

28

THE HALL OF FAITH (PT3)

Hebrews 11:23-39

Intro: How do you know if you have faith?

I. Faith Refuses to Follow the Allurements and Values of the World (v.23-28)

- A. The worldly path can look attractive and comfortable
 - o Moses had access to prestige, status and wealth
 - He could be called “son of the Pharaoh’s daughter” (v.24)
 - He could’ve enjoyed the “treasures of Egypt” (v.26)
 - o Is wealth bad? No, but it would require Moses to deny his identity as an Israelite
- B. Only Faith can keep us from believing the world’s false promises
 - o #1—Moses believed that the pleasures of this world are “fleeting” (v.25)
 - The world promises a lot but delivers little
 - Do you believe that today?
 - o #2—Moses believed that real pleasure comes from following Christ
 - Moses “considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward” (v.26)
 - If we suffer with Christ, we have more pleasure than anything in the world! “Walking by faith means defeating sin’s pleasures with the promise of a superior pleasure in God.”
—John Piper
 - o #3—Moses believed God would judge the Egyptians and protect his people
 - Why side with the group that will face God’s judgment?
 - By faith, Moses put the blood over the doorposts to avoid the angel of death (v. 28)

**** Key Point:** “Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it” (Luke 17:33). The Way Up is Down!



II. Faith Believes Even When Things Don't Make Sense (v.29-31)

- A. God has a history of asking his people to do things which make no sense to us
 - o God led Israel to a dead-end at the Red Sea (v.29)
 - o God asked Israel to defeat the fortified Jericho by encircling it (v.30)
 - o Rahab sided with the Israelites despite their smaller army and her sin! (v.31)
 - B. Why Does God do it this way? Is he out to get us?
- ** Key Point: Faith is seen most plainly when we don't understand!

III. Faith Leads to Mighty Deeds and Accomplishments (v.32-34)

- A. Faith is the foundation for the great accomplishments of God's people
 - o Gideon beat Midianites with 300 men
 - o Barak was great general under Deborah
 - o Samson defeated Philistines by knocking down building
 - o Jephthah was a great warrior for Israel in the book of Judges
 - o David was greatest King of Israel, beat Goliath
 - o Samuel and the Prophets, spoke for God, upheld truth
- B. Why does faith allow us to perform good works? Why is faith the best foundation for our obedience?

**Key point: We are not saved by good works, but they flow naturally from a heart that trusts God. That's why, "faith apart from works is dead" (Jas 2:26)

IV. Faith is Willing to Endure Persecution and Suffering (v.35-38)

- A. Those who walk by faith often suffer greatly
 - o Bible is filled with countless stories of saints suffering for God: "mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, sawn in two, they were killed with the sword...destitute, afflicted, mistreated" (v.37)
 - o Jesus endured these same things! "A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me they will also persecute you" (John 15:20)
- B. Are you ready to suffer? Only faith will get you through it



Discussion Groups

1. How are you struggling today with the comforts and pleasures offered by the world? How does this passage help you be more willing to give them up?

2. What challenges do you face today where God is asking you to believe when it doesn't make sense? How does this passage motivate you to press on in faith?

3. Do you think you are ready if serious persecution comes your way? What can you do today to help you be prepared to suffer?

