

## Discussion Guide: Hall of Fame of Faith – Part 6

*Let us examine the Scriptures like the Bereans who "received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." Acts 17:11 (NIV)*

**July 13th, 2003:** "Hall of Fame of Faith - Part 6" by Pastor Kimber Kauffman, Senior Pastor College Park Church. Pastor Kimber continued his series on faith based on Hebrews 11. Sunday's sermon was two part and covered an immense amount of ground. For the purposes of this discussion guide we will briefly consider his highlights and develop several provocative questions to help with the teaching and discussion time. I would suggest that you carefully review the pastor's handouts and your notes and read Hebrews 11 in its entirety before meeting.

Kimber reminded us that "faith continued" is key in the Christian faith. Pastor Kim spent much of his time again emphasizing perseverance. He started by referring to Matthew 13 and the parable of the soils. Read this parable to better understand how fragile our early faith can be. One evidence that the heart is receptive and not hard or shallow is that we do not just hear the word but understand it and bear fruit. While the level of fruit may vary all true believers are expected to bear fruit. Kimber challenged us to consider the fruit of our lives. He referenced John and 1 John as he drilled home the point of enduring faith. Thorough out the book of Hebrews we are called to earnestness, effort and growth both corporately and individually. Although many might argue that we can not strive and surrender, Pastor Kim corrected that notion by quoting Col 1:28-29. We toil and struggle but it is His power by which we overcome. Kimber's life verses in 1Tim 4:13-16 the word "devoted" to the public preaching of the Word was compared to a drunkard who is "addicted" to wine.

Two quotes the pastor reiterated Sunday capture much of the urgency of the message: "Anything worth doing is worth doing even poorly" and "The Christian life has not been tried and found wanting—it has been found difficult and untried." Both of these quotes would be worthy of discussion especially as it relates to prayer and family devotions.

The emphasis on eternal rewards was continued. Kimber asked us to consider where we are laying up treasure. How are your treasures in heaven coming along? Several scriptures point to the importance of eternal rewards and the perspective of heaven being keep in view (Rom 8:18, Matt 6: 19-20; 1Tim 6:17-19). The suffering of the saints and the idea of even staying in difficulty when we could escape was inspiring (Acts 14: 19-23). Kimber mentioned how a pastor in another country would praise God for the persecution which landed him in jail for preaching the Gospel. In spite of the repeated jailing the pastor saw the home churches grow more rapidly under trial than anyone could have hoped for.

Kim ended the morning by sharing some stories of what faith might look like today. A spouse staying after adultery was confessed, a man finding out he was not a Christian and part of his insight into his faithlessness was that he had not turned himself in for some serious crimes from his past, and someone struggling with secret sin that chose to confess rather than hurt the body and live a lie.

Kimber picked up in the evening by sharing some more "faith stories". He again reviewed that definition of faith and how it commends and looks back. The number of faithful examples from the book of Genesis points to how far back God's commendation reaches. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph were all cited as examples. He quoted several authors including C.S. Lewis, Bunyan and Hodges making the point that all these great men of

God were joyfully anticipating the rewards of love and good works that might go unnoticed here but are being saved up in heaven.

The idea of heaven permeated the evening service. Although we do not know what it will be like exactly we know from our experience here that we are left wanting and wondering. The earth and all it contains leaves us with the deepest yearnings unmet. It would be interesting to discuss expectations and lack of satisfaction among your group. C.S. Lewis was commended by Pastor for his understanding that our best possible experiences fall short. Even a great marriage and fulfilling job leave us wanting. Pastor Kim ended his time focusing us back on Hebrews 11: 4-7. Abel's worship which received credit due to the attitude of his heart (Mt 23:35); Enoch's relationship, and Noah's obedience were cited as faith builders.

### **Discussion Questions**

Read Hebrews 11 to start off the teaching application time.

1. Define faith as a group.
2. How does God expect us to think and act under trial?
3. Where does "striving" come in as a Christian? When does it become about the flesh?
4. How is effort measured by God? What would gain His favor?
5. Where does the conscience play a part in our efforts to please God?
6. Go around the circle and ask each member to commit to one thing they will commit to the Lord in faith this week.

*"Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." James 1:22*

## Background Information

Here are the scripture references used on the overheads as Pastor Kimber took us on the journey of persevering faith: Hebrews 2:1, 2:3, 3:14-15, 4:1-2, 4:6, 6:1-6, 10:26-31, 10:35-39, 6:10-12. Note: Pastor is now using the *English Standard Version* (ESV) because he finds it more accurate than the NIV. For example, Hebrews 11:11-12 is translated...

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

The *English Standard Version* Bible is published by Good News Publishers in Wheaton, IL. and is available on-line at <http://www.gnpcb.org/esv>.

Key phrases used by pastor throughout the journey: Don't give up and turn back...keep the faith. Persevere and keep going. Put faith in what you hear from God's word. Faith believes and then acts. A life of faith is important. The faith that saves is a faith that endures. Faith believes it is worth it all.

Scripture that relate promises with rewards: Hebrews 10:35b, 11:6, 11:6c, 11:26, 12:2, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, Romans 8:18. Our challenge today is the same...be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (Hebrews 6:12).

Here is the special chart presented at the end of the sermon:

<b>Abrahamic</b>	<b>----- Covenant -----</b>	<b>New</b>
<p><b>Abraham/Sarah</b></p> <p>God promises children as numerous as the sand.</p> <p>That promise not even phased by the fact that the couple called were past age.</p> <p>God's promise is good no matter how impossible it may seem.</p> <p>God's promise is always true but often slow. For example,                ?? Many years                        Isaac                ?? More years                        Jacob &amp; Esau</p> <p>Soooo, the key is a faith that endures the hard times.</p>	<p><b>Joseph/Mary</b></p> <p>God promises salvation.</p> <p>This promise comes through an even more amazing Birth, a virgin conceived!</p> <p>Again God's promise is good no matter how dark the times or how impossible it may seem.</p> <p>God's promise is always true but often slow.</p> <p>Soooo, the key is a faith that endures the hard times.</p>	

Concluding thought and challenge: Remember, God loves to help you determine his will for your life. ***What does God want you to do by faith?***

Remember to fill out your "By faith..." statements and place them in the boxes in the sanctuary.

## **Statements of Faith**

**By faith statements, based on what has happened, or is happening, in my life.**

**By faith statements, based on what I feel God may be leading me to do.**