

Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXXIV “By Faith...”

(Chapter 11)
Fred R. Coulter

In chapter eleven of Hebrews it says “**By faith...**” 18 times. This faith is *faith in action*, or an *active obedience* to the spoken Word of God. Of course, all the Word of God has been spoken and then later recorded. We covered where Jesus talked about ‘Moses accuses you,’ showing that it is living Scripture, that it is the recorded voice of God and if God were here on earth in the form of Jesus Christ, what would He tell you? *The same thing we have recorded here in the Bible!*

This kind of faith also expects the fulfillment of the promises with absolute confidence. No doubt! No doubt whatsoever! This kind of faith expects the fulfillment of God’s promises with absolute confidence. Let’s see how important faith is.

Rev. 14:12 tells us about faith. It tells us about the active kind of faith that God wants us to have:

Revelation 14:12: “Here is *the patience* of the saints...” That could also be translated *endurance*, because it says in Matt. 24, ‘the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved.’

“...here *are* the ones who keep the commandments of God and **the faith of Jesus**” (v 12). Faith is not an emotional, empty thing that you just believe in your mind as some sort of metaphysical thing that makes you feel better. This kind of faith is belief and trust in God, and it leads to obeying God from the heart.

There are two kinds of obedience. There’s the obedience, which is not the kind of obedience that God really wants, but He will accept it instead of disobedience, which is this: ‘Well, if God says so, I’ll do it.’ So, it’s kind of *grudgingly!* ‘God says so. I don’t understand it, but I’ll do it.’

The kind of faith and obedience that we find in the New Testament is based upon loving God *with a willing heart and a desire to please* God. That comes from God’s Spirit. That’s why it says “...**the faith of Jesus.**” In the Greek this is in the genitive case, which means: *Jesus’ faith* or it could also be *faith from Jesus*. The faith of God—which we’re talking about here—is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

We’re to grow in faith and there are times when we have more faith, and there are times when

we have more belief—all of those things. Being subject to the difficulties of human nature, those things sometimes come and go. But always remember that if you have some doubt or unbelief never say, ‘Oh, I shouldn’t have any doubt’ and just kind of scoot it out of your mind. *NO!* Admit to God:

- God, I have doubts
- God, help my unbelief
- God, help me to believe
- God, add Your Spirit to me that I can believe

Then as you practice this kind of faith and obedience, *God will give you the conviction of it!* This is what he’s really talking about.

In Heb. 11 Paul is preparing them for the coming destruction of the temple and Jerusalem. He’s preparing them for difficult days that lie ahead. Let me give a little historical background on the book of Hebrews. It was written by Paul when he was in prison in Rome. We know that James, the brother of Jesus, was martyred during Unleavened Bread in 62_{A.D.} This had to have been written at the beginning of 61_{A.D.} and sent out to the churches in Judea and then later copies sent out to all churches, because it doesn’t mention the death of James.

If it were written decades later, after the destruction of Jerusalem and so forth—and this is what many scholars cannot figure out—why does it talk about these things in the present tense instead of the past tense? Why does it speak about these things that are coming, rather than having been fulfilled? That’s the only time that this could have been written to prepare them for the worst days to come. We also need to understand that we have some pretty tough days coming ahead of us—*they’re coming!*

Remember when I gave the sermon on *The Mark of the Beast is Here?* I got letters and then everybody sort of calmed down. But in the meantime, what are they doing? *Building!* Now they are going to pass a law that is going to identify all food items with an RFID—from the point of manufacturer to the trash. Of course, to protect us from terrorism! Yes, they’re going to protect us from terrorism and make a terror out of our lives. This has been in the works for a long time.

Let me just say this: There are secret black budgets within the government that very few people know about, which are used to fund research for this kind of thing. You need to understand that. You don't have to be a 'conspiracy nut'; you don't have to be a 'conspiracy buff'; you don't have to be way out on the fringe to know that that is so. It's going to come! All the information is out there.

Let's understand something that's important: Here's a principle that God works with. He lets the information be known through many different sources. He expects us, *in faith*, to act upon that so that we can know. We don't have to be carried away and become all 'bug-eyed'; but be alert! Be aware!

I got one of these privacy notifications: If you don't answer back they can use your name and address and everything to send it to whomever they want. I wrote back: Do not use my name on any list, nor sell to anyone. If I order something on the phone and they say: This may be recorded for quality control. I've gotten in the habit of asking them to please not record anything, just take my order.

We're going to see how much that Paul talks about Abraham. Abraham is referred to 49 times in the New Testament, which is 7 times 7. You can go back and listen to the sermons that I've done on *The Covenants of Abraham* and so forth. It jumps from v 7 with Noah to v 8 with Abraham. The setting of Abraham was this: he lived in Ur of Chaldees, which was filled with total idolatry. God called him out of that. In other words, Abraham came out of Babylon. You can tie a lot of these things together with other Scriptures. Where does it say, 'Come out of her, My people' referring to Babylon? *Rev. 18!* Well, Abraham did the same thing.

God calls us and we don't know where—except we'll be in the Kingdom of God—the trail is going to lead between the time we're called and the time that Christ returns or we die and are put in the grave. We *walk in faith*, and that's what this is all about. Go back and read in Gen. 12 that when God called him, God said, 'I want you to leave your father's house and your land and I want you to go into a land that I will tell you of. I will bless you, and *in you* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. I will bless those that bless you; I will curse those that curse you.' You can see that coming right down the line.

Hebrews 11:8: "**By faith Abraham**, being called of God..." A special calling; the same with us, God calls us. Why do you understand certain things that no one else close to you understands? What happened to your heart and mind? *God did something! Yes, He did! He called you*, just like He

did Abraham.

"...to go out into the place which he would later receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went, **not knowing where he was going**.... [likewise with us] ...**By faith he sojourned in the land of promise**... [the very land that he was to inherit he was]: ...like a foreigner..." (vs 8-9)—a sojourner; very much like us today. We're going to inherit the world with Abraham. We're going to rule the world under Christ. *Yes, we are; same thing!* You can see many parallels.

"...dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob..." (v 9). If the chronology that we developed in following down the genealogies, Abraham lived to see Jacob at two-years-old before he (Abraham) died.

"...the joint heirs of the same promise" (v 9). We'll look at some things concerning the things that are here.

2-Sam. 7 is the account where David wanted to build a house for God. Always remember that human beings would like to do great things for God and receive all the credit. Remember Job! This was not out of vanity that David did this. I'm sure it was out of a good and a right heart.

2-Samuel 7:1: "And it came to pass when the king dwelt in his house, and when the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies, the king said to Nathan the prophet..." (vs 1-2).

Let's understand the setting here: We have Nathan the prophet and we have Asaph the priest. They tended to the Ark of the Covenant that was in a special tent in a special section of David's house. It was not yet united with the tabernacle or the temple. That came later when Solomon built the temple.

Here David is praying to God right before the Ark of the Covenant that's behind this tent and he "...said to Nathan the prophet, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God dwells within curtains.'.... [he could look over there and see it] ...Then Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that *is* in your heart, for the LORD *is* with you.' And it came to pass that night the Word of the LORD came to Nathan saying, 'Go and tell My servant David, "Thus says the LORD, 'Shall you build Me a house for My dwelling? For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up the children out of Egypt until this day, but have walked in a tent, and in a tabernacle'"..." (vs 2-6).

Note this: Anyone who builds a temple gets in trouble! Why? *Because they put something between themselves and God!* God is not interested

in great things that you can do for Him. What great thing can you do for God? I mean, *He created the universe, and all that there is!*

By the way, one of the leading atheists had to admit that the universe was created by a great intelligence with purpose, ‘but I can’t tell you whether that’s God or not.’ I saw that on the news and I said, ‘Boy, you’ve got to reserve that little part for yourself—don’t you?’ At least it’s a step in the right direction.

Isaiah 66:1 “Thus says the LORD, ‘The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,’ says the LORD...” (vs 1-2). What are you going to build it with? *What God has already created!*

This is the most important thing; here is the greatest building of God and this is why when we’re talking about faith and we’re talking about temporarily dwelling on this earth as sojourners and strangers—which we are. The more converted you become and the more that you understand the Word of God, the more alien the world becomes. The world and God’s Way are now departing from each other at a very frightening speed.

Here’s the greatest thing, v 2: “...‘But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word.’” What is greater than a building?

- a converted heart
- a willing attitude
- walking in faith

That’s what’s greater, and that’s what God wants.

You know the rest of the story. God said, ‘All right, David, I’m going to do something for you.’ This must have been before the sin with Bathsheba. ‘I’m going to build a house for you, and I’m going to establish your throne forever.’ What does it say of Jesus? *That He shall sit on His forefather’s throne—David’s throne—forever!* David was humbled at that and so forth.

Here’s another lesson: Was David inspired when he said this? *Yes!* Was he humbled when God gave the answer through Nathan? *Yes!* ‘I’m not going to let you build the house, but I’m going to let your son build the house, because you’re a bloody man, and all the wars that you’ve committed and so forth.’ How long was it before he entrapped himself with Bathsheba and all the things that went wrong there? We’ll also find this is also very similar in our

lives. I’ve experienced it and you’ve experienced it. When you’ve been very close to God and you’ve been very uplifted and God has inspired you, shortly after that something’s going to come on when you just fall right on your face, *spiritually*. That’s just God letting you know that you need God all the time, and that we still have to grow and change and overcome.

Let’s understand something, too, about tabernacling. Let’s come to John, the first chapter. Just as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelled in tents and tabernacles, so likewise God gave up His glory, His power and most of His Divinity to come to this earth as a man to live a perfect life and to be the perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. In other words, the Creator Who made everything that there is and subjected man to sin, put himself into the same position with the responsibility of never sinning.

John 1:14: “And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us... [He temporarily dwelt with man; quite a wonderful and awesome thing] ... (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), **full of grace and Truth.**”

This means that the way that you always stay faithful is to remain within the grace of God, that we ‘stand in this grace’ (Rom. 5). Everything comes from God to us:

- His love
- His mercy
- His Spirit
- His goodness
- His Word

As Paul wrote later, *we have nothing we didn’t receive!* It all comes from God. ***And Truth:*** Our lives are dedicated to always seeking the Truth, and that is how we discern the right from the wrong, the good from the evil and the various shades of half-truths and things that people give. As a church we are to be *seekers of Truth always!* The ministers and teachers are to always seek the Truth and preach the Truth and to do so in love, so that all the brethren can grow into the fullness of Christ. That’s the whole purpose!

Just like when men build a temple they put something between them and God. Didn’t Solomon do that? Everything went well; it was dedicated; God put His presence in there and then his wives led Him astray. You’ve got the temple over here across the valley over here on this side became the Mount of Abominations where he built temples and incense altars to his thousand concubines and 300 wives and

all their gods. He even went after other gods.

Did Jeroboam build a temple? *Yes!* He built one in Dan and one in Bethel and put a golden calf in each one. Which, by the way, the fifteenth day of the eighth month is Halloween. {note book: *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?*} Today we are witnessing an attack on Christmas. Though Christmas does not celebrate the actual birthday of Christ, what they are after is the name ‘Christ’ in Christmas. That’s ‘religious’! ‘Let’s have a winter solstice.’ Guess what? *That’s religious, too—pagan religion!* It’s their hatred for Christ. Amazing how these things go.

Why did they live in these tabernacles and tents? Why couldn’t God just have worked with Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees? *and* Abraham would somehow survive in this idolatress place and still be converted all that sort of thing? *Well, God had greater plans!*

I mean, look what happened when Lot went down to Sodom! He went down there because the grass is green and it’s nice and flat and it’s a lovely place to live. There are a lot of good things that you can buy at the bazaars and all this sort of thing, and it’s easy living. What happened? *When the homosexual population increased and increased he could hardly bear living there!* He was frustrated everyday. Finally, it came time for him to leave. There were not even ten righteous people, even in his own family! You have himself, his wife, and two daughters—and the wife wasn’t really convinced.

This is why He called Abraham out of Ur of Chaldees, because He was going to work directly with Abraham through his entire life to prepare the way for three things:

1. for the coming children of Israel
2. the spiritual children of Israel to be born into the Kingdom of God
3. to prepare the way for Christ to come

Hebrews 11:10: “For he was waiting for the city with *the* foundations of which God is *the* Architect and Builder.”

What city on earth could even be compared to New Jerusalem? *Couldn’t be!* (read Rev. 21-22). It wasn’t quite as desert as it is now. It was plush and green and all that sort of thing. What we see now, today, is the result of sin and insanity. Take a look at the big cities that we have in the world today. What are they? *A cesspool of crime and filth and murder!* I’d like to send an e-mail to Fox News and say: ‘Why don’t you add one feature to the beginning of every Monday night broadcast. List

every murder and every rape that occurs in the United States every week.

- What city in the world would you like to live in?
- What city in the world has righteousness dwelling in it?

Not one! Not even Jerusalem where God put His name! That’s why they were looking for the city that was coming from God, that God was going to build.

Always remember this, John 14:1: **“Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also”** (vs 1-3).

That’s our promise. That’s a fulfillment of this promise that was given and Abraham was the one who had to start it. Now then, in order to fulfill the promise of God, then God did the impossible. He called Abraham when he was 75-years-old and his wife Sarah was 65. Then after the promises given to him and their futile attempt to help God fulfill His prophecies through Hagar and the Ishmaelites occurred. There’s a lesson there: ***Do not try and help God fulfill His promises!*** He’s perfectly capable of doing them Himself.

Has it been trouble for the world ever since? *No question about it! Without a doubt!* But there had to be the son, so God made sure, absolutely sure, that there was no way that they could have any children unless God performed a miracle to make it happen. So, He waited until Abraham was 99-years-old and Sarah was 89. You go search all the records today of births and you will not find the age of the mother or the father at that age—would you? *No!*

Hebrews 10:11: **“By faith also Sarah** herself received power to conceive seed... [I’m not going back through the whole history of Abraham] ...and gave birth *when* she was *well* beyond the childbearing age because she esteemed Him faithful Who had personally promised *her a son.*” Even though she did laugh!

Remember what happened? *God came with the two angels and said, ‘At the set time next year, you’re going to bear a son.’* She laughed. God said, ‘Why did you laugh?’ She said, ‘I didn’t laugh.’ He said, ‘Nevertheless, you will have child, but you did laugh.’ God had to do the impossible thing. When it came time for Jesus to be born, He did another impossible thing—a *greater impossible thing!*

Verse 12: “**Because of this faith**, there came into being from one *man*—and moreover, *one* who was *reproductively* dead—*descendants* as numerous as the stars in the heavens, and as countless as the sand on the seashore.” Quite an amazing thing! This gives us the understanding of what God wants us to have.

Heb. 6 shows us where the promises are. This shows where the promises were given. Remember that “**by faith**” means *believing with full expectation and complete confidence that what God has said, He will do!* Heb. 11 shows the beginning of the fulfillment of those promises with Isaac being born.

Hebrews 6:11: “But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the end*; so that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises. For God, after promising Abraham, swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater, saying, ‘Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.’ Now, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise” (vs 11-15).

Why is all of this given? This is why men like to say that this is all a bunch of myths, so you can discount the promises of God.

Verse 16: “For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts* an end to all disputes between them. In this *way* God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath” (vs 16-17).

Let’s understand something profound with God, as we live our lives and come across difficulties and challenges and problems and perplexities and frustrations, and so forth. Because we’re confronted with these things, does not change the promises of God one iota! Remember that!

So, if you’re just looking at the physical circumstances, remember that *God can change the physical circumstances*. Whatever the trial; whatever the difficulty; whatever comes along remember this:

- God loves you!
- God has called you!
- God is dealing with you!
- Christ is dwelling in you!

His plan and purpose for your life is going to be fulfilled! ***The end result will be a glorious resurrection!*** Always keep that in mind. When you

do, it will help you go through the difficulties and give you wisdom and understanding as you going through them so you can learn the lesson. ***The promises of God will stand firm!***

Verse 18: “So that by two immutable things...” ***Unchangeable!*** That’s why it’s so damnable that people come along and say, ‘You know, we need to adjust the Word of God to our New Age.’ ***NO! You need to adjust your life to the Word of God in this age!*** There’s a big flap about this man who has wanted to show about God and the founding fathers and the beginning documents for the United States and all of that. That’s all well and good, but the problem is that they have not gotten to the heart of the question. If they think that they’re coming after God in public acknowledgement in government, they need to be exposing what they have been doing to the Word of God to corrupt it in their translations to lead people astray even worse! Which is a greater sin!

Verse 18: “So by two immutable... [unchanging] ...things, ***in which it was impossible for God to lie...***”

The way that we claim the promises of God is this: *God* has promised it and you might go through the Bible and do a Bible study: What are the promises of God? Just go through and read and study any part of the Bible, because they’re all promises of God. They cannot fail! We may be weak in faith—which we are; we may have weakness of human nature—which we do; we claim the promises of God because ***God has said He will keep and fulfill His promises for us.***

If we claim the promises, knowing that it’s not because we’re righteous or any good thing that we have, that we lay it all at the doorstep of God and ask Him to fulfill the promises. ***He will!*** Sometimes instantly, sometimes step-by-step, sometimes later on; sometimes the answer to the prayer has been in the works for years, and then one day DING!—like a light has been turned on—you understand and you can look back with perfect 20/20 hindsight and see God intervening to fulfill His promise. That’s how we need to live our lives with God. Just exactly like they did here. That’s something!

“...in which *it was impossible for God to lie*, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement ***to lay hold on the hope that has been set before us***” (v 18).

We’re to believe in *hope*! Remember: ***Walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!*** If there’s any one thing that we can get ingrained in our mind, let’s see if we can do that.

The main doctrinal books of Paul are all based on Abraham: Romans, Galatians and Hebrews. Let's see where Paul makes it very, very clear. By the way, as he brings this out in the book of Romans it's very important for us to understand that everything we do is based upon what God did with Abraham—*everything!* And that relates directly to Christ. That's why there are so many examples of it given for us.

Romans 4:16: “For this reason *it is* of faith, in order that *it might be* by grace, to the end that the promise might be certain to all the seed...”—because he talked about the difference between when he was uncircumcised and he received the blessing and promise and then afterward he was circumcised.

“...—not to the one who is of the law only, but also to the one who is of *the* faith of Abraham, who is *the* father of us all” (v 16).

Of course, *the faith of Abraham is very profound because it's based upon obeying God's voice, keeping His commandments, laws, statutes and judgments!* It's based upon *obeying the voice of God* when He said, ‘Take your only beloved son Isaac and offer him for a sacrifice on one of the mountains of Moriah that I will show you.’ Isaac had to have a certain amount of faith, too. He talks about that in Heb. 11.

Verse 17: “(Exactly as it is written: ‘I have made you a father of many nations.’)... [That's profound!] ...before God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not as though they are... [that's part of *faith and hope*] ...and who against hope believed in hope, in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, ‘So shall your seed be’” (vs 17-18).

Today we have a greater glimpse of what it is like that ‘your seed shall be as the stars of heaven.’ We can see some of the fantastic movies that they have showing the glory of God with the galaxies and stars and everything—it's just breathtaking! The earth is special! Man can see the glory of God in the heavens! *The faith of Abraham* does not mean Abraham's faith but *faith like Abraham*.

Verse 19: “And he, not being weak in the faith, considered not his own body, already having become dead, being about one hundred years old, nor *did he consider* the deadness of Sarah's womb; and **he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief...** [he had to wait a long time for it, but he still didn't doubt] ...rather, he was strengthened in

the faith, giving glory to God; for he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do” (vs 19-21). This is where we need to come to in faith, hope, love and belief! That's the ultimate we need to grow into.

Let's see some more about this promise, not only of Isaac and of Christ, but also:

Verse 13: “For the promise to Abraham, or to his seed, **that he should be heir of the world...**” Go back and examine the promises given to Abraham. It started out: ‘You sojourn in this land which I will show you’—the land of Canaan. It started there. Later it came to Jacob and it was to be the north, to the west, to the east and to the south. Then you have the two sons of Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh—and it's expanded even more. This tells us that it's the world! “**...heir of the world...**”

Let's expand upon this a little bit more. This is why God wants us to have this kind of faith and belief, because God is going to do something great for each one of us. Not in this life for notoriety! Not in this life so we can gloat to other people and show off! But at the resurrection so we can be raised from the dead to shine as the stars of heaven forever and ever! That's what Jesus said, and that's why it talks about that ‘your seed shall be as the stars of heaven.’

In other words so great and mammoth and fantastic that the human mind just cannot fully grasp it. We can appreciate, by looking out into the heavens and seeing the stars, but all we see is a little twinkle through the smog. We can look at movies and the Hubble photographs and see something fantastic, but that's the best we can understand it.

God has something so great for us. That's why being called to receive the Spirit of God, to receive the promises of God, to grow in grace and knowledge and overcoming are so great. There's some suffering that comes with it.

Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him” (vs 14-17).

No one likes to be told that they're going to suffer, they're going to have trials; but that's what the Bible tells us. While we are not suffering,

rejoice! But when suffering does come, trust in God and rejoice in that trust, though the physical circumstances may be difficult.

Verse 18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us.”

Heb. 1 is where we started this series; this is why Paul started it out this way. Most of the book of Hebrews is a written sermon, which Paul probably gave over and over again. That will account for the reason that it is one of the most elevated writings of the Apostle Paul and probably because he dictated it to Luke, and Luke was the one who—over a period of time with these sermons, because he was with Paul—refined it and put it all together. The whole book of Hebrews is just outstanding!

Notice he doesn’t begin by saying, ‘Paul an apostle.’ Sending something to Jerusalem with Paul’s name on it would likely be burned upon arrival! He starts out:

Hebrews 1:1: “God... [that’s the whole focus of Hebrews] ...[and Jesus Christ] Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son.”

You can’t have any greater message or witness given to you than that which comes directly from God in the flesh. That’s a tremendous thing! He wants them to understand that ‘Jesus walked your streets and your roads and He taught you.’ The Son of God! Not a prophet, not Jeremiah, but the Son of God; God manifested in the flesh!

Verse 2: Whom He has appointed heir of all things... [If we’re joint heirs, we’re going to inherit all things; isn’t that what it says? *Yes!*] ...by Whom also He made the ages.”

Then he gives a glimpse of the glory that Jesus has. All of this is done to inspire us. Why? *When you are beginning to face difficulties and problems and challenges you need hope!* You need something greater than your own thoughts. You need something higher than the circumstances that are around you. He knew what was going to happen to Jerusalem. So, in writing this, he wants to lift them up! He wants them to focus on God and Jesus Christ!

Verse 3: “Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person...” Just like he told Philip when Philip said, ‘show us the Father.’ Jesus said, ‘Have I been with you so long a time and you have not known Me, Philip? If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father.’

“...and upholding all things by the word of His own power...” (v 3). That’s amazing! When we come and pray in the name of Jesus Christ, we’re coming to the One Whom God has given the authority to uphold the whole universe by His Word. That helps give us a lot of *faith*, too. Helps give us a lot of *hope*, too.

“...when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them” (vs 3-4). We’re called *brethren!* This is what Paul wants us to keep in mind.

He’s building here in Heb. 11 on the foundation of Abraham for what is going to follow. Hebrews 11:16: “...Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God because He has prepared a city for them.”

You know that if God is going to make it, it’s going to be something! He’s going to give you:

- a new name
- a new body
- a new mind
- a new place to live

That’s what we need to understand. That’s what God has called us to.

Here’s some of the trials he went through, v 17: “**By faith Abraham**, when he was being tried, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises offered up *his* only begotten *son* of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac shall your Seed be called’” (vs 17-18).

He did this in demonstration to show that in spite of the worst possible predicament that you may find yourself in, **God will fulfill His promise!**

Abraham didn’t know how God was going to do it. I’m sure Isaac didn’t know how God was going to do it either, because as they were going up the mountain and Isaac had all the wood stacked on his back, and Abraham was carrying the pot of coals with him. Isaac said, ‘Father, where is the sacrifice.’ Abraham said, ‘My son, God will provide.’

Notice Abraham’s attitude. It’s not recorded in Genesis, but this is the inspired Word of God, v 19: “*Because he* reckoned that God was able to raise him even from among *the* dead, from which he also received him in a figurative way.” He said, ‘Well, if at a hundred I can be a father, if Isaac dies, He [God] can resurrect him.’ He did not expect God to do it the way that He did, at the last instant!

They built the altar, put the wood on it and he said, ‘Isaac, come over here.’ He bound him, picked him up, laid him on the altar, ready for the sacrifice. He reached down to get the knife, then an angel out of heaven said, ‘Abraham!’ I’ll bet he was glad to hear that! ‘Don’t harm the lad.’ Then all of a sudden they turned and saw the ram in the thicket.

It’s amazing how obedient Isaac was—in this instance he was a type of Christ, and in this instance Abraham was a type of God the Father—his only begotten son, whom he loved. This was the ultimate test! After that every word that God had spoken and promised to Abraham was secured by irrevocable swearing of God. And when He said, ‘In your Seed’ (Gen. 22) that’s where Paul shows that Seed is singular referring to Christ. You can take the whole thing that was done in Gen. 22 and show that as a type of what God was going to do with Jesus when He came to the earth. Amazing!

That’s why Abraham went and did what he did. Some of the movies they show when God asks Abraham to take Isaac and—the actor who played him, George C. Scott in this particular movie—got angry and smashed his fist on a rock and said, ‘Oh God, why? And argued with God.’ *We don’t find that! That’s not true!* That’s why we love God, we obey Him, we keep His commandments. He’ll bless us! He’ll be with us! We’ll have our faults and mistakes, but we’ll grow and overcome.

Verse 20: “**By faith Isaac** blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things that were to come.” I don’t know if you could count the blessing to Esau as a blessing, but nevertheless he sits on the greatest oil reserves known to the world. How that’s going to turn out—in the Middle East—we’ll have to wait and see.

Verse 21: “**By faith Jacob**... [This is a very interesting one here. Think about this!] ...when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph...”

Not talking about the other eleven sons that were blessed afterward. Remember that? There was a special, particular blessing to Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48). Then we have a blessing and prophecy for each one of the sons (Gen. 49; Deut. 33). But when you come to the one on Joseph, that’s a long one. I mean, those blessings are something!

Here it’s brought out that each of the sons of Joseph: “...and worshiped *God, leaning* on the top of his staff” (v 21). Go back and read the various things in the book of Genesis so you can get all the background concerning this and it will help fill in some of the blanks.

Verse 22: “**By faith Joseph**, when he was dying, spoke of the *coming* exodus of the children of Israel, and gave a command concerning his bones.” This ends a section. It starts out with Abraham and ends with Joseph. Then v 23-29 has to do with the Exodus and the wandering in the wilderness:

Verse 23: “**By faith Moses**, after he was born, was hidden three months by his parents because they saw *that* he was a beautiful little child; and they did not fear the king’s decree. **By faith Moses**, after becoming a great *leader*, refused to be called *the* son of Pharaoh’s daughter” (vs 23-24).

I think perhaps one of the most accurate movies that has been portrayed—as far as a religious movie coming out of Hollywood—was the one on the Ten Commandments, showing Moses, Egypt and all the things that went on there.

Verse 25: “**Choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the temporary pleasure of sin.**” That’s a profound verse. People are not willing to give up their comfort and the pleasure of sin to suffer for God. Moses had to do that, because God had a great project, which he didn’t know anything about. Moses ran off over to Midian and was finally revived when the daughters of Jethro came down to water the sheep or the goats and found him there. Jethro had seven daughters and they saw one man and they said, ‘Whoopee!’

Then Moses, to humble him, spent 40 years tending sheep. You’re going to learn a lot doing that, and it’s going to take a lot of ego out of you. The great successor to Pharaoh, who was god in the flesh as far as the Egyptians were concerned, with all the wealth and all the riches and all the things that were there in Egypt, God sent him out across the desert to live in a near wilderness and take care of sheep and goats for 40 years. Then one day, when God was ready, Moses saw the bush burning on a mountain. He went up there to see what it was. The first thing he heard was, ‘Take your shoes off! For you are standing on Holy ground! I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and I have called you to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt!’ You can read the whole account about that.

Moses had his faults and everything like that, just like everybody else. Which tells that God always includes the faults of those that serve Him, so that we can all have hope that our faults do not take us away from God. God knows all of our faults—every one of them—more than we do, but:

- He still love us!
- He still uses us!
- He still works with us!

- ✓ We are growing!
- ✓ We are overcoming!

You cannot understand why you must suffer affliction unless you know the goal; unless you know the hope.

Verse 26: “For he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt because he was looking intently to the reward. **By faith he left Egypt**, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he persevered, as *if he were* seeing the *One Who is invisible*.... [that’s quite a faith] ...**By faith he kept the Passover** and the sprinkling of the blood so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not slay them” (vs 26-28). All of these things are by faith.

Verse 29: “**By faith they passed through the Red Sea** as through a dry *land* in which the Egyptians, while making *the* attempt, were swallowed up *by the waters*. **By faith the walls of Jericho fell** after being circled for seven days” (vs 29-30).

The 40-years wandering in the wilderness were called *the faithless generation!* Beginning three days after they crossed the Red Sea they started complaining: ‘Who’s going to give us water to drink?’ Started fighting, coming to Moses, ‘give us water to drink. ‘Who’s going to give us food to eat?’ (Exo. 16). God gave them manna and He sent the quail.

You can go through the other ones and come up to Exo. 19 when they’re prepared to hear the voice of God and receive the commandments of God from Mt. Sinai. As soon as they heard the voice of God, they said, ‘Oh no, we don’t want to hear the voice of God; we’ll listen to you, Moses.’ **No faith!** Then Moses went up on the mountain and their faith was absolutely nothing. What did they do? They came to Aaron—now, Aaron was weak-kneed—and they said, ‘Aaron, make us gods, we don’t where this Moses is.’ Even after they saw all the miracles; even after walking through the Red Sea; they didn’t have enough faith to say that ‘God did all these miraculous things, He’s able to take care of us.’

While he was up there 40 days receiving the commandments, laws and statutes of God, Aaron built a calf. You know the excuse he gave when he got caught: ‘I threw the gold into the fire and out leapt these calves.’ Which also showed that the Levitical priesthood was not faithful either, even from the very beginning.

God counts these 40 years as **faithless!** They didn’t believe God! How many times did they tempt

Him, and then they got to the border, ready to into the ‘promised land’ and all they did was cry and sob and boohoo. God said, ‘Enough! It’ll be one day for one year and you’re going to wander for 40 years. Faithless generation!’

Why did God not let Moses go into the ‘promised land’? *Because he didn’t believe God in one instance!* God said, ‘**Speak** to the rock’ and it would bring forth water. But Moses got carried away in his carnality and all the chiding of the children of Israel, and got angry with them and **beat** the rock. God still gave the water, but because God said to Moses, ‘Because you didn’t believe Me! I’ve given you the Ten Commandments; you sat in My presence for a total of eighty days—40 days one time; 40 days another time—and you wrote these things down. You even saw My glory, the backside of My glory, and when I told you to *speak* to the rock, you didn’t believe Me, therefore, you will not go into the Holy Land. You can come up here on this mountain and you can see it.’ That’s why!

It’s hard to grasp when you just look at it, but it’s easier to grasp when you understand the relationship that God called him to be in with Him. That’s why! After 40 years Moses should have known better. I can understand why he was frustrated. He’s still going to be in the resurrection. *Even though we have some punishment for our sins, God doesn’t reject us.* Keep that in mind!

Moses was probably fed-up with the people! Read the last parts of the book of Deuteronomy and you’ll know he was! He said, ‘I tell you this is going to happen.’ And it has happened.

Hebrews 3:7 gives a summary of it: “For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice.’” This is an important principle: Every day you need to hear the voice of God—not the audible sound of His voice—to heed the words of God. Every day is when we are living! Yesterday is over with; tomorrow hasn’t come. You can’t undo what you did yesterday except through repentance. You cannot predict what’s going to happen tomorrow, because it hasn’t arrived, yet. The opposite of faith is to harden your heart.

“...‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, “They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways.” So, I swore in My wrath, “If they shall enter into My rest—”’” (vs 7-11). The answer is *no, they’re not!*

Except Joshua and Caleb and those who were less than 20-years-old.

Verse 12—the lesson: “Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief... [lack of faith] ...in apostatizing from *the* living God.” Apply that today:

- God has called us!
- God has given us His Spirit!
- God has given us His Word!
- God has given us peace!
- God has given us prosperity!

God has given us all of these fantastic blessings, and what excuse are we going to render to God IF we apostatize? We can't say, 'Well, God, I was on the rack of torture.' No one has been there yet in this generation. *NO!* Everything has been there. This is the most spoiled, pampered, prosperous, as well as degenerate and sinful generation that has been in a long, long time.

God calls us out of it, and if we apostatize back to the Roman religion #2, which is Protestantism—see the book *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight—with all the things that God has done for us, we turn our back on God and go after the things of this world, this is what He's saying; this is how it applies to us today: *They have not known My ways!*

There have been a lot of people in the Church of God who were never converted. That's why God had to scatter it and destroy it. He'll take care of His own. He'll watch over them. But He has to get rid of the tares without destroying the wheat.

Verse 11: “So I swore in My wrath, “If they shall enter into My rest—”.... [an open question, because it's not over until it's over] (Here's the warning): ...Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God” (vs 11-12). He's giving these warnings in there because He knows what's going to happen.

Just like the sermon *The Coming Economic Tribulation*; what I gave in that sermon is nothing compared to what you can do if you go online and start looking up all these different areas concerning the collapse of the dollar and so forth. I gave you the mild! If you go online and look it up and pull it down, it's going to scare you to the bottom of your feet!

What I'm trying to do is the same thing that Paul is doing here: *prepare you for the tough times that are coming!* Maybe it's a year away; maybe it's

two; three; five; seven, but they're going to come! This is what Paul is doing here. He's saying, 'Look! Tough times are going to come and don't leave God because of the tough times.'

“...in apostatizing from *the* living God. Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called 'today,' so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin” (vs 12-13). There we come full circle back.

Today we have so many avenues of sin getting into us it's unreal! We've got sin on every side of us! Sin is deceitful, because there can be some benefit from sin—temporarily! 'The pleasure of sin...' Yes, it can! Everyone looks at the lotto. A man won \$170-million. Everyone said, 'Oh, I wish that were me!' But you fail to realize that you extracted that money from millions of other people through their lust. Yes, Satan rewards us! He gives that which would be thought of as a great blessing—right? Deceitfulness of sin, whatever it may be!

Verse 14: “For we are companions of Christ, **if** we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end. As it is being said, 'Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion'” (vs 14-15).

That's what happened with Moses. He temporarily one day hardened his heart when God said, 'Speak to the rock and bring forth water.' And that's why Moses was punished and not allowed to go into the land, because he didn't glorify God. He sinned before God, before the children of Israel. After 40 years, for him to do that after all this time, God said, 'All right, you're not going in!' ***Deceitfulness of sin!***

Verse 16: “For some, after hearing, did rebel, but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He indignant *for* forty years? *Was it* not with those who had sinned, whose dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear *that they* would not enter into His rest, except to those who had disobeyed? So, we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief” (vs 16-19).

What we're talking about in Heb. 11 is faith! It's very interesting that in Hebrews 11:29: “**By faith they passed through the Red Sea...**”

We jump forward, v 30: “**By faith the walls of Jericho fell...**” By that time, and with Joshua, they were willing to obey God. Someone could have said, 'That's silly for God to tell us you walk around it once everyday and don't say a word. Then on the seventh day you go around it seven times? Then you expect us to shout and the walls are going to come

down.’ NO! *They were faithful! They did what God said!*

I thought that was very, very interesting with that break for 40 years, and yet, the book of Exodus counts all those 40 years.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 14:12
- 2) Hebrews 11:8-9
- 3) 2 Samuel 7:1-6
- 4) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 5) John 1:14
- 6) Hebrews 11:10
- 7) John 14:1-3
- 8) Hebrews 11:11-12
- 9) Hebrews 6:11-18
- 10) Romans 4:16-21, 13
- 11) Romans 8:14-18
- 12) Hebrews 1:1-4
- 13) Hebrews 11:16-30
- 14) Hebrews 3:7-12, 11-19
- 15) Hebrews 11:29-30

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 24
- Revelation 18
- Genesis 12
- Romans 5
- Revelation 21-22
- Genesis 22; 48-49
- Deuteronomy 33
- Exodus 16; 19

Also referenced:

Sermons:

- *The Mark of the Beast is Here*
- *The Coming Economic Tribulation*

Sermon Series: *The Covenants of Abraham*

Book:

- *Occult Holidays or God’s Holy Days—Which?*
by Fred R. Coulter
- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 6-3-11
Reformatted/Corrected: January/2017