

INTRODUCTION

1. Continued challenge to obtain balance in the Christian live.
2. Hebs gives adjustment: rediscovery of Docts of Grace -> imbalances:
 - i. "just justification "- neglects sanctification [Hb 12:14]
 - ii. antinomianism [against law]: Luther - 1st use; Calvin 3rd use] - Hebs shows OCov law fulfilled & now written in heart - Jer 31 [Hb 8 & 10]
 - iii. Passive sanctification - Hb 12:1 must run race
 - iv. privatized salvation - do not forsake assembling together - Hb 10:25
3. Sanctification & perseverance in face of apostasy - Hb 10:36-39
4. Hbs focuses on living faith - Hb 6:7-12 Life of loving faith honors Father
5. Tonight - complete treatment of Hbs 11 [George Guthrie].

1st: Some Misconceptions to Avoid

1. "The people in Hb 11 are exceptional & I'm not - I'm no hero of the faith."
 - i. Noah? Ab? Jacob? Moses? David? Not sinless but lived *by faith*.
 - ii. We are like them & have the same God - better revelation of salvation!
 - iii. Hbs calls for active faith - propelled forward - Phil 3:12-16 [1Th 5:9]
2. "I won't suffer like some of these people - I'm just an ordinary believer."
 - i. Phil 1:29-30 gift of faith & call to suffer - exemplified by Paul
 - ii. Count the cost of discipleship. Enter kingdom by force - intentional engagement w/ means of grace.
 - iii. Readers of Hbs face prospect of another wave of opposition, but had bec/ lethargic & weak - tempted to compromise.
3. "God is good to me & I believe He will "bless" me in my life." [1C 15:19]. Objectively listen to yourself pray - for what?
4. "I believe. I agree w/ sound doctrine." Faith produces deeds.
 - i. We need doctrine - Prv 23:23. Orthodoxy is fndtn of orthopraxis.
 - ii. *If you know these thgs, you are blessed if you do them* [Jn 13:17]. What we know is what we do. [1Jn 1:6; 2Jn 1:4; Tit 1:16].

2nd: Some Observations About Faith

1. Living faith produces fruit: transformed character & conduct. - Hb 6:9 - *thgs that have salvation* - evidence, show, possess character of salvation . The *by faith* listings in Hbs 11 = deeds & declarations of exiles.
2. Faith acts on the basis of God's promises - fulfilled in resurrection. *Faith endures as seeing Him who is unseen* [Hb 11:27].
3. Faith acts on principle & God provides in providence. Successes of Hb 11:32-3a & sufferings of v35b-38 are provisions of God to faith.
4. Faith does not always issue into immediate results. Contrast of results in v32-35 & v35-18 - "successes & failures"
5. Faith works in a variety of circumstances & full spectrum of personalities.
6. Faith is approved & rewarded by G. Hb 6:10; Hb 10:35; 11:6, 26. What is the reward? All that God promises & gives in union w/ Christ.

3rd: Some Exhortations to Faith

1. Let us take principled risks for Christ *by faith*. Engage others; displace the good thg w/ a kingdom thg.
2. Holy risk-taking is not unprincipled - but expects Christ to provide & guide. Ab - Hb 11:8. Dan 11:32b; 1C 9:23. We experience our salvation as we *do, take action, go* - relying on Jesus *by faith*.
3. Faith overcomes fear. Risks are scary. Faith set in contexts: battle, threats from authorities, trials. Hb 2:14-15 fear of death
 - i. Satan enslaves w/ fear of death - not deny self, not take up cross, not die to self, to thgs of this age. Fear of loss keeps from Christ.
 - ii. We are freed, not from death, but from the *fear of death* - in Christ.
 - iii. Robert Neal [*The Art of Dying*, 1973]: 1] fear the loss of mastery - but Christ is in control; 2] fear incompleteness, failure - but we stand perfect & complete in Christ & our good works are rewarded; 3] fear separation from loved ones - but we will forever be w/ those who have died; 4] fear of unfamiliar that arouses anger: Dylan Thomas - "Do not go gentle into that good night... rage, rage, against the dying of the light" - no, in death we meet our familiar Jesus & awake in the light of eternal day. AMEN