

## "Faith Travels with Trouble"

Hebrews 11

October 13, 2024

**INTRO** ...Heb 11 is a Historic Highlight Reel on Faith! ...But it's NOT intended to be like Reading the History of the French Revolution or watching ESPN reruns of "Great Moments in Super Bowl History"

**"my righteous one shall live by faith" (Heb 10:38)—THE Theme!!**

"What does Jesus really want from you? So much needs to be said. But boiled down to one sentence it's this: 'Believe in God; believe also in me' (Jn 14:1). That's why when the apostle John wrote his gospel, he used some form of the word 'believe' eighty-five times in twenty-one chapters. What he remembered Jesus emphasizing in his teaching and preaching was believing.

Whether or not you believe in Jesus is the most important issue of your life because 'whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him' (Jn 3:36). You see, 'without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him' (Heb 11:6).

But believing in Jesus is very difficult. It's difficult because 'the whole world lies in the power of the evil one' (1Jn 5:19), and he works with all his might to blind the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2Cor 4:4). And he is constantly trying to lead believers astray (Matt 24:24).

Because of this, it is crucial that followers of Jesus learn to 'walk by faith, not by sight' (2Cor 5:7). In other words, we must learn to trust God's promises more than we trust our perceptions. This theme is woven through the Bible from beginning to end." **Jon Bloom**, *"Not By Sight"*, p. 17

... Fundamental to Every Moment, Every Human Expression of Life, Every Human Thought, Every Human Decision, Every Human Motive or Mood or Emotion—Is FAITH! ...This posture, this functioning force, this way of processing reality!

- **Jon Bloom** ~ *"What does Jesus really want from you? ...Whether or not you believe in Jesus is the most important issue of your life ...You see, 'without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him' (Heb 11:6)."*

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**...Believing... "is very difficult"!!**

**Jn 14:1** "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me."

- ***This "believing" (this walk of faith) is in the presence of "trouble"!*** ...Thus, what was Jesus aware that we would be "feeling" when we go to exercise faith?—TROUBLED!! [**tarassō**; *to stir or agitate (roil water): — trouble. to cause one inward commotion, take away his calmness of mind*]

"The advice of the text is very timely and wise. There is no need to say, "Let not your heart be troubled," when you are not in affliction. When all things go well with you, you will need another caution — "Let not your heart be exalted above measure: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them." The word, "Let not your heart be troubled," is timely, and it is wise." **Charles Spurgeon**, "Let Not Your Hearts be Troubled" (Spurgeon's Sermons, The Complete Set (63 Vols.))

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## Simulating "Game-Like-Conditions"

**ILLUST:** Practicing Basketball Shots ...

... The examples of faith in chapter 11 are drawn from "game like conditions" ...Heb 11 is a trip to the "Faith Gym" to Simulate Real-Life-Troubles! ...**To "Do FAITH amidst all the "Off-Balancedness of Troubles!"**

"Hebrews 11 is in the Bible to remind us that God hides his most precious treasures for his saints in their most difficult and painful experiences. Think of how Abraham and Sarah agonized over their infertility for twenty-five years before God fulfilled his promise of Isaac. Think of how Isaac and Rebekah agonized over the treacherous and nearly murderous rivalry between Jacob and Esau. Think of how Jacob agonized for years in grief over the belief that wild beasts had killed Joseph. Think of how Moses agonized for forty years in the Midian wilderness over his lost opportunity to deliver his enslaved people, and then struggled another forty years in the Sinai wilderness over his people's faithlessness. Think of how David agonized for years as Saul hunted him like an animal." **Jon Bloom**, "Things Not Seen", p. 17

***...What's it Going to be FEELING Like, when I go to walk by Faith?***

## FAITH Travels with TROUBLE

**What Did THEIR "Trouble" FEEL Like, When They Were Called On to BELIEVE God?**

**v. 7 ...Noah**

...It is unlikely that I will ever need a walk of faith that Builds an Ark

...BUT, I may need to live a life of faith that brings God's Protection, God's Provision, God's Providence into My Household—Our Households Come with TROUBLES

***...My "Heart-Felt-Trouble" for my Hour of Faith may "FEEL" Slow, Tedious, Questionable!***

**v. 8 ...Abraham** - Faith to Start Anew

...What "Real-Life-Trouble" is This Story Simulating?

- There's the Troubling Feeling of Moving Away from the FAMILIAR ...to the UNFAMILIAR

**... "Let not your hearts be troubled—BELIEVE!"**

**v. 11 ...Sarah** - Faith to Receive Power

...It is a bit Mysterious to be a Limited Human Being trying to learn to relate to an unbounded, limitless, transcendent God!!

- It's "TROUBLING" to ponder—How Is God's Power/Provision Going to Reach Me and be Manifest in My Life?? **...How is God Going to be ABLE to do what is "Beyond Doable"?**
  - **"She's Too Old! ...That Time has PAST!!" ...Are You Walking in a Place that You Feel "Too Old" for ...or... "That Time/Opportunity/Window has Past"?**

**v. 17 ...Abraham** - Faith to Surrender Dreams

**...What "trouble" is in this story? —The trouble of Surrendering Your Dreams!!**

- **The Proverbial Action of "Placing Something on the Altar"**
  - Preceded by Torment to Trust ...to Ponder the Loss or End of a long dream ...to Reinvent Your Mental Future ...to See a Future that Perhaps Doesn't Contain "THAT"
  - The Post-Surrender feel of being "Liberated" from the ever-present tension of mental management of "THAT"

**v. 24 -25...Moses** - Faith to Refuse Pleasure/Benefit

...What kind of "Troubles" do we experience, when we Forego Pleasure/Benefit?

...What kind of "Trouble" comes in this life by "choosing rather to be mistreated"?

**"TROUBLES" are Moments for FAITH!!**

"My Brothers and Sisters, some of us live at this hour in the midst of trouble. We do not remember any period more dark with portents of evil than the present watch of earth's long night. Few events have occurred of late to cheer the general gloom. Our hopeful spirit has been accustomed to say, all things considered, there are no times like the times present. Think about whether any times have been more vexatious and troublesome than those which just now are passing over our head.

The political atmosphere is far from being clear, no, it is thick and heavy with death-damps of mutual distrust which bring no increase to England's greatness, but greatly the reverse. ...There are, we fear, dark days coming upon this land. In fact, the dark days are here, for in no year of the last twenty has there been, Brethren, such deep and wide-spread distress in London as at the present moment.

I am far from endorsing all the fears of the timid, yet I do see much ground for pleading earnestly with God to send to our rulers political wisdom to end the bitter disputes of class with class, and to grant to our whole nation Divine Grace to repent of its many sins, that the chastening rod may be withdrawn." **Charles Spurgeon**, *"Let Not Your Hearts Be Troubled"* (*Spurgeon's Sermons, The Complete Set (63 Vols.)*)

"It is the easiest thing in the world, in times of difficulty, to let the heart be troubled. It is very natural for us to give up and drift with the stream, to feel that it is of no use "taking arms against" such "a sea of trouble" ...here is the wisdom of His advice, namely, that a troubled heart will not help us in our difficulties or out of them.

It has never been perceived in time of drought that lamentations have brought showers of rain, or that in seasons of frost, doubts, fears, and discouragements, have produced a thaw. We have never heard of a man, whose business was declining, who managed to multiply the number of his customers by unbelief in God.

A troubled heart makes that which is bad worse. It magnifies, aggravates, caricatures, misrepresents. If but an ordinary foe is in your way, a troubled heart makes him swell into a giant.

A doubting, distrustful spirit will wither the few blossoms which remain upon your bough, and if half the wells are frozen by affliction, unbelief will freeze the other half by its despondency. Brothers and Sisters, you will win no good, but you may get incalculable mischief by a troubled heart — it is a root which bears no fruit except wormwood! **Charles Spurgeon**, *"Let Not Your Hearts Be Troubled"* (*Spurgeon's Sermons, The Complete Set (63 Vols.)*)

**Heb 10:38-39** <sup>38</sup> but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him." <sup>39</sup>

But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.