FAITH

A Ten Week Study
in Hebrews Chapter 11

10 Questions: CREATION

Scripture: Hebrews 11:1-3; Genesis 1:1-2:3; John 1:1-5

1) "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." In your own words, what does that mean? Is that how you typically think of faith?

2) In what way did the people of old receive their commendation through faith? How was the faith of people in the Old Testament different from the faith of people in the New Testament, particularly after the resurrection of Jesus?

3) Why does it take faith to understand that God made our universe by His word from nothing? Do you find it difficult to believe that? Why or why not?

4) Do you think that both young Earth and old Earth views of creation are valid for Christians to hold? What are some of the scientific challenges to a young Earth view? What are some of the Biblical challenges to an old Earth view?

5) Is belief in macro evolution compatible with the Bible?

6) What do you find most interesting in the description of the days of creation? What questions do you have?

7) Why did God rest on the 7th day?

8) What instructions did God give to the man & woman that He created? Are those instructions still in effect for us today?

9) Jesus is described as the Word, life and light. What does it mean for Him to be each of those things? How dependent do you feel on Jesus in your daily life?

10) How do your beliefs about creation impact the other aspects of your life as a Christian? If you have questions that are unanswered about creation, how could you learn more about how other Christians would answer those questions?

10 Questions: ABEL & ENOCH

Scripture: Hebrews 11:4-6; Genesis 4:1-16 & 25-26; Genesis 5:18-24

1) Why was it an act of faith for Abel to make an offering of the firstborn of his flock & their fatty portions to the Lord? Why do you think this was pleasing to God?

2) In what sense, because of his faith, is Abel still speaking?

3) Why didn't God have regard for Cain's offering? What was lacking?

4) What did the Lord say to Cain when he became angry? How could you apply that wisdom to your own life?

5) Maybe, like Cain, you struggle with anger. Or perhaps the sin that is crouching at your door is something different. What would it look like for you to rule over it? What role does the Holy Spirit have in making that possible?

6) Do you feel that the punishment that God gave to Cain was just? Why or why not? Where is God's love for Cain evident even in his punishment?

7) What does it mean when it says that Enoch walked with God? What does walking with God look like in your life? How could you increase or improve your walk with God?

8) Who else in scripture was taken by the Lord and did not experience death? Why do you think it is such a rare experience?

9) Why is it impossible to please God without faith?

10) Are you seeking to draw near to God? Do you believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him? What could you do to seek Him more intentionally this week? What role does Jesus play in helping us to draw near to God?

10 Questions: NOAH

Scripture: Hebrews 11:7; Genesis 6-9; 1 Peter 3:18-22

1) Why would it have taken faith for Noah to build the ark?

2) In what way did Noah's obedience & faith towards God condemn the world? Can you think of a time when someone else's faith & obedience convicted you and led you to change your behavior or way of thinking?

3) What made Noah a righteous man? What makes you a righteous person?

4) What were some of the reasons that God determined to judge the world and to destroy all flesh at that time? Was it right and just for God to do that?

5) According to Genesis 6:22 & 7:5, how closely did Noah follow the instructions that the Lord had given him? How closely do you follow the instructions that you have received in the Bible on how you should live?

6) Who shut the door of the Ark? What things in your life are your responsibility? What are the things that only God can do?

7) What was the sign that God gave as a promise to never destroy all life on the earth with a flood again? Why do you think God gave us that sign?

8) Was sin carried into the post flood world by Noah and his family? How does this account point us to the need for Jesus and his sacrifice for our sins?

9) What evidence is there in the world today for the truth of this account? What parts of the story are hardest to understand or take the most faith to believe?

10) In what way does this account of salvation through the ark point to our ultimate salvation through Jesus?

10 Questions: ABRAHAM & SARAH

Scripture: Hebrews 11:8-12; Romans 4; Genesis 12:1-9; Genesis 15; Genesis 21:1-7

1) Why did it require faith for Abraham to leave his home and go where the Lord sent him? Describe a time that your faith led you to a step of obedience. How did you know that it was what God wanted you to do?

2) Abraham went to the new land and lived in tents because he was "looking forward to the city that had foundations." What is that city?

3) "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness." What does that mean? What makes you righteous before God?

4) How was Abraham the father of both the uncircumcised and the circumcised?

5) Despite his age and the lack of children, why do you think Abraham believed it when God said that his offspring would outnumber the stars? Do you currently feel like God is calling you to believe something that feels impossible?

6) What future events did the Lord foretell in Genesis 15? What was the reason for the delay in taking the promised land?

7) Why was it significant that Abraham was asleep when the covenant was made? Who was responsible to fulfill the covenant? How does that relate to our salvation through Jesus?

8) Why do you think God waited until Abraham was 100 to fulfill His promise to him and give Abraham a son? Does it feel like God has delayed to fulfill something that you have been seeking or praying about? Why might that be?

9) Abraham is the great patriarch of the nation of Israel and of all who come to God by faith. Why do you think God chose him?

10) What is a small step of faith that you could take this week in obedience to God? What do you believe is the next thing that He is calling you to do? What is preventing you from doing it?

10 Questions: STRANGERS & EXILES

***Scripture: Hebrews 11:13-16; Philippians 3:17-21;* 1 Chronicles 29:14–18; 1 Peter 2:9–12; John 14:1–7; Revelation 21:1–4**

1) Do you think of yourself as a stranger and exile on earth? Why or why not? How does that impact your mindset and your motivation in life?

2) What do you expect from the city that God is preparing for us?

3) What does it mean for you to be a citizen of heaven? What other "citizenships" or allegiances compete with or hinder your allegiance to Jesus?

4) How should our knowledge of the impermanence of this life impact our generosity and our perspective on possessions? Why were the people of Israel able to give so generously and with such joy towards the building of the temple?

5) As sojourners and exiles, how should we deal with the passions of our flesh? Why?

6) What forms your identity? What is most foundational to who you are as a person? How does receiving the mercy of God transform the way that we think?

7) Do you find it comforting that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us and that He will bring us to be there with Him? What do you expect that to be like?

8) When Jesus says that no one comes to the Father except through Him, what does that mean? Is it possible that there are multiple paths/religions that lead to God?

9) What do you find most exciting when you think about eternity with God? How confident are you that you will be with Jesus when you die?

10) In what areas of your life are you too much in love with the world? Has this study challenged or convicted you of a need to change your way of thinking or living? If you were to die tomorrow, what would you regret?

10 Questions: ABRAHAM, ISAAC & JACOB

Scripture: Hebrews 11:17-21; Genesis 22:1-24; Genesis 27:1-40; Genesis 48:8-22

1) Why did God ask Abraham to be willing to sacrifice his son Isaac?

2) According to Hebrews 11:19, what did Abraham believe that God would do to restore Isaac?

3) What are some of the aspects of this account that foreshadow or point to Jesus and the cross?

4) Has God ever asked you to sacrifice or give up something that you really desired? What was the result? Is God convicting you today about something that he wants you to release to Him?

5) Why do you think that Rachel encouraged Jacob to deceive his father Isaac?

6) What is interesting or significant in the two blessings that Isaac gives to Jacob and to Esau?

7) Why did declaring a blessing over his sons require faith on the part of Isaac?

8) Why do you think there is a Biblical pattern of God choosing the younger son over the older one? Can you list some other times in the Bible where this happened?

9) What does it mean for God to be your shepherd? What are some of the ways that your relationship with God resembles that of a sheep with it's shepherd?

10) Why do you think that Israel (aka Jacob) believed in faith that God would bring his offspring back into the land of their fathers? What promises of God are you relying on in faith today?

10 Questions: JOSEPH

Scripture: Hebrews 11:22; Genesis 37:1-24; Genesis 41:46-52; Genesis 50:15-26; Exodus 13:17-19; Joshua 24:31-32

1) What do you know about the history of Jacob & his wives that would explain why Joseph was Jacob's favorite son, and why his brothers would hate him?

2) What impact does it have on a family when favoritism is shown to one child over another? Have you witnessed or experienced this? What was the result?

3) What do you think the dreams of Joseph meant? Did they ultimately come true? Do you think he should've handled how he shared those dreams differently?

4) Can you describe a time when you shared something that you should've kept private? If you know something, is it always wise to share it? Why or why not?

5) In Genesis 37, 39, 40 & 41 Joseph goes through much difficulty but ultimately is elevated to a very high position in Egypt. What do the names of his sons tell you about how he viewed those experiences & his relationship with God?

6) Genesis 50:15-21 is a beautiful picture of forgiveness & reconciliation. What was necessary on the parts of Joseph & his brothers to make it possible?

7) Joseph says "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" In your own words, what is he saying? Can you describe a time when you saw God take a bad thing or difficulty in your life and turn it to a blessing or something good?.

8) Why was Joseph's confident declaration that " God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob" seen as an act of faith? Why did he want them to take his bones with them?

9) Do you find it surprising that, after hundreds of years, the Israelites fulfilled Joseph's request and buried his bones in the promised land? What would've made that difficult to accomplish?

10) What hope & belief do you have about your future and the future of your family? How can you make sure that is carried forward even after you are gone?

10 Questions: MOSES

Scripture: Hebrews 11:23-29; Exodus 1:22-2:15; Exodus 12:1-13; Exodus 14:10-31

1) How did faith allow the parents of Moses to disobey the command of Pharaoh? Why were they willing to risk punishment or death to keep their son alive?

2) Moses would have had a luxurious and materially comfortable life as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Why did he choose instead to identify with & defend his people? Have you ever had to turn down something desirable for your faith?

3) "He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward." In your own words, what does this mean?

4) In what way is the Passover symbolic of the way that we receive salvation from death through Jesus? Who was protected from the angel of death?

5) What did the Israelites say when they saw Pharaoh pursuing them? Why do some people prefer the bondage of sin to the freedom of Christ?

6) The faith of the Israelites was imperfect, but it was enough for them to step into the Red Sea and cross to the other side. Are there times in your life when your faith felt imperfect? What allowed you to take that next step forward?

7) When the Israelites saw their enemy defeated, what was their response? Describe a time when the Lord won a victory in your life. What was the result?

8) How much of the life and story of Moses is attributed to his faith by the writer of Hebrews? How much of your life story could be attributed to faith?

9) The order of events is significant. God saves His people from slavery and then offers the law as a way to live in obedience to Him. How does this relate to the way that Jesus saves us from sin? What is the purpose of the law in the Bible?

10) No step of faith is without risk or difficulty. What fear or challenge is preventing you from taking the next step of faith that Jesus is calling you to take?

10 Questions: JOSHUA & RAHAB

Scripture: Hebrews 11:30-31; Joshua 1:1-9; Joshua 2; Joshua 5:13-15; Joshua 6:15-25; Matthew 1:1-6

1) Why does God command Joshua to "be strong and courageous" multiple times?

2) When you think of being strong and courageous, how much of that is dependent on you and how much is dependent on God? Practically, what does this look like?

3) Beyond being called to be strong & courageous, Joshua was called to know the law and be obedient to it. How highly do you value obedience to God's word? What things are you doing to ensure that you know and obey God's will?

4) Why does Rahab say that she chose to deceive the guards and save the spies?

5) When Joshua asks the commander of the army of the Lord whose side he is on, what is his reply? Is it accurate to say that the Lord is on your side? Why?

6) What aspects of the battle plan for attacking Jericho would've required faith? Has God ever called you to do something that really didn't make sense, but ultimately proved to be exactly the right thing?

7) Did Rahab's identity as a prostitute make her ineligible for God's mercy? What sin in your life would make you ineligible for the grace of Jesus? Who is worthy of God's love?

8) Rahab married an Israelite and her great great grandson became King David. Ultimately Jesus would come through the line of David. Are you surprised that Rahab would be in the family tree of Jesus? Why or why not?

9) Joshua served under Moses for many years, but ultimately his faith had to become his own. Can you describe the time in your life when your relationship with Jesus became personal to you, and your faith became your own?

10) What feels impossible in your life today? How can you pray with faith about it?

10 Questions: JUDGES, KINGS & PROPHETS

Scripture: Hebrews 11:32-40; Judges 6 & 7

1) In this study we'll focus on the story of Gideon. What other people in this final list stand out to you? Where was faith evident in their lives?

2) The book of judges has a recurring theme: "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Why does that philosophy cause society to break down & immorality to run rampant? What is preventing our society from becoming like that?

3) What caused the people to cry out to God for help? Can you describe a time when a difficulty or fear led you to seek God more seriously?

4) Was it accurate for the angel to call Gideon a mighty man of valour? Do you feel confident in your strength & ability to do what God wants you to do?

5) Why did Gideon tear down the altar at night time? Can you relate to his blend of obedience & timidness? Why was God still willing to use him despite his fears?

6) Why do you think that God was willing to perform the signs of the fleece for him?

7) Why did God shrink Gideon's army down from 32,000 to 300? How many soldiers did God need to defeat the enemy army?

8) What do you view as your greatest weaknesses? Is it possible that God wants to show Himself to be strong through those weaknesses?

9) On multiple occasions, God was patient with Gideon and gave him signs to reassure him. How do you think that impacted his faith? How do these accounts of people of faith impact you in your relationship with God?

10) Why is faith the common thread that unites all of Hebrews 11 together? How does faith relate to our motivation, our mindset, and our mission? How did faith lead to action in each of these accounts? What action is your faith leading you to take?