

Jack Whittaker - The Basic Ingredient

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Good morning brethren and thank you very much. Brother Darak and thank you for your prayer. Brother Chris. Very motivating.

I believe most Bible students at some time or Bible student elders at some time or another consider giving a talk on faith. You can consider this talk a review, but with the memorial coming in two weeks, my hope is this talk will be a reminder of how greatly we have been blessed. We know faith is the basic ingredient in having a relationship with God, and when the subject is examined in light of action taken by many of the heroes of faith, we conclude faith in God is based on belief and trust resulting in reality, but without total proof. As the New American Standard Version Bible expresses the thought now faith is the certainty of things hoped for, a proof of things not seen for. By it, the people of old gained approval One can have faith in many things.

Faith is a deeply personal and subjective concept, and what one can have faith in varies greatly depending on individual beliefs, values and experiences. Here are some common areas in which people often place faith the most Obvious Religious Beliefs Many people have faith in a higher power deity or spiritual force according to their religious traditions. This faith often involves trust in sacred texts, religious leaders, rituals and teachings. Self Belief Having faith in oneself is crucial for personal growth and achievement. It involves confidence in one's abilities, values, and potential to overcome challenges and achieve goals.

Humanity Some individuals have faith in the inherent goodness and potential for positive change within humanity as a whole. This faith can drive efforts toward social justice, compassion and cooperation. Science and Reason Many people have faith in science and the pursuit of knowledge through empirical evidence and rational inquiry. This faith underlies advancements in medicine, technology, and our understanding of the natural world. Hope Faith can also manifest as hope for a better future, even in the face of adversity or uncertainty.

This hope can provide motivation and resilience during difficult times. Ultimately, what one chooses to have faith in is personal and may evolve over time based on individual experiences and perspectives. Bible students put their faith in God that He exists, that he has a plan, that he rewards those who believe and live as he directs, that he is just, that he is wise and all powerful, and that his character is based on love and righteousness.

We begin by looking at the Book of Hebrews and comment on its powerful words. Brother Russell called this book the Apostle Paul's masterpiece. The book contains Paul's commanding logic, while his reverence for God and God's plan of salvation is most apparent. Paul's humility and sincerity can be seen throughout the book. His higher level of logic was meant to be understood by not only Jesus, 11 apostles, but by any who by faith desired to know the deeper things of God's plan.

The change in dispensation was difficult for many Jews to understand or accept. Paul wisely used the antitypes of the Gospel age to compare and identify the typical events, timing and features of the Jewish age. Acts 9:15 says, but the Lord said unto him, go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. This was the Lord's response to Ananias, a disciple of Jesus who lived in Damascus, who was used by the Lord to restore Paul's sight after Paul's encounter with the risen Jesus in indeed, Paul was a chosen vessel unto the Lord. Paul himself states in Galatians 1:11 12 I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not of man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it.

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But by the revelation of Jesus Christ, Paul was to present divine truth to the followers of Jesus with great force and logic. He was directed to preach to the Gentiles, which he accomplished on his three missionary journeys. He also appeared before Kings Felix Agrippa and Festus to bear witness, and he clarified to the children of Israel how to discern between the types in the law, covenant and the antitypes in Christ head and body. Paul would identify Jesus as the antipical high priest, the antipical prophet and judge, and the antitypical mediator of the new covenant.

Paul used logic in his presentations, but faith was required to accept it. Let's look at faith versus Hope. How do we define hope?

Hope is an optimistic state of mind that is based on an expectation of a positive outcome with respect to events and circumstances in one's life. Or more simply said, it is an expectation with confidence. Synonyms for hope are anticipate, look forward to depend upon. Hope is not a reality you cannot count on is merely a hope. Faith, on the other hand, shows the reality of what we hope for.

It is the evidence or proof of things we cannot see. Faith is based upon a promise, and that promise is from God, the one who changes, not who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. We believe in God's promises. We trust what he reveals to us in His Word is so. Our faith in God is a humble confidence.

It has always been astonishing for me to understand God's creation of time and space. Paul states in Hebrews 1, verse 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. So that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. We look into the sky at night and ponder how the universe was created. We marvel at the organized movement of the stars and planets and how the fixed laws of motion and gravity affect their placement.

And how the sun of our solar system provides the necessary heat, light and atmosphere for life on Earth. By faith we accept a grand Creator with almighty power who has the ability to create such a design. We see the evidence of his work, yet cannot fathom how it came to be. It is by faith we trust in Him. It is by faith we believe what he has given us through his word as to his nature, his character, his abilities, his plan for mankind.

As we read in Psalms 8:3:6, when I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the Son of Man that thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet. These verses help us gain high respect and conception of the power of God and His ability to control his creation.

These verses tell me man may have accomplished success in development of his surroundings, advancement in understanding science and medicine, in making life more comfortable and enjoyable through effort over time. But we can see from the world around us the achievement of living in a pure, sinless society with equity for all and living as God desires is yet to come. Incorrect Worship in reverence of our Heavenly Father currently does not exist because faith is required to accept an all powerful Creator who has such an interest in his creation that he embodies the very essence of love and concern for those he created. How can such a great being, our God, who has created the living place of man in what appears to be an infinite universe, and who has given him life and the ability to choose for Himself what is acceptable and what is not, visit him and care for Him. The beautiful Psalm of David found in chapter 19, verses 1 through 4.

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The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world.

For those who have a hearing ear are greatly blessed. They have the basic ingredient, faith to know and please God.

It's estimated that the observable universe is 93 billion light years across. Light has been proven to travel at 186,282 miles per second. Now think about that. In one second travels 186,000 miles. This equals to a distance of 5,874,589,152,000 miles traveled in a year.

5.8 trillion miles in a year. So if the observable universe is 93 billion light years wide, the size seems incomprehensible to our earthbound minds. It computes that 5.4 multiplied by 10 raised to the power of 23. In other words, 5.4 with 23 zeros following, and that's how many miles it is wide.

How many miles well, hearing a talk about faith can be difficult for the listener, in that this subject, although vital for the Christian, can be somewhat overworked and common. I have a partial solution. I've read where injecting an amusing story into a talk oftentimes aids an audience in listening and breaks the somber mood created by a serious subject. Our subject is concerning faith, and a story about faith goes like this.

A boy was sitting on a park bench with one hand resting on an open Bible. He was loudly exclaiming his praise to God. Hallelujah. God is great. He yelled without worrying whether anyone heard him or not.

Shortly after, along came a man who had recently completed some studies at a local university. Feeling himself very enlightened in the ways of truth and very eager to show this enlightenment, he asked the boy about the source of his joy. Hey? Asked the boy in return with a bright laugh. Don't you have any idea what God is able to do?

I just read that God opened up the waves of the Red Sea and led the whole nation of Israel right through the middle.

The enlightened man laughed lightly, sat down next to the boy, and began to try to open his eyes to the realities of the miracles of the Bible that can all be very easily explained. Modern scholarship has shown that the Red Sea in that area was only 10 inches deep. @ that time. It was no problem for the Israelites to wade through. The boy was stumped.

His eyes wandered from the man back to the Bible lying open in his lap. The man, content that he had enlightened a poor, naive young person to the finer points of scientific insight, turned to leave. Scarcely had he taken two steps. When the boy began to rejoice and praise louder than before, the man turned to ask the reason for this resumed jubilation. Wow.

Exclaimed the boy happily God is greater than I thought. Not only did he lead the whole nation of Israel through the Red Sea, he topped it off by drowning the whole Egyptian army in 10 inches of water.

Faith requires questioning and thinking about the things for which we hope. But faith also requires what is in the heart. Romans 10:5 10 For Moses writes of the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who performs them will live by them. But the righteousness based on faith

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speaks as follows. Do not say in your heart who will go up into heaven that is to bring Christ down, or who will descend into the abyss that is to bring Christ up from the dead.

But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart. That is the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. This has always been somewhat intriguing to me.

Here is what I think is meant. The law was given to Israel at Sinai. The law was given to show each of us that we are imperfect and unable to keep what the law requires for continued life. If we do not obey the law, we sin, and if we sin we die. But the law can be used to show Jesus was able to maintain its requirements and therefore he did not have to die.

He lived to the requirements of the law. He was a perfect man based on the understanding of the ransom. We would never ask how anyone could go to heaven to bring Jesus down to earth or go to the grave to bring him up. A true believer accepts the facts as they are. We believe because our faith confirms the logic of God's plan.

Jesus as a perfect man, gave his life to ransom Adam and his race. The Apostle Paul used the law in Galatians 3 to test the Galatian brethren as to why they felt it necessary to be under the law when they had come to understand Christ died for their sins and fulfilled the law. We Read in Galatians 3:1:5 from the New King James O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth? Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you.

Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain? If indeed it was in vain.

Therefore, he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does he do this by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?

The word bewitch in the first verse is Strong's number 940. Paschenio means to malign, I.e. to fascinate by false representations. So Paul confronted them and explained the work Jesus did for them. We can apply his teachings to ourselves also.

He asked, who has bewitched you, given you false representations, that you should not obey the truth? Paul noted their thinking was clouded, that they must be under some strong influence. He advised to keep their eye on Jesus and him crucified. Some teachers of the law were trying to bring them again under law's bondage. Paul asked, did they receive God's Spirit by doing the works of the law or by faith in Christ, by what they heard?

Here is where faith is so strong. We cannot please God unless we have faith in him and His Son. Are you a new creature? Can you become so by the workings of the law? No.

It was your faith in Christ and what he taught that brought you to a relationship with God that you value now. Have you suffered so many things in vain? True Christians suffer for righteousness, for the truth that the Holy Spirit has allowed them to understand. If you parted from the faith that allowed you to understand, would then the past sufferings be in vain? Have you had wonderful

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spiritual experiences and did they not serve a purpose?

The Spirit is a gift from God given in response to faith. We can recall Jesus words in John 6:63.

It is spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are Spirit and they are life. As each of us should note, Jesus words were spiritual and could be understood only by those possessing the understanding supplied by the Holy Spirit. This is why the study of the Bible, the word of truth, is so important that praying for the Holy Spirit without applying Jesus words will profit us little.

A recent class study of the witness of the Holy Spirit is such an important study. It identifies the Holy Spirit's witness to us that we have become a Son of God and are prepared for a place in the body of Christ. This, as the apostle describes, should give us full assurance of faith.

We are often influenced by our brethren, hearing of their experiences and how they accept the difficulties that may be present, or how they react to criticism, insults or disparagement, or how they deal with sorrow and loss. All bear weight on our own lives. We are all an example of faith to one another. Do we rely on God's promises. Is our faith built upon a promise, or do we just hope everything will turn out all right again?

Remember, the scripture in John 6:63 displays Jesus, it is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life.

How do these words help us if our faith is built upon the firm foundation of divine promises and we walk with God by faith and not by sight, our walk tends to be peaceful even though the world, our flesh, and the devil create obstacles in our way, and they do. No tribulation can replace our innermost joy of pleasing God in knowing we are doing well. We have examples of the wonderful heroes of faith in God's Word. You are familiar with them, Paul writes in the 11th chapter of Hebrews the amazing things accomplished by those faithful individuals who lived prior to Jesus.

They were remarkable men and women. Hebrews 11:2 tells us, by faith those people of old obtained a good testimony, that is they gained God's approval and earned a good reputation. Because their hope was based upon their knowledge of the character of God and His promises to Israel. Brother Russell classified them as worthy individuals, ancient worthies, and they were overcomers of the Jewish age. We realize they were not of the spiritual priestly class, yet they too suffered for righteousness sake.

Outside the camp they were commended for their faith. God counted their faith as righteousness. I've always found this exceptional. They denied of Christ as their justification. Yet because of their reverence for the Father in obedience to what he promised through the law and the prophets, the ancient worthies were considered justified when resurrected in the millennial kingdom, they will have been previously tested by their faithful obedience and willingness to suffer, upholding God's character and greatness.

Can you imagine how quickly they will accept Christ as the Son of God and understand his role in bringing mankind back to righteousness and perfection?

When examining the order of the heroes of Faith in Hebrews 11, Paul first fittingly brings to mind Adam and Eve's second son, Abel. Paul's intention was to introduce those notable ones who lived prior to Christ and revealed their faith and how it affected their actions. Paul used this method as a

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teaching tool and emphasized faith, that basic ingredient to have a relationship with the Father. We recall the story. Abel, a shepherd, is portrayed as righteous and obedient to God, offering the best of his flock as sacrifices to God which were accepted.

However, his older brother Cain, a farmer or as the new American Standard Version says, a cultivator of the ground, offered a good sacrifice of first harvest of the fruit of the ground which had a lesser value than the life sacrifices of Abel. Cain became jealous of Abel's favor with God and murdered him out of envy. Here we are at the very beginning of populating the earth. The emotions of envy and hate are present. You will note that even at this early time in mankind's existence, a relationship with God was built on faith.

Remember from Genesis 3:21 and the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. The garments of skins required the sacrifice of life, and therefore Abel's sacrifice of his flock was a type of the promised redemptive sacrifice of Christ to cover a man's imperfect sinful nature. What we find is more interesting is Paul's statement in Hebrews 12:24, where he likens Abel as a type of Christ when he says, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood which speaks better than the blood of Abel. Jesus offered a most acceptable sacrifice in his life and was slain as a result. But while Abel's death called for vengeance, Christ's life was sacrificed for us and calls instead for mercy not only upon those who slew him, but also upon the whole world.

Jesus life sacrifice most appropriately covered our sinful nature. Continuing in Hebrews 11:6 we read, but without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. We talked earlier that faith is based on a promise. We are living at a time when fake news is the story of the day, when so much information and theories and blogs provide something that baffles or fascinates or entices each. Good works are viewed as a standard for righteousness.

Faith seems to occupy a distant second place as a path that leads to our Lord. But we know differently. It is our faith that is accepted of the Lord, and according to our faith he will reward us, and then too, a good faith will bring out good works. No one can properly be an overcomer unless he exercises faith in God and His promises through his works.

To exercise faith in his promises, we must understand the promises. Therefore, it is imperative we must understand his plan by study and review. We have been guided to our understanding by the writings of the seventh messenger, from whom we continue to learn and are blessed. In a recent memorial study, we considered how, at the time of Passover season, difficulties the brethren encounter tend to be greater than usual. Brother Russell comments that as we approach the Passover season, Satan's activity has been manifested by some kind of a special trial or test upon the truth.

The memorial service is so intimate and personal that draws our attention to our Lord and what he provided is an opportunity for us as well as the world. We think back to the time when the memorial was instituted and the confusion and concern the apostles exhibited. It was a time for sober thought and humble watchfulness in prayer. Jesus words to Peter in Luke 22:31 32 and the Lord said, simon, Simon indeed Satan has asked for you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you that your faith should not fail.

And when you have returned to me, strengthen your brethren. You can see this was a trial of faith. Did Peter believe strongly enough? The hope presented before the disciples that Jesus would be

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the Lord of the Sabbath, the King of the Jews, the bread of life and the Redeemer? He witnessed the miracles.

He saw Jesus loving character. He saw the honor and reverence Jesus constantly expressed for his Father. He witnessed Jesus spending his vitality for others, and he heard from the astonished public. Never has a man spoken in this way.

Yet Satan desired to sift him as wheat, and he would do this by attacking Peter's faith.

Sift is Strong's word number 4617 Zenihazo, meaning to shake in a sieve, also figuratively by inward agitation, to try one's faith to the verge of overthrow. In a spiritual sense it means separate you from your loyalty to Christ and discourage you from discipleship. If faith is weakened, we lessen our hope and discouragement can result. Why does the Lord permit sifting? Because only those who can withstand siftings, trials and tests are fit for the kingdom.

We might think we are loyal. We might say we are loyal as Peter did. But until the realities of experience force a position we do not know for certain. Our loyalty depends upon our faith. How strongly do we believe what Jesus taught?

How much desire do we have to become like him? The way the very same apostle Peter wrote years later is described in 1 Peter 1:13. Therefore prepare your minds for action. Keep sober in spirit. Set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

How important is this advice? The spiritual warfare takes place in the mind. We realize our minds need to be strengthened. Again we rely on the Holy Spirit and our understanding of God's Word to be our guide. All this is a part of faith.

Memorial season is upon us. Lets consider the faith exhibited the day of his trial and crucifixion. He had met with his 12 chosen disciples to celebrate the Passover supper, declaring, I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. The Passover lamb which they were to eat typified our Lord himself, and the eating of it by his disciples represented how believers of the Gospel age were to feed upon Christ in their hearts and by faith appropriate to themselves, the blessings secured to them through his death. But Jesus himself had to have great faith in His Father and the path His Father directed to fulfill his plan of salvation.

As this memorial season draws nearer and our faith be more may be more intensely tested. This is a time to appreciate Jesus faith and what he endured to fill His Father's plan of salvation. Paul tells us in Hebrews 12:3 for consider him who endured such hostility from sinners against himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls you have not yet resisted the bloodshed. Striving against sin we consider our lives and our relationship with our Heavenly Father knowing, believing we have seen the Father through the respect, character, admiration and recognition of His Son Jesus, and therefore we want to go on not only displaying our faith, but constantly increasing it.

Jesus is our leader. He is our guide. We can take courage from how we reflect on Jesus life, comparing our trials and experiences with the extreme suffering he endured, and be thankful that the Heavenly Father knows our limitations. We may experience some difficulties and possibly to an extent as a result of disobedience, but Jesus upheld meekness and patience while enduring sufferings most unjustly. A perfect man who did not deserve the extreme vicious treatment he received.

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Yet this is what the Father required, and Jesus accepted it. Through free will. He allowed His Heavenly Father to be in total control, and then too, we are told those powerful words in the Scriptures that those who patiently and steadfastly display that most basic ingredients of the soul faith will be rewarded greater than anything their mind could imagine. We are all different, yet desire to make up the body of Christ.

Some have greater faith than others, and we question, is faith something you are born with, or do you acquire it over time from experience? Brother Russell offers the thought that faith may be cultivated as any other mental quality. It increases in proportion to knowledge and reliance upon that knowledge. In Luke 17, 5 and the apostles said to the Lord, increase our faith.

The Lord addressed His apostles with parables and strange sayings, certainly intriguing, but requiring deeper thought. They trusted the Master but often had to think differently than in the past to get the meaning of his message. Jesus words were eloquent and powerful, different than common conversation. They needed a stronger faith to accept Jesus thoughts Being a great teacher, Jesus introduced ideas that challenged their thinking and response. The apostles just heard Jesus tell them that temptations to sin are always present, but woe to the one through whom they come.

It would be better they lost their life than influence Jesus followers to sin. Jesus was offering the thought that any who sin against light knowledge are in danger of damaging their own future life. Jesus warned his apostles, difficult times were ahead. They would encounter those who would commit sin against them, including brothers. Jesus told them, if your brother sins against you, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.

Continuing on to let them know that even if a brother sins against them seven times a day and returns to repent, they must forgive him. At this point, the apostles asked, increase our faith. These ideas Jesus presented needed further thought. The disciples certainly received a different message than what the world would have presented. Jesus answered, answer followed in Luke 17, verses 6 to 10.

So the Lord said, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea, and it would obey you, and which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him, when he has come in from the field, come at once and sit down to eat. But will he not rather say to him, prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself, and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not so.

Likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, we are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do. Jesus gives quite an answer to a direct request for increasing one's faith, and his words require deep thought to contemplate an answer. Jesus teaches his disciples about the attitude they should have towards their faith and their service to God. He does not increase their faith, but rather explains the power and desirability of faith and how that faith guides their service to God.

Jesus starts by using the imagery of a mustard seed, which is one of the smallest seeds, to emphasize the power of even a small amount of genuine faith. He suggests that with such faith, believers can accomplish seemingly impossible things, such as commanding a mulberry tree to be uprooted and planted in the sea. This underscores the importance of trusting in God's power and promises. True faith relates to things that God has promised. Jesus used the plucked up mulberry

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tree only as an example of the power of faith that his followers should possess.

The belief that if God commanded something to be accomplished, they would receive the method and ability to accomplish it. Jesus then shifts the focus to the disciples attitude toward their service to God. He uses the analogy of a master and a servant to illustrate the relationship between God and his people. In this analogy, the disciples are depicted as servants who are expected to fulfill their duties diligently without anticipating special recognition or reward. Jesus highlights that a servant doesn't expect thanks or praise for simply doing what is expected of them.

Similarly, disciples of Jesus should not serve God with the expectation of receiving special privileges or accolades. Instead, they should humbly acknowledge that they are merely doing their duty as servants of God. A continuous, humble and devoted service and completion of duties will result in an increase of faith. They first must prove faithful in serving him. Jesus concludes by emphasizing humility in service even after faithfully in carrying out their responsibilities.

The disciples should recognize their unworthiness and acknowledge that they have only done what was required of them. This humility contrasts with any sense of entitlement or pride that might result from fulfilling their duties. However, the most faithful will ultimately receive the grandest of spiritual rewards. Returning to Paul's wonderful explanation on faith in the Book of Hebrews we read in the 12th chapter, verse verses 1 and 2. Therefore we also since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

All those heroes of faith that Paul described in the 11th chapter of Hebrews are such great examples called a cloud of witnesses and a source for us to gain faith. They without Jesus teachings and without the understanding of the written word, still had such faith as to live their lives and often give their lives to honor and please God, often under peril and agitation. Several examples are Noah, who served the race by building an ark when rain did not fall for 120 years Abraham, whose trust in God allowed him to leave his home, father a son in his old age, offer his son as a sacrifice and become the father of nations Sarah, who received strength to conceive and bear a child in her old age because she believed God would keep his promise. Moses rejected a life of ease and pleasure in Egypt, preferring to act as mediator between God and his people, leading them out of bondage and establishing them as a nation in their own land, and the list goes on and on.

Rahab, Gideon, Barak, David, Samuel, and the prophets, and many, many others. As a reminder, brethren, and I know you know this scripture by memory, Hebrews 11:39:40 says, and all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise God, having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. As faithful as these witnesses were, many even giving their lives to uphold the righteousness and majesty of God, did not receive the prize of the high calling that based on your faith, is reserved for you. One last point on the witnesses. We are surrounded by a great crowd of witnesses, not only from the past pages of Jewish age and Christian history, but by those who are our brothers and sisters in Christ, our families, our schoolmates, those in the work lives, neighbors and friends.

All observe all form opinions. We want our Christian characters to always reflect our faith and uphold our love for our Heavenly Father and His Son. I'd like to conclude this talk noting the memorial of our Lord's death is soon to be celebrated. How blessed we are to have a faith so

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strong as to recommit our lives to conform our hearts and wills to serve God through His Son. May you be blessed forevermore and be thankful that you possess the basic ingredient to have a wonderful relationship with our great God.

For by grace you have been saved through faith in that, not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.

May the Lord add His blessing.