Tonight we come to the end of our “Mountain Moving Faith” series. It's hard to believe we have spent nearly three months in this eleventh chapter of Hebrews isn't it? And I'm sure there are even greater depths we could explore in this great chapter.

In my Bible and perhaps yours' as well, this final section of Hebrews 11 is entitled: “By Faith They Overcame.” And after our study this evening I believe we will all agree this is a most appropriate title.

Let's read our scripture text together.

**HEBREWS 11:30-40 (NKJV)**

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.
31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.
32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:
33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,
34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
35 Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.
36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.
37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—
38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.
39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,
40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Let's pause here and ask God to bless our study of His word this evening.

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INTRODUCTION

Up to this point, the Hebrew writer has singled out a number of great heroes of the faith individually.

By faith Abel......By faith Enoch......By faith Noah.......
By faith Abraham.....By faith Sarah.....By faith Isaac.....
By faith Jacob......By faith Joseph....and By faith Moses.

In this final section of final section, in verses 30-40, the Hebrew writer breaks from this pattern and ends this chapter by giving us a flurry of names and information. And in a few moments we'll see why.
In this final section, the Hebrew writer teaches us **FIVE VALUABLE TRUTHS ABOUT HAVING THE KIND OF FAITH THAT OVERCOMES THIS WORLD.**

Let's look at these truths together.

**TRUTH #1: Overcoming Faith Means BELIEVING In GOD Even When The Odds Look IMPOSSIBLE (v.30)**

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.

1. J.B. Phillips once said, “*The bigger your God, the more you trust Him. If you've got a tiny, little God, don't trust Him, because that isn't the God of the Bible. People who truly know who God is have no reason to do anything but trust Him completely; and the reason these people trusts God completely is because they have the right view of who He is.*”

2. The Israelites believed in a great big awesome GOD who could do impossible things!

   - They saw how GOD brought those **ten catastrophic plagues** upon Egypt.
   - They saw how **GOD parted the Red Sea to make a path** for them to cross over on dry ground.
-When the Egyptian army was in hot pursuit of them, the Israelites saw GOD close up the Red Sea and drown all of Pharaoh's army.

-When they grew hungry in the wilderness they saw GOD miraculously provide manna for them to eat.
-When they were thirsty, they saw GOD miraculously bring water out of a rock.

3. Time and time again they saw GOD do impossible things! Now granted, their time in the wilderness was largely characterized by periods of gross faithlessness, and rebellion, and doubt, and grumbling and complaining.

But by the time they crossed over the Jordan River and prepared to conquer Jericho, their faith and trust in GOD was at an all time high. They believed in a BIG GOD who could do IMPOSSIBLE THINGS!

4. Remember their conquest of Jericho had absolutely nothing to do with the size or strength of their army. Their key to victory was to trust in GOD completely.

The people were instructed to march around the walls of Jericho one time a day for six days in a row. Seven priests were to lead the procession with the Ark of The Covenant behind them, and the Israelite people behind the Ark.
For six straight days they were to march in total silence. No trumpets, no shouts, not even a whisper. But then on the seventh day they were to march around the walls of Jericho seven times, and after the seventh time, the seven priests were to blow seven trumpets, and the children of Israel were to shout as loud as they could.

5. **GOD** had told the people through Joshua that if they did exactly what He told them to do they would see the walls of Jericho fall right before their eyes. And that is exactly what happened on that seventh day. The walls of Jericho fell like a house of cards. **The Israelites didn't take JERICHO by force, they took Jericho by FAITH IN GOD.**

6. **How big is your GOD?** Is your GOD “big enough” to do the impossible? Is your GOD “big enough” to give you victory over your greatest foe? Is your GOD “big enough” to remove your greatest obstacle? Is your GOD “big enough” help you through your toughest situation? Is your GOD “big enough” to provide your greatest need?  **When was the last time you asked GOD to do something absolutely impossible?**

7. **Overcoming faith means BELIEVING in GOD even when the odds look impossible!**
TRUTH #2: Overcoming Faith Means BELIEVING In God Even When You Can't UNDERSTAND How He Could LOVE You (v. 31)

31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

1. Let me just refresh your memory regarding Rahab's story. Joshua had sent two spies into Jericho to spy out the city before the Israelites overthrew it. Those two spies were almost caught, but they found refuge in the house of a prostitute named Rahab.

Armed soldiers had been “tipped off” that the Israelite spies were hiding in Rahab's house and so they went to confront her. But rather than turning the spies over to the soldiers, Rahab hid them and protected them.

Rahab lied and told the soldiers there were no spies there. Now the question is WHY? WHY would Rahab lie to her own people to save the hides of two Israelites? The scriptures tell us it was because Rahab believed in God.
2. Listen to Rahab's conversation with the two Israelite spies. This is in *Joshua 2:8-11 (NKJV)*

   8 Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof,
   9 and said to the men: “I know that the Lord has given you the land,
   that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of
   the land are fainthearted because of you.
   10 For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea
   for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two
   kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan,
   Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.
   11 And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did
   there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for
   the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

3. This is one of the most remarkable instances of faith in all
   the Old Testament. For one thing, **Rahab was a Gentile**. For the most part **Gentiles didn't even believe in God**.......but
   **Rahab did**. She not only believed in God, she believed in the
   **miraculous things God had done**. And she believed that the land
   she lived in would become the land where God's people would
dwell.
4. Perhaps even more remarkable was the fact that Rahab was a lowly prostitute. She was in one of the most dishonorable, shameful professions any woman could possibly be in. In the eyes of society she was about as low down and worthless as anyone could be. But even though Rahab may not have understood how GOD could possibly love such a wretched sinner as her, she had faith that if she protected and spared the lives of the Israelite spies that GOD would protect her and spare her life as well as the lives of her family members when the Israelites over-threw Jericho.

5. Before the Israelite spies left her house, Rahab gave them a “sign” to look for when they and the Israelites returned to overthrow her city. She hung a “scarlet cord” in her window........a bright, blood-red colored cord. And when the Israelites invaded Jericho and saw that scarlet cord in Rahab’s window they would know that house was under God’s protection and they would spare the lives of Rahab and all her family.

What a beautiful symbol of the precious saving blood of Jesus Christ!
6. Many a wretched sinner like Rahab have come to GOD by faith. Prostitutes.....drunkards.....drug addicts.....thieves.....murderers.....hardened criminals and the like; people who were deemed worthless and unlovable by society. And yet even though they may not have understood how GOD could possibly love them, they had faith that GOD could save them through the precious scarlet red blood of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ.

TRUTH #3: Overcoming Faith Means BELIEVING in God As The SOURCE Of Every Spiritual SUCCESS In Life (vs. 32-34)

32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:
33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,
34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

1. Remember earlier I told you that in this final section of Hebrews 11 the Hebrew writer gives us a flurry of names and information. In verse 32 he tells us why. He simply doesn’t have the time to tell the stories of each and every great hero of the faith.
2. He could tell us much more about Gideon's faith, and Barak's faith, and Samson's faith, and Jephtah's faith, and David's faith, and Samuel's faith, and the faith of the great Old Testament prophets, but he doesn’t have enough time to give us details so he simply mentions the names of these great heroes of the faith.

3. Let me just briefly mention the stories of these men.

- The angel of the Lord called **GIDEON** to lead and to save Israel. **Gideon felt unqualified.** He was overwhelmed with a sense of his own unworthiness. And yet **GIDEON finally trusted in God and by faith GIDEON and his band of 300 men armed with clay pitchers and torches defeated the powerful Midianite army.**

- **BARAK** was called by God to lead Israel through the prophetess Deborah. Like Gideon, **BARAK was overwhelmed with a sense of unworthiness to lead Israel. And yet by faith in GOD Barak won an incredible victory over 10,000 enemy soldiers.**

- **SAMSON** we remember was known for his incredible strength and his insatiable attraction to beautiful women. From the time Samson was born he was under the strict Nazarite vow and he was to live a life of discipline and self-denial in order to serve God. And yet despite his sins and glaring flaws, **by faith in GOD, Samson pushed down the pillars in the Temple of Dagon and killed more Philistines in death than he had killed while he was living.**
-**JEPHTAH** was a man who had known scorn and rejection his whole life. He was the son of a prostitute, but was later raised by his biological father. God called Jephtah to lead the Israelites in over-throwing the Ammonites, one of their arch enemies. And by faith, GOD gave Jephtah the victory

-**DAVID** By faith GOD gave young David the victory over Goliath the Philistine giant. And by faith GOD protected David from the relentless attacks of jealous King Saul who was out to kill him. And by faith GOD gave David and his army victory after victory over Israel's enemies. Of course David, like the others was far from perfect. His greatest sin is recorded in the scriptures for all to see. And yet David is called in the scriptures, “the man after God's own heart.”

-**SAMUEL** was called by GOD when he was just a young boy. Samuel was faithful to GOD throughout his whole life. He was the lone voice of faith in a very difficult time of rebellion and sinfulness in Israel.

-**THE PROPHETS** This is referring to the great Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Micah, and Nahum, and Habakkuk and many others. These men faced terrible opposition and persecution for proclaiming the word of GOD to the children of Israel. And yet each and every one of them were faithful until death.

4. Each and everyone of these men enjoyed great successes; not because of their own great abilities, but because of their incredible faith in GOD.
5. Likewise, we owe all our spiritual successes to our faith and trust in GOD. Humanly speaking, we are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing of any lasting eternal value apart from our faith in GOD.

TRUTH #4: Overcoming Faith Means BELIEVING In God As The Key To OVERCOMING Life's TRIALS (vs. 35-38)

35 Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.
37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—
38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

1. I'm sure you noticed there are no names mentioned in these verses. These were just ordinary, every day men and women like you and me who weren’t great leaders and didn’t do anything particularly great or noteworthy, other than the fact they believed in GOD with all their heart and they put all their faith and trust in Him.
2. Some women's faith was so strong they received their back their dead. I think of that widow woman of Zarephath who had her dead son raised back to life by the power of God working through the prophet Elijah.

3. A great number of believers have been tortured and have refused to be set free or to spare their lives by denying their faith in GOD. Countless numbers of believers have also endured scourgings and enslavement and imprisonment because of their faith in GOD.

4. Millions upon millions of believers have been brutally martyred for their faith in GOD. Many have gone out of this life in the most cruel, most violent of ways such as by stoning, or being sawed in half, or by being burned at the stake, or even crucified.

5. But look at that powerful testimony about these people in verse 38, “The world was not worthy of these people.” The world literally stripped these people of everything that was of any worth on this earth, including their very lives. But all the unbelievers in the world with all their money and material riches are not worthy to even stand in the presence of any of these great men and women of faith.
TRUTH #5: Overcoming Faith Means BELIEVING In God Until DEATH (vs. 39,40)

39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,
40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

1. All of these men and women of faith that are mentioned in Hebrews 11 left this world without ever knowing the salvation that would come through the Lord Jesus Christ. All of these men and women lived on “the other side of cross.” They received The Promised Land but they did not live to see The Promised Seed of Abraham.

2. And yet their faith stands out like a light in this dark world. Their faith pointed people to GOD. Their faith left a lasting testimony and witness to the kind of lives they lived and the kind of people they were.

3. These men and women never quit! They never gave up! They never abandoned their faith in GOD. And their true stories are recorded for us here in Hebrews 11 to teach us what it really means to “be faithful unto death.”
Illustration: Back in the early days of the west a traveler came to the Mississippi river and discovered there was no bridge. Fortunately it was winter and the great river was sheeted over with ice. But the traveler did not trust himself to step out on to the ice. Finally, he put all his faith and trust in God and prayed that God would grant him a safe crossing. At first he crawled on his hands and knees, and then as his trust increased he stood up and began to walk to walk with confidence.

About halfway across the river he heard singing coming from behind him. And when he turned around he saw a man driving a four-horse load of coal across the river on a wagon, singing all the way!

The point is this: When one chooses to live by FAITH it will inspire others to do the same.

As we bring this wonderful series to a close it is my prayer that through the example of these great men and women of faith in Hebrews 11 that we have been challenged to stop crawling on our hands and knees in fear and that we will boldly stand up and walk with MOUNTAIN MOVING FAITH IN ALMIGHTY GOD!

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

(Hebrews 11:6 NKJV)