

Hebrews 11:1-7

Sunday 5/5/2013

First of all, thank you for the warm welcome. It was 68 degrees when we left Boston, and it was snowing when I got to Kansas City. I appreciate the warm welcome. Second of all, I didn't know how to turn this on. I didn't know I was preaching, so I didn't have anything with me, but I had this iPad, and I had something on there, so I'm going to try to use it. I've never done this before, so this is a first for me. Last time I was here was a first because I didn't wear a tie when I preached. That was a first for me, and several things have happened this weekend that have been really great.

I need to tell you this first and explain to you. I do this pretty much now. About two years ago, and you don't need to hear the whole gory story, but I had a little operation on my heart. By the way, the guys that are Skyping, that's great. Where's the camera at? Oh, it's right there. They did that. I was in the hospital for 28 days, so the church Skyped for me, but they put the camera back here, so I spent all their service looking at my son-in-law's rear end, and he was preaching. I was a little worried that that's where the camera was, and that would have been terrible for these guys.

When I had this surgery, and I want to tell you this because it is true, when I had the surgery, they took this vein out of my leg, and it didn't work. So one of the nurses volunteered her veins, so I got a woman's vein in my leg, and that has affected my heart, and so sometimes I get teary-eyed. I just want you to understand why that is. In fact, I got teary-eyed the other night at the end of the dinner. I know you've noticed that's how Jamie is bossy. My goodness gracious, she is bossy, and Kelly is very submissive. Jamie snaps her finger, and Kelly starts running. It's pretty amazing. They teamed up together against me the other night at the Hootenanny thing.

Hey, wait a minute, I got it here. You cried, Jim? You just called me a big baby. I didn't cry. Would you let me preach? I didn't know roughly what you were saying. If you wonder about my relationship with Jean, I can, I promise I wouldn't tell you that she changed my diapers when I was a baby, so I won't tell you that. Yeah, I did. Yeah, I know. It was a horrifying experience for both of us. This is not starting out good, Bob. This might be the last time you ever had me come.

Anyhow, at the dinner the other night, Jamie comes up to me and she says, "You're carrying this cake." And I said, "Okay, alright, I'll carry it," but it was heavy, you know. What do you drive, Barbara? A Bronco? Is that what that is? It's an Escape. I wish I could have. So I said, "Okay, but there's no way I'm going to get this cake and get in the car at the same time." So Zach carried the cake out for me. It wasn't raining, so the cake is not worth eating anyhow. Yes, it is. Well, you eat it. So I get in, I get in the thing, and now what Jamie didn't think of was she actually assumed that me sitting in the front seat with my belly and the dash, that that cake would get to my lap, and it never got to my lap.

Now it gets better because the windshield was all foggy, and Bob is driving, and I'm holding the cake, and Barbara's back, and Robert, Robert, turn the heat on, no, turn on cold, turn on hot. And Bob was saying, "I can't see a Blakely Blake thing," you know, and I'm holding the cake. The whole conspiracy was they wanted to get cake on my pants so I'd have to wear khakis, but the

cake never got to my pants, but you should have seen my belly. It was kind of convenient because I had all this icing on here, and I could just, you know, eat it. You know, what I really did think is, I wonder what these people think of a black man handing a guy a white cake getting in the car. I thought that must have been something else. Barry would have been not so into that, brother, let me tell you.

Kathy and I counted it an honor to be here, and she didn't bring anything to sing, and I hadn't brought anything to preach, and you might think that when we get done. But it is, we always love getting together with Bob and Barb, and there were a number of years when he was busy and I was busy, and it just seemed like it never happened. I think I told you the story when Bob came to preach one time, and his plane was late, and I'd waited for him an hour, and he was preaching on a Wednesday night, and waiting for him to get off the plane, and he gets off in his blue jeans, and of course we're not in Kansas City anymore. We're in Vermont, and so he's changing into a suit in the back seat of my car, and I'm driving down the road, and I said, "Some things never change, Bob." It just seems like we always go that way with us.

We counted it a privilege to be here, and if you only knew what Bob meant to me in all seriousness, and he is, I will tell you this as I said last time, I am not here to teach you because when you've got one of the premier Bible teachers in the country, and I think it's the pastor's job to teach, I'm here to try to encourage you this morning in God's Word. I'm not an evangelist, and I probably shouldn't tell you what I think evangelists are, but anyhow, in the Bible, I think evangelists are missionaries. I don't have any, never mind. We had an evangelist come one time, and he's preaching to my church, and he's screaming and hollering and carrying on, and the reminders are like a, you know, and he says, "You know the best thing about preaching is? It's getting to yell at people and get paid." I leaned over to my wife and said, "Not very much, and never again."

I. The Importance of Dying in Faith

Hebrews chapter 11. Now that's a familiar passage, and you know at my age, the men and women that have most influenced my life seem to be dying. My parents have both died. I preached both of their funerals. My mom and dad were both a great influence in my life. My dad led me to the Lord. Of course, we lost Mel just a little over a year ago, and that was a tough loss. Some of the great preachers that Bob and I had the privilege of hearing growing up in Camp Baptist Temple over the years have died. Just, you know, as you get older, those that influence you seem to begin to die.

Several years ago, I don't know, I don't remember how long ago it was. Maybe, it's probably longer than five. How long did Gene Held die? Do you remember? About how long ago that was? It's been a while. Fifteen years, really? Wow. So anyhow, this good friend of ours, Earl Held, and he was sort of like a big brother to me. His wife passed away, and she had breast cancer, and he was down in Connecticut, and so they asked me to come down. Kathy and I would go down anyhow, but they asked me to go down and be a part of the funeral service, and then I traveled to Canton where they were going to have another funeral service for her in Canton and then bury her there. So I drove on to Canton, and there were several people that were

involved in that. Is there a napkin or something around here? My nose is running. I've been colder since I got here. Thanks.

So Gene died, and we were having this funeral service in Canton, and the last preacher was an older, not older, well, he is older, but an old Bible believer out of Ruckman School, Art Martin, was the last preacher. Brother Art turned to this passage, and I'm going to read several verses, but I want to start with verse 13 because that's going to be the hardest message, and he read this verse.

Hebrews 11:13

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

He looked at that for a minute and he said, "Now I want you to notice something, and I want you to notice it." He said, "I want you to notice the phrase, 'all these died in faith,' because that's where we're going to jump off from as soon as we pray."

Let's pray. Father, this morning I'm thankful and privileged that You allow me to preach Your Word. And God, I know that in my flesh, as Paul said, there is no good thing, and I have no ability to convince anybody of anything. And if You do not allow Your Holy Spirit to deal with our hearts today, then we'll leave the same way we came in. But I pray God today, You would change us where we need to be changed. I don't know where that is. I pray You'd reveal it to us. And God, I pray You would just deal with our hearts. I pray Father that what we do and say here would be honoring to Your Son, the Lord Jesus. We owe everything to Him. And so God, I pray today that You'd have Your will in this service, and You promised that if we ask anything according to Your will, You'll hear us. And then we have the confidence that You'll hear us. And I pray God, Your will would be accomplished here today. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

I have this thing, my wife, and don't anybody get mad at me, okay? I like to go where people like me when I leave. It doesn't often happen, but I like that. I had these pet peeves, and one of the pet peeves, I get my wife on it all the time, and she says, "You're so fifties," you know? And like she's a young chick. But anyhow, which she is by the way. Oh boy, I'm going to look over here the rest of this time. One of the pet peeves I have is she always says, "Love you, love you," you know, you guys say it all the time. "Love you, love you," hug all the time. I'm not a hugger. I probably shouldn't tell you that. Last time I said that, 15 people came up and hugged me afterwards. Yeah, everybody. And my wife gets perturbed. We have the welcome thing, you know? She's back there hugging, and I'm saying, "Can we come on, sit down already?" Everybody's hugging the chicken. I stand on the platform trying to stay out of the mess.

Anyhow, the pet peeves, we use words, a lot of words, and they lose their meaning. You know, and the love thing, and I love that, you know, because we, did you get that? I said I love that. Because here's what we do. We say, "I love my wife," and I do love you, sweetheart, and you are the sweetest chick ever that came into my life. She's six years younger than me. You know why I married a girl 16? When Bob and Barb got married, I told them this, when Bob and Barb got

married, she's 16. And it was against the law to marry her then, so I had to wait. I actually didn't know her then. And fortunately, she didn't know me. But anyhow, I lost my train of thought, which happens to me a lot these days.

We use these words, "I love you." I love my wife. And then we say, "I love ribs," and "I love my dog," and "I love going to a baseball game." I would say I love the Kansas City Royals, but I don't want to lie while I'm preaching, so I won't say that. But we use those terms. We use those words. Faith is one of those words. The word faith is so misused so often.

The Scripture here doesn't say, this thing shut off on me. That's not good. This verse doesn't say, "These all died in a faith." It doesn't say that. You see, you can have a faith. When people say, "What's your faith?" they want to know what church you go to. What's your religious persuasion? That verse doesn't say, "These all died in a faith," because you can have a faith. When I was a teenager, the thing used to be, "Keep the faith, baby. Peace, keep the faith." Nobody ever said what the faith was. It was pretty much whatever you wanted it to be. This statement says, "All these died in faith."

I'm sure your pastor has told you a couple of gazillion times that words are important in the Bible. God didn't put them in there just by accident. So if He preserved them, and if He preserved them for me and you, then they're important. This statement that the Apostle Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the book of Hebrews says, "All these died in faith." Not "a faith," not "being a person of faith," but "in faith."

Now, Art Martin went on to preach a message on dying in faith. And I got to thinking about that. In all the years that I've read the Bible, I love when somebody points something out to me that I've never paid any attention to before. And I got to thinking about that. In reality, I think that the key of dying in faith is living in faith. And that's kind of what I want to talk about this morning.

Now, this is a familiar passage, and I'm sure you've heard preachers preach out of it a lot of times. The outline that I'm going to do, I'm only going to do three points. You could do about 50 in this passage. It's probably similar to what you've heard before. But I want us to look at something a little different this morning. I don't want to look at these men and women by what they did. I want to look at why they did it.

I don't want to emphasize the fact that, and I'm not going to do Abraham, so I'm going to use him as an illustration, that Abraham left Haran and didn't know where he was going. Because we say, "Wow, can you imagine God said to you, 'I want you to go this place.' Where? 'Well, I'll tell you on the way.'" Can you imagine going and getting your wife and kids and the goats and the lambs and all that, and then talk his nephew into going with him and say, "Okay, listen, we're going to move." "Okay, where are we moving?" "I don't know. Let's pack up the tents. Let's get the camels in order. And we're going to head out." "Where are we going?" "I don't really know."

Now, my wife and I had that conversation a couple of times driving, but that wasn't Abraham's problem because I knew where I was going. I just didn't know how to get there. And she was reminding me that I was lost. Abraham wasn't lost. Abraham was stepping out in faith, going someplace that he didn't know where he was going to. We look at that and say, "Wow, what a

man of faith." I don't want to look at what he did though this morning. I want to look at why did he do that? Why would you do that? Is there a wife in this room that would do that? No, there isn't. Sorry, I know there's some faithful women in here, but if your husband went home today and said, "God's speaking to me, He's not real clear. I don't have a good idea. I don't have a handle on it yet, but I think He wants us to move. And I want to load up the U-Haul and I want to head out 71 or 76 or 40 or whatever's around here. And I want to just head in a direction." "Which direction?" "I'm not really sure. When we get to a junction, I'll decide." There isn't a wife in this room that would do that. And there isn't a husband brave enough to ask her to. But that's what Abraham did. That's a pretty amazing thing when you think about it. Why would he do that?

Hebrews chapter 11 and 12 are really the high point, in my opinion, of the book of Hebrews. These chapters really speak of those who died and their actions of faithful living. We refer to Hebrews 11 as the Hall of Fame, Hall of Faith. You know, it's kind of interesting for a preacher because, you know, most of us, all of us, want to be welcomed into heaven by the Lord by "well done, thou good and faithful servant." And you kind of wish, you know, the Lord would point you out and say, "Look at this fellow did." But the reality is this. The reality is that when I compare myself to these men and women, I wouldn't make the Hall of Faith anymore than I'd make the Hall of Fame. So when we read these things, we get pretty taken up about what they did.

When we get to verse 13, it's an interesting verse. He says, "These all died in faith, not having received the promise." Now I'm going to stop for a second. Am I going to be okay to talk about Mel a little bit? You're not going to cry and carry on? Oh, okay, all right. I remember at camp when I went to camp, and Ruckman would be there, and Mel would be there. And they would make this statement. I'm like 18, you know, not, maybe not 17, 16, 17. And I distinctly remember them saying this. "Jesus is coming. And if I am not killed in an automobile accident, I don't think I'm going to die a natural death." I can remember 1976. Man, the world's come to end in that 76. I happened to be in Pensacola that time. We were finding escape routes because we knew the Antichrist was going to show up, and all this stuff was going to happen. And we're figuring out what we're going to do. And you know, we didn't have bottled water then. So we had canteens, and we were getting ready for this, and 76 came and went. And Mel Sabaka died in faith. Have you not received the promise yet of the second coming? Now he's in heaven. Praise the Lord. He used to talk about how he couldn't wait to be raptured up and kick the moon on the way out. And maybe he did that. I don't know.

These all died in faith. You see, they were looking for something that they never quite got to see. They, but they died in faith. They saw them, it says, "afar off." And were, watch this, "persuaded of them," convinced of them. You know the word conviction means to persuade, and no preacher can persuade you of anything. It has got to be God, the Holy Spirit that persuades your heart. I was a salesman for a long time. I grew up in a salesman's home. And the worst thing about selling for a Christian is I was selling people stuff. I was convincing them that they needed to buy my product. When I knew in my heart, they didn't need it, but I needed the money. So I weighed them against me, and I won. And I would convince them of their need to buy a product.

It happens to you all the time on television. Well, you're in the mall somewhere, and they've got something stuck out there, and they convince you to come in. We had breakfast at the casino, not at, we had breakfast out there at the buffet, you know, and they had all the lights and everything's flashing. You know what that casino was saying? "Come on in. Come on in." Convincing you to come in. When you go to the store, they're convincing you to buy this. When the new hairstyle comes up, they convince you to get your hair cut that way. See? Or they convince you to wear clothes a certain way. It's just amazing to me, and we all fall for that. But when it comes to God's Word and the things about God, there isn't a salesman alive that can convince you of anything. And if he's convinced you of something, you're in trouble. It must be the Holy Spirit that convinces you. These people were persuaded. They were persuaded. And then they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on this earth.

Let me sum this up. These people were convinced of things that God had told them. They were so convinced of the promises that He made that they considered themselves strangers in the place that they lived. Now, I moved to Vermont in 1980. I've been there 32 years, it'll be 33 years this fall. And trust me, I am a stranger in that place. I mean, you want to go to a liberalism, and I'm not talking just about politics. You want to go to liberalism, you come up and see me. Where the norm is Christians are the danger. That's the norm. We're the problem. But see, I grew up when we were the answer. I can remember if you wanted to get a job, you put your pastor down. Man, if that guy thought you went to church, he was going to hire you. You try to get him to call your pastor, and your pastor would always lie for you. So you'd call, have him call the pastor, you'd get the job. But today, if you put that you're religious, I'm working with a guy, and he's had lots of problems. And he's in, he's just got out of jail, and he's got lots of, he's got lots of problems. I'm working, he wrote, sir, writing me from jail, and they released him, and he's still wearing the bracelet thing, you know, and they, and he's a Christian. He got saved in jail and took every jailhouse course there is to take, you know, thought he'd come out being a scholar. But anyhow, he's, he's got all this stuff down, but when he goes into counseling, they say, "How's your religiosity going?" They actually, you would think of a prisoner, and I won't tell you what he did. But if you would think of a guy like that made a conversion to become a Christian and wanted to go to church and wanted to do his right, wanted to live right, that they would say, "That's a good thing," but they criticize him for it. They think that's a problem. You see, folks, I got to tell you something. We are pilgrims and strangers, and unless we become persuaded of that, we're not going to get anything done. We got to let go of this world. This world doesn't have anything for us.

Let me get onto my message. By the way, Bob told Jean she could sing as much as she wanted because I was preaching, and I don't preach very long. So I'm going to change that this morning. At my church, if I go an hour, which is quite often, they're saying, one day my wife was sitting in the back, and she was doing this. And I hadn't been preaching very long, and that made me, you know, it got me a little irritated with my sweetie. And I said, "What do you mean? Wrap it up." She said, "No, it's hot in here. Turn the fans on." The fan thing was over here. You know, in a society that rejects God's Word, we must live in faith. In a society that completely rejects God's Word, when you narrow this down to God's preserved Word, this book, we really are a minority. We are really a minority. We must live in faith. These all died in faith.

II. Living in Faith: Confidence and Patience

Turn over to chapter 10 real quick because chapter 10 sort of leads up to this. And look at verse 35. Holy mackerel, this print is so small I got to put my glasses on. I didn't bring my preaching Bible, which is a big print.

Hebrews 10:35

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

Don't throw away your confidence. Don't get rid of your confidence, folks. Don't let anybody tell you what this book says isn't true. Don't throw your confidence away. You want to live in faith? Hang on to your confidence. I'll tell you what, I'm 60. I'll be 63 years old. In January, I turn, I always, my birthday's in August. So January 1, I go to the next year. So in January 1, my birthday's not till August, but in January, I'm 63. It drives my kids crazy. I told them this is the secret to living with old age. When my birthday comes, it's not such a shock. I've already been 63 for six months, eight months. So I'm 63 years old. Or am I going to be 64? 63 or 64? How old am I? You're going to be 63. 63, right. Don't try to make me older. I'm 63. I've been saved since 1958. I've been convinced of some things. The Holy Spirit has convinced me of some things. I'm not going to throw away my confidence in God's Word because somebody else says, "Everybody's doing something else." I don't care what everybody else is doing. I'm not going to throw away my confidence in God. I'm not going to throw away my confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm not going to cast away my confidence in God's Word because somebody else says, "That's not what everybody else is doing." Don't cast away your confidence.

Look what else it says. Look at verse 36.

Hebrews 10:36

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

We have to have patience. We have to be able to endure. That's what patience is, it's enduring. We had some kids in our church, a little girl, Melissa Lorenovich, would run long distance in high school. So I thought it was the dumbest sport. First of all, you couldn't see anything. You saw them take off and you saw them come back. For all I know, they had a bicycle out there in the woods. You know, I don't know, you can't see them. They're out and running. And I don't know how many miles they run. Anything over one tenth is too much for me. But they're out there running. And then at the end, they're all heading out, you know, and they're all, ah. Now they come back. And they're trying to get across that. And when they finish, they're all bawling. And I said to Missy, I said, "What are you doing? Why do you do this?" "Oh, it's so much fun, Pastor." I said, "Are you out of your mind?" You know what she had? She had endurance. She had patience to run the race. We got to have some patience, folks. They're never going to love us.

I was preaching at a fellowship meeting, a pastor's fellowship meeting one time. And I said, and this was back in the early 80s, I said, "How dare we call ourselves the moral majority? We have never been in the majority. We're not the majority. Have you looked outside your church lately?"

There are people out there, more people that don't agree with us than do. We are not in the majority of anything. We're certainly not in the moral majority because the morals of this society, oh, they don't have any."

Look at verse 37.

Hebrews 10:37-39

For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

That's our hope. That's our faith. I don't care what the world says. I am convinced. I am persuaded of the truth of this book, and I'm not throwing away my confidence. Now before we start bragging, pick up a book you got back there, Fox's Book of Martyrs. I taught church history in a Christian high school for 11 years while I was starting the church. What did I just do? I don't know. That's not good. This is what I was afraid of. Wait a minute, I get it. Oh, there we go. Okay, that's not it. Let me get down one more. There we go.

I would make them read Fox's Book of Martyrs, and they would have to write a report on every chapter, and they would say to me, "Oh, Pastor Lake, this is so gory." Now they're watching kung fu take your head off on TV, you know, blood everywhere, and they're watching all this stuff, and they're saying, "Oh, I was born at night, but not last night," so I understood what they were. They didn't want to write the reports. They probably weren't even reading the book. So you read that book, and be careful of what you say you're willing to do. Be careful. Those guys, I don't know. I wondered how they do it. I don't want to find out. But you know, there's an Iranian pastor. There's a pastor that went over to Iran, and they throw him in jail, and he's in a bag jail somewhere, and he says, "I'm not recanting. I will not recant." We don't even pay any attention. Here in America, we got it pretty easy, folks. We Bible believers, oh, we're standing on the book. Nobody else says, "Oh, dip, dip, dip." Yeah, well, you still got it easy. It might not be forever. And honestly, I hope it comes sooner than later, because I hate to leave my daughters and their husbands here by themselves. Not that they need me. I need my son-in-law, this is what I need.

III. The Definition of Faith

What would make people do that? Well, let's look at faith. Here's what a little boy's definition of faith was. He says, "It's believing in what you know ain't so." That's not faith, that's religion. That's the kind of faith most people have. They go to church Sunday in, Sunday out. They hear the preaching or the priest or whatever's going on. They have a faith. They don't believe anything that was said. That's what this little boy's saying. That's not what faith is.

The Bible here in Hebrews 11 says in verse 1:

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

You staked your life on it. Your pastor has staked his life on it. You stake your family on it. Some of you young parents, I got a brand new granddaughter. She's seven and a half months old. First time in history a newborn was pretty. I've been saying for years, newborns, I'm just telling you. He's a handsome little bugger. He's not pretty though. But Jasmine was beautiful from day one. She's beautiful. I never saw a beautiful baby. We are pretty judice, aren't we? I didn't tell her the truth. I'm staking my family on it. I told my daughters the truth. I'm staking my family on it. I dragged my wife 800 miles away from home to a place where nobody was and nobody asked us to come and nobody wanted us. And against the advice of almost everybody that I knew, almost everybody said, "That's not the right place to go." I'll go up there. Sometimes I think they were right. I've got to stay. I have staked my life on it. I've spent more of my life in that ministry than anywhere else. I've staked and it's all because I believe what this book says. You see it's the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen.

Anybody seen God lately? If you saw Him last night in your dream, you ate too much of something. You ever seen Jesus? I live in Pensacola. I live in an apartment, and that's a funny word for what I lived in. But it was an apartment, and across the street were a bunch of charismatic guys, and so you end up having this battering. So they said, "We come over here." So I went over, and they had a picture of Jesus in the clouds, and the guy said, "I took that picture." I said, "You're a liar." Back in those days, I didn't look like this, and I could defend myself. I said, "You didn't take it." "Yes sir, I took it right over there." I'll tell you something. None of you have ever seen Jesus. You may have dreamed of Him. I dreamt one time the rapture was in a rocket ship. You dream some dumb things. You better not hang on to your dreams. You better hang on to the Word of God.

This passage though doesn't stop with a definition, does it? It gives us examples of men of old, and these men and women received God's approval through faith. Now I'm going to say this again. You've heard messages on these folks, and I'm going to probably say some things, same things that other people have said, but I want you to keep in mind we're not looking at what they did. We're trying to figure out why did they do it.

Verse 3:

Hebrews 11:3

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Now what's interesting about this passage to me is it doesn't start with men of old. It starts with "we." It starts with us. "We understand." "Through faith we understand." It doesn't say there "through faith they understand." It says "through faith we understand." What is it that we understand? That God created the world and He did it by His Word. He spoke it into existence. We believe that by faith. We understand God prepared the universe, that He spoke it into existence.

Now the other crowd that believes in evolution also believes what they believe by faith. They have some evidence. I say, "Well, I have some evidence too." They say, "Well, we discount your evidence." I say, "I discount yours for country." You put your faith in what you want to put it into. I'll put my faith in what I believe is true, and at the end we'll see who's right. I'm willing to stake my life on it. They keep changing theirs. They keep changing it over and over. That book hadn't changed. That message hasn't changed. It's the same and it's going to remain the same.

But I have an interesting question to you. I mean, were you around when He created it? You watching? The Bible says the sons of God did, and they shouted for joy. That's not you there. Can you imagine seeing that happen? Do you see? Throw the stars in the sky and the angels, they weren't Baptists obviously. They're all shouting amen. Hallelujah. They certainly weren't Vermont Baptists. I wasn't there. And I'll tell you something else. I wasn't there when George Washington led the revolution or led our army in the revolution. I wasn't there. I didn't see it. I believe it. I believe it because a credible source told me. I believe this Word was created by the hand of God by the evidence that I see and because I have a credible source, the Word of God. He made it out of nothing. Nobody else can do that.

I was reading an article, and it was really kind of an encouraging thing, and I thought it was pretty cool about this little girl. Did you read it? It was in all the newspapers. It was the one I read. This little girl was born without a larynx. No, trachea. Trachea. She couldn't breathe. And they took some of her own, whatever it was they did. Stem cells. Thank you. She's a nurse. Stem cells. She put that in her body, and her body began to recreate the trachea. Let's see science do that. Science has taken all the credit for it because they thought it up. But God knew about that millions of years ago. And mankind was the crowning creation of God. Everything, I mean, it was higher than everything else He made. And I've realized more and more every time I hold my granddaughter.

Now let me ask you a question. Do you know God loves you? Amen. I'm glad you know that. Let me ask you a second question. Do you believe it? Aha, be careful. We use words pretty easy. Do you believe it? Did you ever get any bad news and you didn't want to believe it? Did you ever get a phone call? "So and so is gone. It's been an accident." About a year and a half ago, I don't know how long it's been, maybe two years, I got a phone call. It was in the afternoon. And it was a mom on the phone, and she said, "Pastor, I need you to come down to Dartmouth to the hospital. Kerry, his husband was out cutting trees. He worked for his dad. He was a, and a tree fell on his head. He's in intensive care. It doesn't look good." I didn't want to get that news. I guarantee you Kerry didn't want to get it. When that boy was pronounced dead, my job was to go out of the intensive care to where the hundred and some young people were assembled that knew him from school and the neighborhood and bring them in two at times to say goodbye. That's what I did for 45 minutes. And then watch his little boy crawl up into his lap and kiss him. And watch the nurses in the intensive care cry. And I don't get that, I don't want that kind of news. I don't need that kind of news. I don't mind getting the news that the Indians lost to Kansas City because that really don't make any difference. That's bad news.

You know what? The disciples got some bad news one day. John chapter 13. Jesus has gathered them together. And He washes their feet. He had to get ready for the Passover supper. And He

washes their feet. And in all of that He says, "Now listen, I'm going to tell you this is Lake's translation, okay?" He says, "I'm going to go away. And where I'm going, you can't go." And Peter says, "Why not?" And he says, "Lord, let me tell you something. I will go wherever You go. I will even die for You." And I think Peter was thinking he's going to go someplace because they were out to arrest Him. The news was out. Everybody knew they were, Jesus was the, He was on the most wanted list. And they, they, Peter probably thought He's going down to Jerusalem. He's been talking about it. He's going to go down to Jerusalem. He's going to get arrested. "I'm going with You, Lord. I'll die for You." And you know what Jesus said in Lake's translation? "Really?" I got that from my dad one time. Well, probably several times. But one of the times that I really remember it, first at the end of the first eighth grade football practice. I was so excited. My dad picked me up. I got in the car. I said, "Dad, this is great." I said, "You know what I think?" He was already rolling his eyes by then. I said, "I think I'll get a scholarship to Ohio State." You know what my dad said? "Really. Really, Jim? You know, let's just see if you graduate from high school. Let's work on that first." Okay. Jesus looked at Peter and said, "Really? Peter, I hate to tell you this, but before the cock crows, crow, before the thing, woo, three times, you're going to deny Me. You're going to deny Me, Peter." "It's never going to happen, Lord. Not going to happen." "Yes, it is."

So in chapter 14, Jesus got them together. You know what He says? Man, they were upset. "What do you mean You're leaving us?" He says:

John 14:1-3

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

He wanted them to believe that. But before He was off the cross, these men who swore to the end, who said they believed, just like you all shook your head, yes, were in the upper room, hiding, afraid, one out of 12, one, one out of 12. One denied Him. One betrayed Him. The rest of them were hiding. John was at the cross. See it's easy to say, "Oh, I believe it. I believe it," until the crunch comes, until the battle comes, until the valley comes. And you know what we have to have? Faith moves us to believe.

Let me ask you another question. How many of you know Jesus died on the cross for your place? Now, nobody's going to move their head. Now, everybody's going to say, "I'm not moving anything. I'm not going to shake my head. I'm not raising my hand." Nobody in here believes that? All right. Okay. Do you believe it? Do you believe it? You say, "Of course I believe it. I've been saying," well, let me tell you about a lady who followed Jesus all the time. And ladies, let me tell you something. Those ladies never got to sing. Those ladies never got any accolades. They just went and served. And they sent a message. Mary and Martha sent a message to their Savior, to the one they loved, to their Messiah, and asked Him if He would please come. Their

brother was sick. They had seen Him heal hundreds of people, thousands of people. They even saw Him raised the dead. And they sent a message. "Your friend Lazarus is sick, and we need You to come." And Jesus wouldn't go. He didn't go. And finally word comes. "Lazarus is dead." Jesus says, "Let's go." Thomas says, "All right, let's go with Him. He's going to die. We're all going to die. Well, let's go." Martha comes out and she says, "Lord, if thou had been here, my brother would not have died." And Jesus says to her, "Ah, Martha, I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Then He asked her the most important question. He's asking this of someone who followed Him and served Him, who denied herself for Him, who pledged herself for Him. He looked at her and He said, "Believest thou this?" You believe it? Do you really believe it, Martha? Do you really believe I am the resurrection and the life? You know, there's no question that's more important than you'll ever be asked than that. Do you believe?

Faith moves you to believe. Faith in Christ, folks, is not about what you know. It's not about what you know. Faith is about what you believe. It's not about what you know. You can know that Jesus died on the cross. You can know that He raised Himself from the dead. You can know that He was with the disciples. You can know all of those things. The question isn't what do you know. The question is what do you believe? Faith moves you to believe. That's why in Romans 10, the apostle Paul wrote that:

Romans 10:9

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

That's what you know. That wasn't enough. Poor people who are always confessing their sins. That's not enough. Confessing your sins is not enough. He says that if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. It's not what you know. It's what you believe.

Romans 10:10

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Heart first. Heart's always first. Heart is always first. And with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation. I'm sure Bob has told you this and said this to this. You may have even heard Mel say it yourself. But he used to say this, "You know what? The Bible isn't hard to read. It's not hard to understand. It's hard to believe." Faith moves you to believe.

IV. Faith Moves You to Worship

Listen to the next one. I've got 10. Faith moves you to worship. He came here this morning. I hope some worship was on your mind. I love fellowship. We have a friendly church. I'm glad we do. I like the fellowship. I love all the stuff. But when the church gathers together, we've come to worship. God always wants worship that comes from faith. He wants heart worship. He didn't

want mouth worship. He wants heart worship. He wants what's inside. He's always looking for faith. Faith is about the heart. Worship is about the heart.

I am tired of hearing all this business about worship, about what position you're in. If your hands are up or not, if you run around saying, "Thank you Jesus, thank you Jesus, thank you Jesus," or if you're a Baptist, sit there and don't say nothing. Don't sing. Everybody's singing. I've got guys in my church. Everybody's singing. They think it's manly not to sing. I preached a whole message on praise. I cleaned their clock about not singing. Man, you ought to sing. But singing isn't worship. You can have a three-piece combo or a pipe organ, and that will not be worship because worship is in your heart. And if you don't have a heart to worship, I've got news for you, you're not worshipping.

Let's look at Abel really quick, and I am so far behind. What time do we get out of here? It's ten minutes afternoon. People in my church are already at lunch. What time do I get started? Too many jokes. Kathy, quit talking. Let me go.

Abel, I'm just going to make this quick, all right? You follow along. I'm not going to quote it, but you follow along. In verse 4:

Hebrews 11:4

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

Faith is what? Doing what God said to do. That's what faith is. Faith is doing what God said, believing the Word of God. In Genesis 4, the Bible tells us there that God didn't have regard for Cain's offering. He didn't pay any attention to it. He had no regard for it. Now listen, Cain believed in God. You know why I know that? I know Cain believed in God. You know why I know that? He brought an offering. He brought one. He believed in Him. He brought an offering. He said, "God, here it is. Here's the best that I can do." And God said, "Huh? You talking to me? Pardon me?" No regard for it. No regard whatsoever.

Hebrews said that it was by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice. How? Well, Abel brought forth the firstlings of his flock. Well, where is the faith in that? He was a shepherd, man. That's not faith. He didn't want to grab one. Well, here's what the faith was. It was an act of obedience based on what God had told him to do. He did what God told him to do. But here is the second part of that. It was an act of faith because Abel wasn't there when God said it. Abel wasn't there when God took those lambs and slain them and showed Adam how to do that and then clothed him and what's your faces, Eve's body, and showed them how to do that and told Adam, "This is how you are going to sacrifice and this is how you're going to fellowship with Me." Adam had to sit his sons down and say, "Cain and Abel, here's what God told me. Here's how you do it. This is how you're going to walk with God. Please do this because this is what's going to put you in connection with the creator of the universe. And I saw the creation and I want you to, I was there at the very beginning and I want you to believe what God said. And here it is." And Cain said, "I'm not going to believe." And Abel said, "I am." But they weren't there. They weren't there. Cain disobeyed God and disbelieved. Abel believed God and obeyed.

And folks, let me tell you something. If you believe God, you'll obey. I'm not saying you're going to be perfect. Man, everybody messes up. Oh, man. I sometimes hope the Lord's pen broke when he's writing down how I mess up. We're all going to mess up. I'm not talking about this, but I'm going to tell you something. Here's the difference. I've got a cousin that believes. He's a preacher of another denomination. I won't say anything about the Pentecostals. And he says to me, "Jim," he said, "if I believe that you believe, then I would just get saved and go out and do anything I want to do." And I said, "Clayton, here's your problem. You want to do those things and you don't think you can. Because if you do them, God's going to kick you out of the family. I can do them, and I don't want to. I don't want to do it. I don't want to do that." Do I do it sometimes? You bet your boots I do. And when I do, I feel so filthy and I have to fall in my face before God and say, "Please, Lord, forgive me."

You know, when I was a little boy and I disappointed my dad, you know what I feared? I feared the punishment. But now listen, when I got older and my relationship with my father got stronger, I didn't fear the punishment. I feared disappointing them. And when you first get saved, you think, "Oh, man, if I do this, God's going to get after me and the Lord loves me. Whoever the Lord loves me, He's chasing me. He's going to spank me." But listen, you start walking with the Lord. You start living in faith. Pretty soon it's not, "I don't want to mess up because I don't want a spank," but "I don't want to mess up because I love my dad. I don't want him to be disappointed in me."

And listen, folks, let me tell you something. A lot of times we don't do things because there are a lot of things I didn't do as a teenager because I was afraid of my dad. I never drank, never drank a beer. My dad would have killed me. My mom and dad were both sergeants in the Army. That's where they met. They were both sergeants in the Army. It was not a pretty sight sometimes. And my dad didn't have to wait for, or my mom didn't have to wait for dad to come out. She could handle the belt just as good as he could. But I'll tell you what I hated to do. I hated to disappoint my dad when I got older. I mean, even as an adult, I didn't want to disappoint my dad, disappoint my dad. I love my dad. You know the greatest thing I got to say at his funeral? I preached his funeral. The greatest thing I got to say is he opened the Bible and knew enough about it to show me how to get saved. He could open the Word of God and show me how to get saved. And if you're a parent here and you don't know how to do that, you better get to it. And my kids went off to Christian school, and in Sunday school I told everybody, "If my kids want to get saved, you send them to me. You don't do it. You don't take them to the Bible. You bring them to me. They're my kids. I don't handle it." And both of them did. Faith moves you to worship. You see, worshiping and faith has nothing to do about doing your best or giving God your best. Worshiping God is about obeying what God said by faith.

V. Faith Moves You to Walk

Here's the last one. I've got about six, but I want to give you one more. Faith moves you to walk. Look at verse 5.

Hebrews 11:5-6

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

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.

I wonder what it means. In Genesis 5 it says that Enoch walked with God. He walked with God. I don't know what that means. I mean I've heard the preachers about every way it can be. Mel had a famous message from Hebrews 11 that he and Enoch was walking with God. One day they were closer to God's house than his house and God said, "Just come with me." I had great preaching. There really is. I loved it. I used it. I've stolen it. I don't often give him credit, but you know he's probably said it here so I have to give him credit. I don't know how that walk was, but I know this about it. It was by faith.

Here's an interesting thing. Look at that passage again. It says that Enoch did not see death. Well then why is he listening with those who died in faith? This is about those who died in faith. "These all died in faith." Enoch didn't die. And don't feed me the baloney that he's coming back and he's going to die then. He's a type of the rapture. He's not coming back. But he's listed as one who dies in faith. That's just like theology. Take it or leave it, whatever.

You know what walking in faith is? Selling out to God, living for Him. Dying daily. If you want to walk with God, you've got to die. Galatians 5:20 says, "I am crucified with Christ." I'm crucified with Christ. I died with Him. The faith that I now, and I can't even quote it, and it's my life verse and it just gone out of my head. I hate being 65, however old I am. I can't quote it. Anyhow, I'm worried about the time. Let me... Can't get it. Listen. You're going to die daily. Paul did say I die daily. I die daily. You've got to get up every morning and kill the flesh. Say, "I'm not doing what you do. I'm doing what God's doing. I know what you want to do. I'm not giving in. I'm going to walk with God today. I'm going to walk with Him. I'm not walking with the world. I'm not walking with the flesh. I'm not walking with doing what I'm doing. I'm walking with You." And in order to walk with God, I've got to kill you. So I'm killing you. And you're dead. And when you want me to do something, I'm not going to do it because dead people can't talk. So just shut up.

Walk with Him when you leave here. Walk with Him when you go to bed at night. Walk with Him when you wake up. Walk with Him when you go to work. Walk with Him when you're around your coworkers. Walk with Him when you're with your friends and your family. And when you have free time, you better walk with Him because that's the most dangerous time. Walk with Him. Faith moves you to walk.

VI. Faith Moves You to Work

Moves you to work too. Can I squeeze one more in here since I couldn't remember Galatians 2:20?

Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Thank you, Lord, for pulling that out. I've got a rusty computer. I don't live by my faith. I live by His faith. Faith moves you to work. Noah worked in faith when he built the ark. Look at verse 7.

Hebrews 11:7

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Faith moves you to work. Wow. Here's how it took faith. God said to him, "Here's a warning." Do you ever see Fox News or one of the things and they have, and something comes across the screen, "Here's a warning." The sirens go off. You know what? The sirens go off the sides, scaring you. It's to get out of the way. It's a warning. Look out. Here they come. You guys have sirens when the tornado's coming, right? That tornado goes off. You're heading to the shelter wherever you go, you know. Noah was warned of God. It had never rained. I know that's not a revelation to you. It had never rained before. So here was the warning. "Noah, it's going to rain." "Okay." "I'm going to flood the world." "Okay." "And I want you to build an ark that's 450 by 75 feet and 45 feet high. And I want you to do it over there on that mountain." "Okay." "Hey, boys, come here. We got a job." "Oh, good, Dad. We've been looking for work. Man, we need it." "Well, you got it. It's going to take us about 120 years." That's a pretty good job. 120 years to do this. "What's the job?" "Well, God told me. He gave me a warning." "Uh-oh. What's up?" "It's going to rain." "Okay." "And He's going to flood the world." "Okay." "And He wants us to build this boat." "Okay." "On that mountain." "Okay." "And when it gets done, He's going to send all the animals to get on it." "Okay." And they started to work. And 120 years in the Bible, and 1 Peter says that he was a preacher of righteousness for 120 years. He sounded the warning. And you know what the people said? "Okay. That guy's a little wacky." You know what faith does? It moves you to work. He moved with fear, it says. He moved with reverence. He moved with reverence. He moved with fear. He revered God. He respected God. He honored God through his obedient trust.

I can use that same illustration about my dad. My dad gave me a job to do. I wanted to do it. One quick story. My dad had a '62, I think. He bought a brand new '62 Ford Galaxy blue. And, man, that was the first new car we ever had. And the roads in Ohio where we lived, in the summertime, they weren't really dirt, but they weren't really pavement. So it would get dusty. So they came along with this fresh oil and put the oil down on it. And the cars would drive and we'd kick that oil up and underneath there, we'd get all oily and dirty. And that stuff didn't come off. So I wanted to please my dad. And one Sunday afternoon after church, they all went to sleep. I never saw that. I never understood that. I understand it pretty good now, but I didn't understand it then. And I said, "I'm going to wash dad's car." And I got the bucket out and I got the hose out and I washed his car. And there was that oil on there. I said, "How am I going to get that off?" Oh, my dad was a full of rest salesman. And one of their basic products was a steel, stainless

steel pad. So I said, "That takes everything." I went and got that. I put that under water, man, and I scrubbed that stuff. The oil came off. The paint came off. Brand new car. When I saw the paint coming off, my prayer life immediately improved. My dad came out. Actually, I went in. I think I had the woman's vein then too. I'm pretty sure I was crying. And I said, "Dad, I did something to the car." I've said that several times. Next time I'm here, I'll tell you when I ran into the church, but that's another story. I said, "I did something to the car." You know what? He wanted to kill me. Literally. I could almost see the smoke coming out of his ears, but he recognized what I was doing. And he said, "Son, next time, talk to me first and don't ever touch those stainless steel pads again." You know what? I didn't want to disappoint my dad. I wanted to honor him. I got to do that several times. I got to do it at his funeral when I preached his funeral. I don't want to disappoint God. I still do the wrong thing sometimes. Sometimes I'll be preaching 900 miles an hour and I'll say something really stupid. You probably had written it down a few times since this morning. But my goal is to honor my father. I don't want to disappoint him. I don't want to mess up. I don't want him to be – I want to do what he wants me to do.

Galatians 3:26-27 says that we are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Now listen to me as I close. There's no other way to become a son of God other than faith in Christ Jesus. Coming to church ain't going to do it. Your works aren't going to work. Your attempts at worship aren't going to work. The money you put in the plate isn't going to work. It's faith in the Lord Jesus. That's how you become a Christian, not by your works, not by your efforts or your good pay for or your church affiliation. It is a personal decision you make to trust in Christ. It's by faith. Do you have faith in Christ this morning? Now I'm not going to ask you to shake your head yes this time. But does your faith show through your faithful obedience? There's a song that we sing, "Trust and Obey for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey." You see your faith does not come by your works. Instead it's evidenced by your works. These all died in faith because they lived in faith.

Does faith move you to worship? I mean from the heart. This is an exciting place. I mean next to the Vermonters you guys are like going to Disneyland. I mean everybody's laughing and hugging and well they're hugging. But you know there's a great spirit in our church but it's different than here and this is a different part of the country. And I'm different than Bob and both of us are glad about that. But we serve the same God. Does your faith move you to worship or is it just fun to come here? I've hung around Bob. I've gotten more trouble with Bob. Sometime I'll come when he's not here and I'll tell you. He's fun to be around. My wife says it takes her three weeks to get me straightened out after I've spent a couple of days with him. Bob is not the reason to come to church. Bob is not the reason to come to church. Does your faith move you to walk with God? Does it enable you to work for God?

Let me read you those verses in Hebrews one more time and I'm done. Verses 20-23 of Hebrews 10 says this:

Hebrews 10:20-23

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

And having an high priest over the house of God;

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

You know part of the reason you come to church is to encourage each other to do right, to provoke one another to do right, to encourage one another to do right. It's not just to have fun. It is fun. But it's not just to be here and hear Bob teach the Bible and folks you don't know what you've got. But the reason we come and you should not forsake the assembling of yourselves together.

It goes on down to verse 35 he says:

Hebrews 10:35-36

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

Mel was looking for the rapture. Instead he got a personal escort and he walked into the throne room of God. And he received the promise and countless thousands and millions of Christians before have walked into that throne room. And God said, "Come here, give me a hug." I guess I'll be a hugger then. "Come on. You're home. Come on." Don't throw away your confidence, folks. There's great recompense of reward.

Let me finish it:

Hebrews 10:37-38

For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

I wrote that two thousand years ago and yet a little while, just a little while. He that's to come shall come and not tarry. Might be today, might be in a hundred years. Now the just shall live by faith. We live here, we live by faith. We don't live by sight. We live by emotion. We live by how we feel or don't feel. We live by trusting what God said. And if there's ever a church around that I don't have to say this but I'm going to say it anyhow. If you're not in this book, don't brag about being a great Christian. Would you do me a favor? If you're not in this book, just be quiet. We've got enough people out there talking about Jesus and don't know Him. We've got enough people

out there trying to witness for Him and they've never opened the pages of this book. Somebody's given them a plan on how to do it. Here's what you do instead. Open this book and read it. A wise man said it one time. Read this book from cover to cover. It will change your life. And at 16 it changed my life. Got saved when I was eight. No challenge does. Read it from cover to cover. Devotional books are fine. But read this book. Read this book. Concentrate on the assurance of what you have. Hope. He's coming. He's coming. But what you don't see. I don't see Him. But He's coming. He's coming. Might come today. If He comes, are you ready? Come ahead, preacher. Let's bow your heads please.