

Hebrews

Chapter 11, Part 1

I. Introduction

- a. In our previous lesson, the writer of Hebrews closed with the statement of faith principle
 - i. That is, “...*my righteous one shall live by faith*” (**Hebrews 10:38**)
 1. This was followed by a verse of application stating that true believers have real faith, will not shrink back and preserve their souls
- b. Today’s lesson is a bridge between this principle and the “hall of faith”, as it’s often referred to
 - i. This lesson will lay the foundation for faith itself and introduce the following passage which deals with many faithful people in the Word of God

II. Commentary

a. **Verse 1**

- i. “*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*”
 1. In no way is this meant to be a full theological definition of faith
 - a. This is a definition of faith which emphasizes the characteristics of God given faith that the writer is attempting to get across to his audience
 2. Don’t forget, the writer is writing to Hebrews who grew up under a perverted form of Judaism
 - a. By this time, little stress was placed on faith while heavy stress was placed on works
 - i. He is about to show them that the heroes of their own Old Testament were men and women of faith
 1. It cannot be argued that Old Testament believers had to trust the future promises of God
 - a. They all looked forward to the coming Messiah by faith
 3. God given faith gives real “*assurance of things hoped for*”
 - a. This does not necessarily speak of the assurance of salvation as many children of God have doubts from time to time
 - b. This speaks of the assurance that God’s Word is true, that Jesus truly is Who He claimed to be, the Gospel is true and Jesus is returning again for His people
 - i. An assurance that these things are true is the result of God given faith
 - c. “True faith is an absolute certainty, often of things that the world considers unreal and impossible” (John MacArthur)
 4. God given faith gives read “*conviction of things not seen*”

- a. Internal assurance that the Bible is true will lead to conviction which is seen in an outward manifestation of Christian fruit
 - i. It's impossible to have God given faith that Jesus is your only Hope for eternal life without being changed by that knowledge
 - 1. This is the conviction spoken of here
 - a. In the following passage, we will see men and women who had both assurance and conviction

b. Verse 2

- i. *"For by it the people of old received their commendation"*
 - 1. In the Bible, God has repeatedly shown His approval of the people of faith
 - a. This is another point which will bear out in this chapter
 - i. The men and women listed in this chapter had God given faith which gave them assurance of the truth of God's Word
 - 1. Because of this, they acted with great conviction which proved their faith
 - a. *"But someone will say, 'You have faith and I have works.' Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."* (**James 2:18**)
 - i. The reoccurring theme of this chapter is that faith gives assurance and conviction which produces works
 - ii. This is the type of faith God has given and will approve

c. Verse 3

- i. *"By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible"*
 - 1. The recipients of this letter believed unreservedly that God had created the heavens and the earth
 - a. They embraced the Genesis account of creation wholeheartedly, even though they were not there
 - i. In this, the writer is explaining that we believe in special creation by God by faith
 - 2. This is not some blind faith, as modern scientists would have you think
 - a. Scientifically, evolution is unobserved and unproven
 - b. Scientifically, nothing has ever produced something
 - c. Scientifically, disorder has never produced order
 - d. It is evolutionary science which trusts blind faith

