

58-11-05.wpd --Trusting in the Invisible
faith, deliverance, persecution, reward
Heb 11:23-29

Faith makes a visible response to the invisible realities of God.

INTRODUCTION: (Text as Scripture reading)

--God gave us intelligent minds. We can learn things. We can have *knowledge*. But there is a problem with knowledge. Someone has said: "Our greatest difficulties in life aren't caused by the things we don't know, but by the things we do know that aren't so." We often think we know something, and find later that we were misinformed, or we heard it wrong, or science discovered a new factor that cancelled out what they thought was true. For that reason, the God of truth requires faith instead of knowledge. The facts accepted now and the reasoning currently popular may be valid only until tomorrow. But the realities in which God asks us to place our trust are *true today and throughout eternity*. But believing is not enough.... we must act on our faith: **HOM.idea**.

--In this section of the Faith Chapter, Hebrews 11, we look at **Trusting in the Invisible** in the life of Moses.

I. The Visible Threat of Human Hostility

- A. Pharaoh had a problem: an *overpopulation* of Jews, and he made an edict to solve the problem-- Exo 1:22b, "Every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live." [Sounds cruel, but our society uses the same reasoning today by using abortion as a means of birth control.]
1. Many succumbed to Pharaoh's edict, out of *fear*. Many today fall for the *fear tactics* of the abortion industry:
 - a. "*We're overpopulated*" (So, we decrease our numbers, and the world immigrates here to keep those numbers up and growing.)
 - b. "*Children will tie you down and spoil your happiness*" (Guilt from abortion spoils happiness and ties people up emotionally.)
 - c. "*Having kids makes you poor*" (What about a child's worth? Do children have intrinsic value?-- Psa 127:3 (NASB), Behold, children are a gift of the LORD; The fruit of the womb is a reward.)
 2. This was the reasoning of Moses' parents-- **v.23**, *By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. (Children don't just come along; they are given. The reward they bring is*

helping us grow up and out of our selfishness and immaturity. *Faith's responds to the yet unseen reality, even at the cost of defying the visible threat of human hostility.*

- B. Faith embraces our true, God-given identity at the cost of forsaking a favorable false one-- **v.24**, By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. (We find *our true identity in Christ*. It may cost us to give up for Christ an identification with the world and its system of values.)
1. As with Moses, it may mean choosing a painful path, rather than a pleasurable one-- **v.25**, He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.
 2. It may mean an unpopular destiny with an everlasting reward rather than one with fame and fortune that lasts only during this life-- **v.26**, He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

TRANS: Fear worries about the future as it faces hostile situations in the present; *faith* trusts God for the future as it faces present situations. Just as his parents, Moses did not fear the visible threat of Pharaoh, but maintained a commitment to the invisible God-- **v.27**, *By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. Faith makes a visible response to the invisible realities of God, even at the threat of hostility. That may sound like risky business, BUT...*

II. Faith Puts Us on the Safe Side of God's Deliverance

- A. God's acts of salvation always draw a dividing line; on one side of the line is *destruction*, and on the other is *safety*.
- B. In the final plague of Egypt, God drew a dividing line for safety and for destruction, when He required the blood of a sacrificial lamb to mark the doorways of Jewish homes.
1. Moses led the people in the right "faith" response to God's act of salvation-- **v.28**, By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.
 2. Firstborn sons, Jewish or Egyptian, on the wrong side of that doorway met death, and those on the right side of that doorway, whether Jewish or Egyptian, were saved-- Exo 12:23, When the LORD goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.

- a. How the blood was applied on the doors formed an invisible sign of the Cross that points today to our proper faith response to the sacrificial blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. (Faith in God's revelation puts us on the right side of the blood.)
- b. The work of salvation accomplished on the Cross is accessed by true faith, but cancelled by false trust in our own good works-- Rom 9:30-33. What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone." As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."
- C. God drew another dividing line at the Red Sea-- v.29. By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.
1. The Bible compares Israel's Red Sea experience to baptism, which represents our *dying to self* and *rising to new life*, an outward representation of our faith in Christ. (If you've accepted Christ as Savior, but have not been baptized, it's something you should do. It is "*following Christ in baptism.*")
 2. But just as the Egyptians perished in that sea of water, Christ becomes a dividing line between the saved and the lost-- John 3:17-19. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

CONCLUSION:

--What happened to the Egyptians puts the visible threat of human hostility into clear perspective. Man's opposition to God's truth will ultimately vanish, but faith placed in His truth puts us on the right side of the dividing line between destruction and safety.

--But the kind of *faith* spoken of here is an active choice, a visible response to the invisible realities of God. It means to place the blood of the Cross over the doorway of your heart. It means to make your faith visible to a hostile world by following Jesus through the waters of baptism. It means to live your life trusting the invisible God.

Heb 11:23-31 (NIV) By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. {24} By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. {25} He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. {26} He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. {27} By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. {28} By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel. {29} By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.