Introduction

Today we are going to finish our study on faith in Hebrews 11. His purpose in writing is to encourage and build up our faith by saying look at what God has done through these men and women who walked by faith. Hold on to God and you will be surprised at what faith can do.

I. Faith is surprising in what it can do. Hebrews 11:29-30, 33-35


The Faith of the Generation that entered the Promised Land – verse 30.

By faith the walls of Jericho fell. What is surprising here is that no mention is made of Joshua.

“Neither,” he replied, “but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, “What message does my Lord have for his servant?”

The commander of the Lord’s army replied, “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.” Joshua 5:14-16

In Joshua 6:2-5, God gives them their battle plan. Why did God ask Israel to do it this way? So that he would get the glory.

They proved their faith by obedience and the walls came tumbling down. Faith is surprising in what it can do because God responds to obedient faith. Verses 33-35a

But faith does guarantee this. When we walk by faith with Jesus, he always leads us in triumph.

“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.” II Corinthians 2:14

Our part is to follow Jesus wherever he leads.
II. Faith is surprising in where it turns up. Hebrews 11:31

Rahab lived in the city of Jericho.

“I know that the Lord has given this land to you.” Joshua 2:9

She had come to believe in the one true God. Amazing!

Rahab would marry Salmon, the father of Boaz, and become part of the line of Christ.

We never know where faith may turn up.

“In every saint there is always to be found something reprehensible. Nevertheless although faith may be imperfect and incomplete it does not cease to be approved by God. There is no reason, therefore, why the fault from which we labor should break us or discourage us provided we go on by faith in the race of our calling.” John Calvin

III. Faith is surprising in its response – from the world and from God. Hebrews 11:36-40

I know that the scripture says, “Don’t be surprised by the fiery ordeal among us as though some strange thing were happening to us.” I Peter 4:12

“If the world hates you, keep in mind it hated me first.” John 15:18

But I am surprised by how strongly the world hates God and his people. Verses 36-37

- Antisemitism
- Christian Persecution

Yet what does the Bible say about these heroes of the faith?

“The world was not worthy of them.”

Just like with Abraham, “God is not ashamed to be called their God.”

Conclusion

What’s the message for us in a text like this?

Hold on to Jesus and trust him.

Walk with Christ and he will surprise you.

Walk with Christ and you will walk in victory – always!