Messy Faith

Hebrews 11:1-7

In Hebrews 11, all Christians are called to live by faith. In it, the writer discussed two important topics relating to faith. The original recipients of this letter were tempted to go back into Judaism and put their faith in Moses. Their confidence was in the visible things of this world, not the invisible realities of God. In this chapter Paul is trying to reason with them so he reminds them of what true faith is. First Paul gave them a description of faith (1-3).

This is not a definition of faith but a description of what faith does and how it works.

* True Bible faith is not blind optimism or a manufactured “hope so” feeling. Neither is it a intellectual assent to a doctrine. And its certainly not believing in spite of evidence! That’s called superstition.
* True Bible faith is confident obedience to God’s Word in spite of circumstances and consequences. Faith operates simply. God speaks and we hear His Word. We trust His Word and act on it no matter what the circumstances are or what the consequences may be. In other words, believe Him to do what is right and what is best.
* We all have a decision to make to trust and obey or to do it our own way. Example: There was a man that had gotten lost in the desert. His mouth was dry and the heat was unbearable. He was already starting to grow weak. As he came over a hill he saw an old well pump and on the pump was a small jug of water with a note attached that read, “Pour all of the water into the pump to prime it and you will have all the water you need.” At that moment he had a decision to make. He could choose to ignore the note and get instant satisfaction and drink the water in the jog but doing so meant he could still die thirst. His second option would be to pour the water in the jug into the pump in hopes that it will give more water. After pondering his choices he decided to pour the water into the pump and trust the writer of the letter. After he poured the water into the pump he started pumping and so much water came out that it not only satisfied his thirst but he also took a shower as well. After this he filled the jug up and made a revision to the note that said, “trust me it really works.”
* Can I have my volunteers come on up please. We are going to do a trust fall. I know you have seen this 1000 times before but humor me for a second. These guys represent Gods Word and this guy represents our choice to walk by faith or walk away. We are going to count down from 5 and then you are going to fall ok. 5,4,3,2,1. The guy falling falls forward instead of backward.
* Faith is also only as good as its object. Faith is not some feeling that we manufacture. Its our total response to what God has revealed in His Word.
* Hebrews 1 says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Two words stick out to me in this passage, “substance and evidence.”
* Substance means literally “to stand under, to support.” Faith is to a Christian what a foundation is to a house. It gives confidence and assurance that it will stand!!
* The second word is “evidence.” Evidence simply means conviction!! This is the inward conviction from God that what He has promised, He will deliver.
* Faith is a very practical thing. Faith enables us to understand what God does. Faith enables us to see what others cannot see. Dr. J Oswald Sanders put it like this. “Faith enables the believing soul to treat the future as present and the invisible as seen.” This would change the way we live our lives. The Devil would have you believe that your current circumstances is all this world has for you so get use to it. But the Word of God says, “For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.” The Devil would have you to believe that you will always be this way because your mom was like this or your dad was like this. This is just who you are!! But the word of God says, “If any man be in Christ he is a new creation in Christ Jesus.” Church its time we put our faith squarely in Him again!!!!
* Lastly, faith enables us to turn from the approval of the world and seek only the approval of God. If God is glorified by delivering His people, He will do it. If He sees fit to be glorified by not delivering His people, then He will do that. But we must never conclude that the absence of deliverance means a lack of faith on the part of God’s children.