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A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- **Chapter 11**

of Hebrews

shows that throughout history,

men and women

have done the impossible

by faith.

- ***“The just shall live by faith”***

(Hebrews 10:38)

- This chapter proves
that faith can conquer

in any circumstance.

- True biblical faith is not an emotional kind of wishful thinking;

- It is an inner conviction based on the Word of God (Romans 10:17).

- Hebrews 11:1

the word

substance

means

“assurance”

and

evidence

means

“proof.”

- Faith then

is all the

assurance and evidence

we need!

- Faith is **absolutely certain** that what it believes is true.
- It is **not** wistful thinking.
 - It is the hope which looks forward **with utter conviction.**

- True faith
requires us
to live
in faith
and die
in faith.

- It is a belief in God against the world.

- It is a belief in the spirit against the senses.

- The senses tell us to grasp the moment;
- The spirit tells us that there is something better.
- The Christian hope is belief in the future against the present.

- Nero once condemned Paul,
 - But as the years have passed on
 - The time has come when men call their sons Paul and their dogs Nero.

- Faith enables the believer to treat the future as present and the invisible as seen.

- Through faith, we can see

what others cannot see

- By faith,
Noah saw
coming judgment,
- Abraham saw
a future city,
- Joseph saw
the Exodus
from Egypt,
- Moses
saw God.

• Faith

accomplishes things

because there is

power in

the Word of God,

• Illustrated by the Creation

(Hebrews 11:3.)

• God spoke,

and it was done!

- God still speaks to us through the Word.

- When we believe what He says, the power of the Word accomplishes wonderful things in our lives.

(Romans 1:16)

- God has spoken and has revealed **basic truths about life.**
- That revelation **is quite different than man's worldly wisdom.**
- Only God's wisdom reveals the **secrets of successful living.**

- If we accept God's revelation and act on these truths life will make sense as God intended it to do.

- But without faith we only struggle on in a confused cycle of bewilderment, boredom and frustration.

- Faith
is a desire for
something better.
- It starts with hope.
- Then an awareness of
Someone else in life,
an
Unseen Someone
who is nevertheless
very real.

- **This eleventh chapter**
is filled with
the simple stories of
men and women
like ourselves,
 - Living in the
same kind of world
in which we live,
confronted with the
same kind of problems,
 - Who mastered their problems
and won the battle by faith.

- Perhaps it may be helpful to point out **six characteristics of faith** manifest in this eleventh chapter.
 - You can **test your own faith** by these
 - For here are **the distinguishing marks** of genuine faith:

- # 1 Faith anticipates

- It moves toward a clearly expected event in the future.

- Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher said:

- "*Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forward.*"²⁰

- Without faith,
life is a blind march
into mystery:
- We can not know
where we are going;
- We do not know
what is coming.
in trying to look ahead.

- The future is a mystery to those without faith.
- Therefore there is always a sense of anxiety in trying to look ahead.

- Faith believes that God has revealed something about the future;
- Not everything, but some things.
- And what he has revealed is quite enough for now.

- Faith
gives
life a goal,
a purpose
and
a destination.

- Faith

is a look into the future.

- See this in Abraham.

*By faith he sojourned
in the land of promise,
(Hebrews 11:9 RSV)*

- *he looked forward
to the city which has foundations,
whose builder and maker is God.
(Hebrews 11:10 RSV)*

- Abraham's faith was the faith of patience.
- When he reached the promised land, he was never allowed to possess it.

- He had to wander in it,
a stranger
and a tent-dweller,
 - As his people
were some day
to wander
in the wilderness.

- To Abraham
God's promise
never came fully true;

- And yet
he never abandoned
his faith.

- Sadly, most of us
are in hurry.

- To wait
is even harder
than to venture onward.

- It is then that
we are liable
to give up
our hopes
and
our dreams die.

- The promises of God seem out of reach or so impossible to believe but faith demands that we carry on.
- Abraham and Sarah were long past the age of bearing a child
- Such was the test of faith for Abraham and Sarah.

- When Abraham heard the promise *he fell upon his face and laughed* (**Genesis 17:17**).
- When Sarah heard it *she laughed within herself* (**Genesis 18:12**).
- The promises of God often seem **too good to be true.**
- **Oh, ye of little faith.** (**Matthew 14:31**)

- There is no mystery like the love and patience of God.

- That he should love mankind

and suffer and die for them staggers the mind.

- That is why the good news of the gospel is so good that it is almost impossible to believe it to be true.
- So Abraham and Sarah laughed at their good news.
 - But God never gave up.

- It finally dawned on Abraham and Sarah that it was **God who was speaking** and God cannot lie.
- By the grace and the power of God, **the impossible became true.**
 - There is something here **to challenge** and **uplift the heart of** every man and woman.

- **# 2 Faith acts.**

- Faith accepts the promises of God **as facts,** not fiction.

- **Faith works!**

Faith is doing something now.

- The life of faith is that which as Jesus said:

"occupy till I come"
(**Luke 19:13**).

- **Faith acts now** in view of that future event.

- Take each example in this chapter and you will see that **it is one of action.**
- Without exception these men and women were **set to work by their faith.**
 - Their faith made them **act in the present.**

- **Faith is not passive.**
- **It is dynamic, forceful.**
- **And what more shall I say?**
- **For time would fail me to tell of:**
 - **Gideon,**
 - **Barak,**
 - **Samson,**
 - **Jephthah,**
 - **David**
 - **Samuel**
 - **and the prophets**
(Hebrews 11:32-35 RSV)

- **Active faith**
has changed
the course of history.

- Yet faith
does not act blindly.

- **Faith evaluates.**

- It weighs
the possibilities.

- Faith
sacrifices present
in order to gain
the future.

- As opposed to the world:
“**Eat, drink, be merry
for tomorrow you die.**”

- **# 4 Faith evaluates.**

- You can see how faith weighs and evaluates in the example of Moses.

- We are told that,

Moses, when he was grown up refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin,"
(Hebrews 11:24-25 RSV).

- He weighed the wealth of Egypt and the prestige of royalty against the riches of heaven.
- Without hesitation he chose the unseen.
- He looked beyond the visible and saw the invisible.
 - He saw God at work.

- You can see **faith evaluating** in the case of Rahab.
- She risked her life **and forsook** her pagan religion.
 - **Why?**
- Because she believed in God and thus saved **her life** and **her family.**
(**Hebrews 11:31**)

- Faith
is never something
merely for the future.

- Faith says that
if we invest
in that future
which God offers us,
we shall gain both the
future and the **present.**

- There is another summary in Verse 36:

Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated, of whom the world was not worthy, wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

(Hebrews 11:36-38 RSV)

- **# 5 Faith dares.**
- But perhaps the most striking quality of all
 - **Is that *faith dares.***
 - When God speaks
faith ignores the contrary evidence
even though it seems
to be impossible.

By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.
(Hebrews 11:11-12 RSV)

- Abraham and Sarah had long since passed the age of childbearing.
- He was a hundred, she was ninety.
 - By faith they dred to believe.

- We see the daring of faith in the people of Israel at the Red Sea and before the walls of Jericho.
 - Here were two impossibilities.

- Crossing the Red Sea was impossible from an earthly standpoint,
 - The Red Sea is about 1398 miles long,
 - And at its widest point 220.6 miles wide.
 - An average depth of 1,608 feet.

- But God moved the waters back by a great wind.

- No doubt the Jews were fearful as they heard the wind blow,

- But the very wind that frightened them

was the means of their salvation.

- ***“For we walk by faith, not by sight.”***
(2 Corinthians 5:7)

- **Faith dares!**

- Even though the Jews had seen the miracles in Egypt

- **many lost faith**

- at the point of victory.

- **Too many Christians**

- like the Jews of old

- get lost

- in the wilderness**

- of unbelief!**

- The great walls of Jericho stood **85 feet thick** and **100 feet high**, impassable, impossible.
- But in **obedience** to God the walls fell down.
 - **Faith dares**.
 - It pays no attention to **impossibilities**.

- **# 6 Faith perseveres**
- Perhaps the most amazing statement in this amazing chapter is **twice given.**
 - These people by faith obtained much from God,
 - **These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, (Hebrews 11:13-16)**
 - And all these,... **did not receive** what was promised, (Hebrews 11:39-40)
- **Yet, they persevered!!!!**

- Faith
not only dares
to do the impossible
against all the odds.
- It perseveres!!
 - To keep on
day after day
after day,
whether we
feel like it or not.

- In spite of everything these men and women never lost their vision and their faith.
- In spite of everything they never wished to go back.

- In aviation

there is what is called
the point of no return.

- When an airplane has reached that point
it cannot go back.

- One of the tragedies of life is the number of people who turn back **just a little too soon.**
- A little more waiting, a little more struggling **would turn faith into reality.**

- As Christians we should feel that we have passed the point of no return.

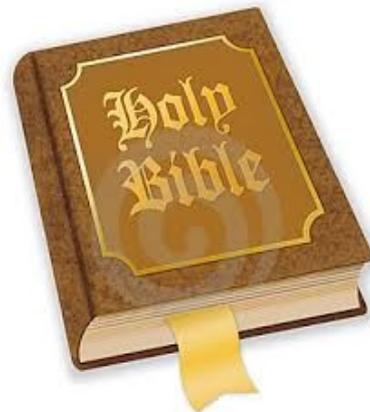
- **# 1** Faith anticipates
- **# 2** Faith acts.
- **# 3** Faith views the future.
- **# 4** Faith evaluates.
- **# 5** Faith dares.
- **# 6** Faith perseveres

- **Think on these things**
- **Philippians 4:8**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



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