- F. June is pride month for sexual minorities, and I read an interesting response for Christians who take a Biblical stand. Professor Robert George of Princeton University called by some the leading Christian legal thinker of our lifetime. He wrote, “I have declared June to be ‘[Fidelity Month](#)’, dedicated to the importance of fidelity to God, spouses and families, our country, and our communities.”<sup>9</sup>
- G. Summary: (1) Faith is believing the good news about Jesus Christ and becoming His follower (2) Faith is the way we walk with God daily. (3)

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<sup>1</sup>Brc Barclay

<sup>2</sup>DuCL Dutch common language translation

<sup>3</sup>NEB New English Bible

<sup>4</sup>TNT Translator’s New Testament

<sup>5</sup>SpCL Spanish common language translation

Faith is a spiritual force opens the door to miracles and unlimited possibilities (4) Faith in God is how we endure difficulty.