

The Bible's Hall of Faith: Hebrews 11

"How Can I Offer My Most Prized Possession?"

Hebrews 11:17-19 – February 5, 2006

Overview of Our Study

THE BIBLE'S HALL OF FAITH: HEBREWS 11			
Date	Highlight	Message Title	Verse
Jan 8	Creation	How Can I Believe in Creation and Science?	1-3
Jan 15	Abel/Enoch	How Can I Walk with God?	4-6
Jan 22	Noah	How Can I Obey Something I Don't Understand?	7
Jan 29	Abraham/Sarah	How Can I Have Faith So Late in the Game?	8-16
Feb 5	Abraham–Pt 2	How Can I Offer God My Most Prized Possession?	17-19
Feb 12	Isaac, Jacob, Joseph	How Can I Trust God with the Future?	20-22
Feb 19	Moses–Pt. 1	How Can I Give Up Earthly Pleasures?	23-27
Feb 26	Moses–Pt. 2	How Can I Get Out of This Mess?	28-29
Mar 5	Rahab	How Can God Use Me When I Have Done What I've Done?	30-31
Mar 12	Others: GSSD	How Can I Have Faith Like That?	32-40

One of the Most Shocking Accounts in the Bible (Genesis 22:1-19)

- Background: Remembering how we got to this point (25 yrs in the waiting).
- Verse 1 – God is testing Abraham
- Verse 2 – Mt. Moriah is the place where the temple mount is in Jerusalem (2 Chron 3:1). The rock in the "Dome of the Rock" is believed to be the very place where Abraham was offering Isaac as a sacrifice.
- Verse 3 – Prompt obedience
- Verse 5 – This is a "by faith" statement. According to Hebrews 11:19, Abraham believed that God would resurrect Isaac.
- Verse 8 – This entire account is a "type" of Jesus and the cross - "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29).
- Verse 12 – An omniscient God does not test us to gain knowledge that He did not have. It appears that He tests us so that we know that He knows.
- Verse 13 – This is the ultimate picture of "substitutionary atonement" – God provided the lamb/ram that would die instead of (in place of) Isaac. God provided the Lamb who would die instead of (in place of) me/you (1 Peter 3:18; Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:8; John 3:16-17).
- Verse 14 – One of God's names is "Jehovah-Jireh" = The Lord Will Provide
- Application #1:** Am I obeying promptly? "Slow obedience is no obedience." Is there a command of God that I need to obey NOW? _____
- Application #2:** Have I received this substitutionary atonement? _____
- Application #3:** Is there something I need to call out to Jehovah-Jireh for today? _____
- Important Sidenote:** God has only asked 2 people in all of history to offer up their son (any human) as a sacrifice: Abraham (whom He stopped) and Himself (offering His Son). If you ever think you hear God calling you to sacrifice one of your children (or any human), go see a psychiatrist.

Hebrews 11:17-19 on Abraham's Offering of Isaac

INSIGHT #1: THIS WAS A TEST (Hebrews 11:17)

- How and Why God Tests Us (a survey of 43 Scriptures):
 - God sometimes tests us by asking us to give up our most prized possession or person (Genesis 22:1; Heb. 11:17)
 - God tests us by giving us commands to obey (Exodus 15:25; 16:4; 20:20; Deut. 8:16;
 - Sometimes God tests us by giving us a awe-filled encounter with Him (Exodus 20:20)
 - God tests us by allowing us to go through long and difficult circumstances (Deut. 8:2; Psalm 81:7)
 - God tests us by putting us in situations where we can choose "gods" other than Him (Judges 2:22; 3:1,4)
 - God tests us in order to train us for spiritual warfare (Judges 3:1)
 - God is testing our hearts and minds (1 Chronicles 29:17; 2 Chron 32:31; Jeremiah 11:20; 12:3)
 - God sometimes tests us by allowing us to feel like He has left us (2 Chronicles 32:31; Hebrews 13:5)
 - Repeatedly, the Bible says that God's testing of us is like refining gold or silver (Job 23:10; Psalm 66:10; Proverbs 27:21; Isaiah 48:10; Jeremiah 6:27; 9:7; Zechariah 13:9; 1 Corinth 3:13)
 - God tests us by allowing people to praise us (Proverbs 27:21)
 - Sometimes God tests us to see if we will believe Him for a miracle (John 6:6)
 - Sometimes God tests us to prepare us to become a leader in the church (1 Timothy 3:10; Romans 16:10)
 - God tests us so that we may receive rewards in heaven (1 Corinth 3:13; James 1:12)
 - Sometimes God tests us by allowing us to be imprisoned for our faith (Revelation 2:10)
 - Sometimes God spares us from being tested (Revelation 3:10)
 - Repeatedly we are told NOT to test God (Exodus 17:2,7; Num. 14:22; Deut. 6:16; 33:8; Psalm 78:18,41,56; Matt. 4:7; Acts 5:9; 1 Corinth 10:9) with one exception (Malachi 3:10)
 - David repeatedly asked and invited God to test him (Psalm 26:2; 139:23)
 - God wants us to pass the tests of life, so He never allows the tests you face to be greater than the grace He gives you to handle them (1 Corinth. 10:13).
- A sampling of some of the above Scriptures
 - Deuteronomy 8:2** - Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep His commands.
 - Proverbs 27:21** – The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but man is tested by the praise he receives.
 - Isaiah 48:10** – See, I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

- **Psalm 139:23-24** – Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.
- **1 Corinthians 10:13** - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted (tested) beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.
- **Application #4:** Looking back over the above list of how God tests us, how are you being tested right now? _____
How will you respond to that test? _____
- **Application #5:** Quote from Rick Warren: “One day you will stand before God, and He will do an audit of your life, a final exam, before you enter eternity.... Fortunately, God wants us to pass this test, so He has given us the questions in advance. From the Bible we can surmise that God will ask us two crucial questions:”
 1. What did you do with My Son, Jesus Christ? (John 1:12; 14:6) _____
 2. What did you do with what I gave you? (Rom 14:10,12; 2 Corinth 5:10) _____

INSIGHT #2: GOD WAS ASKING ABRAHAM TO OFFER UP TO HIM THE VERY THING THAT GOD HAD PROMISED AND SUPPLIED TO ABRAHAM (Hebrews 11:17-18)

- **Application #6:** What is your Isaac? _____
What does it look like for you to offer your Isaac back up to God? _____
- **Romans 12:1-2** - Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - His good, pleasing and perfect will.

INSIGHT #3: ABRAHAM WAS BELIEVING GOD FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE AGAIN (Hebrews 11:19)

- **Application #7:** What impossibility does God want me to believe Him for? _____

INSIGHT #4: SURRENDERING TO GOD LIKE THIS REQUIRES A PROPER VIEW OF GOD (Hebrews 11:17-19)

- False Views of God
 1. God is mean, bad, and cruel.
 2. God is like my abusive earthly father.
 3. God wants to make my life miserable.
 4. God wants to take my fun/pleasure away.
 5. God wants to take my most prized possession away.

- True Views of God
 1. God is good _____ (Psalm 100:5).
 2. God wants to make your life awesome (John 10:10) – both here on earth, but more importantly for eternity (John 3:16; Psalm 16:11).
 3. God is the perfect, loving heavenly Father (Matt. 6:9; Luke 15:11-32).
 4. God is good (Psalm 100:5).
- **Application #8:** What is my view of God? _____
In what ways do I need to correct my view of God to conform to Scripture (John 8:32; Rom 12:2)? _____
- **Application #9:** Will I fully surrender my life to Him? _____

My Prayer of Surrender to God

Sermon Series Application – When your life is over, what do you want your faith epitaph to be? (work on this through out this sermon series)

My “By Faith” Epitaph

By faith...

Discussion Questions with Family, Friends, and Small Group

1. What is your most prized possession (or person)?
2. Read Hebrews 11:17-19 and discuss these notes and applications.
3. How is your “by faith epitaph” coming?