“By Faith They Conquered”
Hebrews 11

Thought of the Passage: By faith, believers conquered because what God said carried more weight than what they saw, feared, or suffered.

- By Faith We Understand — 11:1–3
- Faith at the Dawn of History — 11:4–7
- Faithful Abraham — 11:8–12
- Heavenly Hope — 11:13–16
- The Faith of the Patriarchs — 11:17–22
- The Faith of Moses — 11:23–30
- By Faith They Conquered — 11:30–40

VS 1–3 — By Faith We Understand

VS 1 — Faith Is…

Faith is a real thing, so God describes it as a “substance” for that reason.
Substances can be observed. Substances can grow or shrink. Substances can be tested.
Because it is real, because it exists, it can now be considered “EVIDENCE,” specifically the evidence of things not seen.
Rather than looking at life with our earthly eyes, biblical faith sees through the lens of God’s promises.
By this substance, by faith, they obtained a “good” testimony. Because the only other option is a bad testimony.
Using this faith, we are able to understand, comprehend, or grasp that all of existence was framed by the mere WORD of God.
Biblical faith takes present-day possession of things not yet seen with our eyes but hoped for in the future.
God is going to put on display the evidence of the substance of faith and how, by faith, His people conquered… fear, death, worry, enemies, doubts, threats, themselves.

VS 4–7 — Faith at the Dawn of History

(Gen. 4:1–16; 5:18–24; 6:5—8:22)
Abel gave to God in a way that required himself to trust God. He conquered fear of scarcity. Whereas Cain only gave some of the fruit from the soil…

VS 6 — Without Faith & He Is…

Without this substance of things hoped for, it’s impossible to please God, but that also means that it is possible to please God.

Acts 17:26–27

VS 7 — By Faith Noah…

Noah was warned of something that had never happened before. His faith was shown in not merely agreeing that the flood would come, but in doing what God told him to do regarding the flood—he was moved with godly fear.
Someone moving in faith & godly fear has a way of condemning those around them.
So far, we've seen three examples of faith at the dawn of human history—Abel, Enoch, and Noah. Their faith moved them to conquer fear, limitation, and complacency in order to respond to what God had said.

VS 8–12 — Faithful Abraham

(Gen. 15:1–6; 21:1–7)

VS 8 — By Faith Abraham…

a. Abraham set out to a land that he did not know because God told him to. He had to take his wife Sarah and leave the safety and comfort of his home to go out on the promise of God.
b. When God instructed him to go, He told him these words: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

VS 10 — Builder and Maker Is God...

Even while he was in the land, with the child of promise, he was still looking forward to what God had in store for him.
We ought to be the same way. You may be in the home you prayed for, with the job you prayed for, with the car you prayed for, with the family you prayed for, but have you set your mind on Heaven?
The Bible refers to our bodies as tents, and we are supposed to set our mind on things above. Jesus encourages us this way: "In My Father's house are many mansions and I go to prepare a place for you!"

VS 11 — By Faith Sarah...

She judged God faithful and received her first child after she was too old to conceive. God gave the strength, but Sarah received it by faith.

VS 12 — As Good as Dead...

If there is breath in your lungs, there is work for your heads…
Faith comes down to judging that God is faithful and able to keep His promises because Abraham and Sarah conquered their fears, doubts, and limitations and obeyed, waited, surrendered to God by faith…
Faith comes down to judging that God is faithful and able to keep His promises.
By faith, they conquered their limitations by trusting the limitless faithfulness of God.

VS 13–16 — Heavenly Hope

VS 13 — Died in Faith…

This phrase, "died in faith," is echoed in the New Testament as "finished the race, fought the good fight of faith." In other words, you continued with the Lord until your last breath…

While they were alive, they “embraced”—held on to, hugged tightly to—the promises of God and the fact that they were just passing through this life.

Philippians 3:17–21

VS 16 — God Is Not Ashamed…
Lastly, the most beautiful part of this section is because of their faith in Him, God is not ashamed to be called their God…
Let us learn from their example…
VS 17–22 — The Faith of the Patriarchs
(Gen. 22:1–14; 48:8–16; 50:22–25)
These verses give us a glimpse into the mind of Abraham as he was faithfully obeying God to take his only begotten son and sacrifice him…
VS 20–22 — By Faith Isaac, Jacob, Joseph…
Each one of these men’s faith allowed them to look beyond their current circumstances to a future hope. Whether it was blessings spoken over their children or instructions concerning what should happen after Joseph’s passing.
Faith is proven when we trust God with what is most precious to us and with what we may never live to see completed.

By faith, they conquered the fear of letting go and the uncertainty of what came next because they believed God’s promises were greater than what they could presently see.
VS 23–30 — The Faith of Moses
(Ex. 2:1–10; 12:31–51)
VS 24–26 — By Faith Moses…
By faith Moses rejected the call to royalty under foreign gods so that he could align with the people of God.
VS 25 — Suffer Affliction…
Are you going to be found among the people of God, or are you willing to forsake God’s people for the passing pleasure of sin?
VS 26 — Reproach of Christ…
He was willing to accept the worst that God had to offer instead of the best that man had to offer…
Just as one compromise can make the next compromise easier, one faithful decision can strengthen us for the next act of obedience.
Faithful choices do not happen in isolation. As we obey God in one area, He strengthens us to trust Him in the next.
“Good and evil both increase at compound interest. That is why the little decisions you and I make every day are of such infinite importance. The smallest good act today is the

capture of a strategic point from which, two months later, you may be able to go on to victories you never dreamed of."

C. S. Lewis — *Mere Christianity*

VS 27 — By Faith He Forsook Egypt…

Consider the faith it took to forsake Egypt and also not fear the wrath of the king because his eyes were set on God.

Fear is often an exchange: when the fear of man grows, the fear of God shrinks; when the fear of God governs us, the fear of man loses its power.

The cure for the fear of man is not becoming fearless—it is developing a greater fear or faith in God.

Faith does not always remove fear—it puts fear in its proper order. They conquered the fear of man because God became greater in their eyes than the people they feared.

VS 28 — By Faith He Kept the Passover…

The Passover is a beautiful picture of Christ. Israel was instructed to sacrifice a spotless lamb and place its blood on the doorposts so that judgment would pass over that household.

By faith, they conquered compromise one decision at a time—and each act of obedience prepared them for the next.

VS 30–40 — By Faith They Conquered

VS 31 — By Faith the Harlot Rahab…

Rahab recognized that the one true God of all heaven and earth had brought judgment to her world, and she wanted to be saved from it.

Spurgeon described Rahab's faith like this:

- Saving faith - Singular faith - Stable faith - Self-denying faith - Sympathizing faith Sanctifying faith

VS 32–35 — Time Would Fail Me…

Can you see the faith God wants you to have in these verses? Can you see what He wants you to hope for?

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. As you read these stories, it is supposed to ignite a fire in you.

Each one of us must bring into our minds the things that God has done so that when we look around our lives and see all the opportunities for the Lord to work…

I know that's encouraging, but the thing about biblical faith: it's for great victories, and it's also for what we consider losses as well because God is good regardless of the circumstances.

VS 36–37 — Still Others… VS 38 — The World Was Not Worthy!

No loss for Christ is a loss. We must entrust our lives to the LORD, both our daily lives and the day our lives will end.

2 Corinthians 4:16–18

We want to finish the race, fight the good fight of faith, and to hear God say, “Well done, thy good and faithful servant…”
By faith, some saw walls fall, kingdoms subdued, promises obtained, lions silenced, fires quenched, and armies defeated. Others were tortured, mocked, imprisoned, persecuted, and killed—but they refused to abandon their trust in God.
Both groups conquered.
VS 39–40 — A Good Testimony
“It is what Christ has done that opens the way into the very presence of God for them as for us. Only the work of Christ brings those of Old Testament times and those of the new and living way alike into the presence of God.” — Morris
Through faith, they were able to acquire a good testimony despite all of their struggles with sin, failures, shortcomings, and limitations.
God is offering the same to us today, despite all our struggles with sin, failures, shortcomings, and limitations.

By faith, we can conquer what’s left of this life for the lord…

Application
Faith repeatedly moved people to act before the outcome was visible. Noah built, Abraham went, Sarah believed, Moses endured. **Faith lives by God’s Word, not by present appearances.**
Hebrews 11 shows people choosing obedience over safety, ease, reputation, possessions, and even life itself. **Faith is proven by what it causes us to do.**
Some conquered kingdoms and escaped danger; others suffered and died without compromising. **Victory is not always getting out of the trial—sometimes victory is staying faithful in the middle of it.**