WHAT FAITH IS
Hebrews 10:35-12:3
“Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: ‘For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.’ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.” Hebrews 10:35-39
Faith

• Chapter and verse divisions are generally helpful, but are artificial

• Hebrews 10:35 – 12:3 – Area for our study tonight

• Most religious people agree on faith

• Disagree on the application

• “Live by faith”, “believe to the saving of the soul” – important concepts for our study
Faith is Seeing the Unseen

• We accept creation on this basis: “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.” 11:3

• We believe concerning an unseen God – “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” 11:6

• Noah acted on this principle: “By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” 11:7
Abraham was called to a country he had never seen:

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” 11:8-10

• The patriarchs “saw” their reward only by faith: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” 11:13

• Moses “saw” the invisible: “By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.” 11:27
Faith is Acting on Divine Knowledge

• Abel worshipped acceptably: “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.” 11:4

• Noah “prepared an ark” to save human and animal life (11:7)

• Abraham traveled from place to place: “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;” 11:8-9
Jacob and Joseph entrusted their families to God, then died in faith: “By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.” 11:21, 22

• Moses conquered: “By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.” 11:28-30

• Saints suffered: “And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,” 11:32, 33
Faith is Enduring to the End

• This is the writer’s chief point!
• Endurance is illustrated by:
  • Abraham (11:8-10)
  • Patriarchs (11:13-16)
  • Jacob and Joseph (11:21, 22)
  • Moses (11:25-27)
  • Unidentified (11:36-38)
The Greatest Example is Christ – “Author and Finisher”

• Hebrews 12:1-3 – “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

• He looked for the final joy

• He endured the cross, despising the shame

• He was victorious by faith and is now at His Father’s right hand