

A 10 week study in Hebrews 11 'Unseen Realities' – Week 1

Questions for week of Sept. 27-Oct. 3

Getting to Know you.

Do you find it difficult or easy to focus on one thing at a time? With so many things vying for our attention, how do you focus on what's important and necessary?

Digging Deeper.

1. Read Hebrews 10:19-12:3 to get the context of this section on perseverance and faith.

The writer of Hebrews begins chapter 12 with the metaphor of a race that most of us are familiar with. The author uses imagery of a "great cloud of witnesses" not to describe a group of people looking down encouraging us as passive spectators. Rather, these men and women of faith mentioned previously in chapter 11 are witnesses of God's faithfulness. We can look to these men and woman as examples of people who lived a life of faith in the face of opposition and even through their own mistakes. These faithful followers of Jesus throughout history offer their stories of faith as motivation to keep on living our lives for our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Looking back at your life, who are some of the people who lived lives of faith? How has their story motivated you?
3. The Greek word translated "faith" in Hebrews 11 is *pistis*. It is also translated in the New Testament using the English words "trust" and "confidence." How do you see these three aspects of faith interacting in this passage (11:1-16)? What is the relationship in this passage between faith in God and hope in verses 1-3?
4. The word "faith" is used many different ways in our culture. D. A. Carson points out that this word is often used to mean a "religious preference" or "belief without grounding in fact or truth." How does (or doesn't) that definition fit with the faith of Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham? (See, for instance, 11:11.) How does this definition aid or hinder discussing your faith with those who don't follow Jesus?
5. Look-up the following verses on enduring/persevering/abiding in God's Word. How do these verses add to your understanding of what it means to have an enduring faith in Jesus Christ?
 - John 15:1-11
 - Romans 15:2-7
 - James 1:22-25

Application

6. Does your life exemplify a life of faith? What are some practical ways to focus on Jesus and develop a life of faith?