

**Warm-up**

Think of a man in the history of our nation who had great resolve. How did this affect those whom he led? What was the basis of his faith?

- ▶ Exercising faith pleases God, brings growth, and encourages others.

**Contemplative Faith** (v. 26)

*"...considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward."* (v. 26)

Do you like to think things through, or do you prefer to "wing it" once you have the basic facts? Some people like to mull things over, and others like to make quick decisions. 2 Tim. 2:7 says, *"Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything"*. When I read and memorize God's word I try to do this. In Psalm 19:14 David asked God to direct the *meditations of his heart*. He wanted his inner impulses to be pleasing to God. I'm sure he thought about this often. And I'm sure that God answered his prayer.

A good way to consider God's truth is to observe the impact it has on those who trust Him.

*"Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith."* (Heb. 13:7)

Verse 26 also suggests that we should compare what God gives with what the world offers. Can the world give us peace as God can (John 14:27)? How valuable are the world's riches compared with God's (Matt. 6:19-20, 2 Tim. 4:8)? And will relationships based solely on human commitment last forever? *A wise man carefully considers this.*

*"For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness."* (Ps. 84:10 NASB)

- ▶ A faith that contemplates the value of trusting God becomes a strong, growing faith.

**Confident Faith** (v. 27)

*"By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen"* (v. 27)

Remember what James wrote about faith that doubts?

*"But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, <sup>8</sup> being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."* (James 1:6-7)

Moses left Egypt without doubting God or fearing men (v. 27). He was confident! In Psalm 71:5 David says, *"For You are my hope; O Lord GOD, You are my confidence from my youth."* I like to coach myself to say, "Father, I have confidence in You!" Another good phrase to repeat often is, "Lord, I trust You!"

It is easy to take our eyes off Jesus and stare at our problems. Peter did and almost drowned (Matt. 14:29-30)! It's easy to fear, even though God said in Isaiah 41:10, *"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*

How do you think strong confidence in God is cultivated? Paul wrote in Phil. 1:26 *"that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus"*. I think that our faith is encouraged when we associate with others who trust God. It must have been an amazing experience for those who rubbed shoulders with the apostle Paul! What impact is your faith having on others?

- ▶ Confident faith generates more of the same in ourselves and those around us.

**Protective Faith – Part 1** (vs. 28-29)

*"By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them."* (v. 28)

Notice that Moses was careful to follow through with *specifically* what God asked him to do (sprinkling of blood on the door posts). I think that when we become too casual in our obedience to the Lord we can suffer some consequences. When God speaks to us we need to be at full attention! We need to be careful not to rationalize or change his instruction to better suit our preferences. If we want His blessing and protection we must obey Him.

I was thinking about the Red Sea experience. One could argue that the sea would not have parted without Moses acting in faith. *“By faith they passed through the Red Sea...”* So, do you think that God’s miracles depend on faith being demonstrated? Remember that when Jesus was in his hometown *“He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief”* (Matt. 13:58). Although God’s power is never limited, He seems to restrict using it for our benefit or protection when we don’t believe Him or trust Him. It’s His call, but I think exercising faith is a big deal!

- ▶ *Did you notice that the Egyptians were drowned when they tried passing through the Red Sea without faith? God protected His PEOPLE; they were saved because of the faith of their leader, Moses.*

### **Protective Faith – Part 2** (vs. 30-31)

*“By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.”* (v. 31)

When I had young kids I was deeply committed to both their physical safety and their spiritual health. I often asked God to protect them, and to bring them to Christ. I like the progression in Hebrews 11:28-31, where God first protects His people and then a specific family. Rahab was not a part of God’s chosen people, the Israelites. But her faith in God built a bridge to salvation over which all of her family crossed to safety.

How do you view your spiritual role in your family? You might believe this question is targeted solely to dads and moms. However I’ve seen young children come to Christ through faith, and then this faith impacting mom and dad to where they accepted Christ. When faith enters a family everyone is affected to some degree.

Or how about a parent waking up in the middle of the night with a burden to pray for one their children, and then finding out later that at that very moment God intervened to protect them in some way?

Another aspect of protective faith is for a believer to claim the power of Jesus Christ to overrule satanic forces. Jesus is clear in Luke 10:19 in saying, *“I have given your authority.....over all the power of the enemy...”*. No power can stand against God’s power and authority, and He granted us this protection through faith in Jesus Christ.

- ▶ *God protected a FAMILY because of the faith of one person, Rahab.*

### **Approved Faith** (vs. 32-40)

*“And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised”* (v. 39)

When I was a new believer a hymn entitled “Faith is the Victory” was sung in my church. It is based on 1 John 5:4 which says, *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith”*. You might be tempted to believe that it takes an uncommon degree of faith to have such victory. However Romans 12:3 says that God allotted to every believer “a measure of faith”. And Jesus said that if you have even a small amount of faith you can move mountains and *“nothing will be impossible to you”!* (Matt. 17:20)

Notice in these verses the variety of circumstances and outcomes of these men and women who exercised faith! And then in verse 39, the capstone of victory, all of them gained approval even though they suffered. God *approved* them because of their faith, even though they did not receive what He promised them while on earth.

I suspect that our faith would weaken if we were to consistently have complete victory or deliverance with little struggle. Remember the lyrics; *“Faith is the victory”*. When you have faith you do not require deliverance to achieve victory. When God approves your faith (which means He will test it), you will be refined and have victory.

- ▶ *God seems more interested in our journey of faith than the final destination. He already secured our salvation; now we get to exercise the faith He gave us as we live for Him on this earth.*

### **Group Discussion**

1. Have you ever faced a crossroads, with one direction taking more faith than the other? What did you do; would you make the same choice again?
2. What is a good remedy for removing doubt when acting in faith? (v. 27)
3. Share a time when faith “saved the day” or protected you. What happened? (vs. 28-31)

---

**NEXT TIME: Lesson 11: FAITH / Sharpened – Hebrews 12:1-11**