

HEROES OF THE FAITH

Sunday, August 27, 2017
Pastor Don Denyes

Intro to Hebrews 11:39-12:3

When we think about people of faith, we often think of their triumphs. We think about how people of faith have stood up to oppression or were cured of their illness or were saved just in the nick of time. We don't often think about people of faith who live relatively obscure lives and die without receiving any notable commendation. Even less do we think about the ones who continue on oppressed until they die, about those who succumb to illness or those who (earthly-speaking) are not saved. Yet faith is not about the set of circumstances in which we find ourselves, nor is it about overcoming those circumstances. Faith, narrowly-speaking, is about how we respond to God regardless of the circumstances.

As we begin to conclude this series, it is important to remember that all of the people mentioned in Hebrews 11 died. They died without receiving the full extent of what has been promised. God did that to ensure that you and I will be able to receive that promise together with them! We have already received it in part, as we come to know Jesus personally—to “see” Him in the ways that the Bible talks about Him. But Jesus Himself said that there is more yet to be revealed. And for that, we wait...

Context

While chapter and verse markers are often helpful, it would seem that chapter 11 does not logically end until the beginning of chapter 12. The “therefore” statement at the beginning of chapter 12 clues us in that what follows is logically conclusive based on what has preceded it. Therefore, we should not consider a paragraph like 12:1-2 to be introducing new material, but summarizing what the author has already written. This is helpful to note in any passage of Scripture that is written as a letter or speech.

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.)

“Commendable Faith”

Hebrews 11:39-12:3

What made their faith commendable?

- Unseen 11.1

- Active 11.4ff

- Rational 11.19

- Incomplete 11.39, 13

How can I have a commendable faith?

Hebrews 12:1-3

- Let us *remove* preparation

- Let us *run* participation

- Let us *look* concentration

Discuss

- 1) Who is someone you've known in your lifetime that has exhibited "commendable" faith? What made their faith commendable?
- 2) According to the so-called "prosperity gospel," the will of God is always for human beings to have abundance and good health. It also teaches that failing to achieve the will of God (as they define it) is always due to a lack of faith. How is this view contrary to what this passage in Hebrews teaches (specifically 11:35-39)?
- 3) Pastor Don talked about "seeing Jesus" in our daily devotional times, rather than just checking a box to affirm we took the time. How does a person "see Jesus" just by reading the Bible?
- 4) How are your devotional times going? Is it easy or difficult for you to "see Jesus" during that time?
- 5) Pastor Don also talked about how a person of genuine faith is someone who is seeking to make genuine progress in killing sin and becoming more like Jesus. What is one area in your life where you would like to make progress in becoming more like Jesus?