

## How Men of Faith Live

Hebrews 11:7-27

2/11/07

### Intro

We recognize names such as Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, Cy Young, Dizzy Dean, and Lou Gehrig because they were part of the 1936 Baseball Hall of Fame election. These men were considered the greats because of the feats they accomplished in the world of baseball. When Ty Cobb retired he held 90 major league records, some which still hold today.

If there was ever a Hall of Fame for Faith, Hebrews chapter 11 would be just that. Here we read of such great as Enoch, who walked with God so closely that God just took him up. There was Noah who built an ark, by faith, when the earth had not even heard of rain. There was Abraham who left his home and followed God, not knowing where he was going. And then there was Moses who chose the ill treatment of the Jews over the riches of Pharaoh's house.

When we read of the greats of the faith, our own faith is also encouraged. We are inspired to live our lives by the same faith and desire to see the blessing that God has in store for those who are willing to trust God with their lives.

In this chapter we gain insight in how to live by faith by studying the lives of the men who did it.

**These are principles and insights into men and women who live by faith.**

## I. They Live Their Worship

- What they do they do for God. He is a rewarder of those who seek him. When Noah built the Ark, he did it out of reverence for God (vs 7).

### A. They're willing to lead

- They're willing to do what needs to be done whether anyone else goes with them.
- Noah was willing to lead, to do what God wanted done, in spite of the jeers of the people he grew up with.

**Illus – I remember in Russia how in a store a crowd would gather if someone would stare at an item in a case long enough. People like to do things in packs.**

**Illus – I remember when I was at Oregon State, living in a fraternity, I wanted a place to belong. Then God got a hold of my heart. I decided to walk away from the party life and go to church. No one went with me at first, but they came later.**

**Luke 17:26-28, And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.**

- They were going about their lives as if nothing was wrong, but everything was wrong. They were minding their own business, and ignoring God.

**Luke 17:33, “Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.”**

**B. They’re willing to follow God**

- Abraham went out, not knowing where he was going, because He trusted that God would be faithful to His Word.
- He was following God as an act of faith, believing that God had better things in store for him.

**Illus – Someone asked Mother Teresa to pray for him. She said she would gladly pray, but for what? “That I would have greater clarity for my future,” he said. “I can’t pray for that, but I will pray that you will increase your faith and follow God wherever He may lead you.”**

**I Kings 18:21, Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people did not answer him a word.**

**Joshua 24:15, “If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”**

**C. They’re willing to wait**

- I’ve met some people who are not willing to wait for God to bring about a victory or fulfill a promise. Some say, “If I have to wait, or if I have to suffer, then I won’t believe.”
- But this is not faith. If we go through a trial or a difficulty it doesn’t mean that God has abandoned or has forsaken us; we have need to live by faith that perseveres and not by sight.

**Hebrews 10:35-36, Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.**

**Illus – Some have thought the Lord was slow to fulfill His promise that He would return to rule and reign on the earth...**

**II Peter 3:8-9, But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**

**Isaiah 40:31, Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.**

- Vs 13 – All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and welcomed them from a distance.

## II. They Live in Anticipation

- The Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard once said, “Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forward.”
- We do not see what lies ahead, any unexpected thing may happen, we do not know what is coming into our lives.
- Therefore, without faith, we walk blindly into the future. But with faith, we walk in anticipation that God is there before us.

### A. They have heavenly desires

- I cannot see the future, but I know that God is already there preparing the way for me.
- These men of faith were looking forward; not backward.

**John 14:1-4, “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”**

- *This is true in the whole of life, but it is also true in the smallest slices of life as well.*
- Abraham was willing to dwell in tents with Isaac and Jacob because he was looking for the city who architect and builder is God. ( vs 10)
- Faith anticipates that God is preparing the way and that His desire is to bless, to edify, the build up those He loves.

**Illus – We see that in that in Isaac when he blessed Jacob and Esau, when Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph and in Joseph when he gave orders concerning his bones as he was speaking about the exodus of the sons of Israel.**

### B. They are strangers and exiles on the earth

- Their heart looks forward to what God will do in their lives and they do not look back from where they came.
- Abraham was willing to live in tents in anticipation of God's future blessings.

**Illus – Moses considered the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.**

**Illus – Daniel Ortega wrote a great song that captures this beautifully. It's called, Give Me Jesus. One line in that song says it all; “You can have all this world, but give me Jesus. You can have all this world, but give me Jesus.”**

### III. By Faith, They are Men of Action

- There is an old saying that some think captures the life of faith, “They are so heavenly minded, they’re no earthly good.”
- That is not faith at all! That’s fatalism.

#### A. Faith does what God is doing

- Jesus was about His Father’s business, and he is the example for us all. We should also be about our Father’s business, being involved in what God is involved in.

**Isaiah 58:11-12, And the Lord will continually guide you, and satisfy your desire in scorched places, and give strength to your bones; and you will be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters do not fail. Those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins; you will raise up the age-old foundations; and you will be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the streets in which to dwell.**

- Men of faith look for more than just their own personal satisfaction, they desire to see God’s purpose fulfilled on this earth.
- They weren’t just hoping to go to heaven when they died; they were desiring to see heaven touch the earth now.

#### B. Faith is daring

- This is a quality you see over and over in scripture. Abraham leaving all that he knew and was familiar with to seek a land he didn’t know.
- Abraham and Sarah took a risk to have a child at such an old age.
- Moses chose the ill treatment of the sons of Israel rather than the pleasures of Egypt.
- Abraham offered up Isaac his son fully believing that God would raise him from the dead.
- Rahab the harlot chose to risk her life by giving help to the Israeli spies sent out when Israel was in the desert.
- See examples of faith that dares in verses 33-38.

#### Conclusion

**To live by faith is to believe God, that He is faithful. It is to have heaven in your heart as you live here on earth. It is to live in anticipation that God is at work to build and edify your life so that you can put your faith into action.**