



Sunday, April 10, 2022

Pastor Don Denyes

Intro to Hebrews 11:32-12:2

Most commentators break down this passage in describing the “triumphant heroes” and the “suffering heroes” of the faith. What is clear from the evidence of those names mentioned as well as the description of many others is that the life of faith does not guarantee material safety or wealth.

When we consider David, as one example mentioned, we can think of times of great prosperity for David—slaying Goliath, defeating the Philistines, receiving the kingdom, receiving the promise. Yet there were many other times of suffering that David encountered along the way—almost killed multiple times by Saul, chased like a dog around the Judean wilderness, detained in enemy territory, exiled by the rebellion of his own son. Yet for all of this, David remained faithful to the Lord.

The challenge for us as we consider the passage before us is: will we be faithful regardless of our circumstances? Perhaps you see yourself in this list as one who is experiencing great material blessing at the present time. Perhaps you are experiencing acute suffering. Either way, the promises of God remain and are worthy of our faith and devotion.

Context

Of course the author of Hebrews did not literally run out of time, but as a rhetorical device, he lists these figures one after another to highlight (as he has throughout the chapter) the reality that faith is always forward-looking. Faith sees what is yet unseen, but trusts that it will come one day. For us, we trust that Jesus is returning just as He said He would. We do not yet see Him physically, but we see Him through the eyes of faith as we trust His promise of return—with blessing for those who follow Him and condemnation for those who don't. May we hold fast to our confession of faith and receive the reward together with all the saints!

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Hebrews 11:32-12:2

“Commendable Faith”

Key Ideas

- 1) History shows an ever-moving progress of faith—faith that flows to Christ

- 2) Some suffered tremendously for their faith (“through faith...they were sawn in two”)

- 3) Though in one sense we have received the promise because Christ has come, we will receive the fullness of the promise when Christ returns (Rev. 11:15)

- 4) The victories of faith are not always visible

Discuss

- 1) Are you familiar with the prosperity gospel? If so, how would you describe it?

- 2) From this passage, what do we learn about the relationship between faith in Christ and lived experience?

- 3) What are some reasons that God might not deliver someone from temporal suffering like what is described in vv. 36-38?

- 4) Why does it matter that apart from us, these heroes of the faith were not made perfect (v. 40)?

- 5) How does this passage help us persevere in our faith?