



Sunday, Aug 23, 2020

by faith

[This service will act as the wrap up for our Hebrews series and will offer us an opportunity to hear again the full message of the book, and to personally engage in the story. As such it will be a little different in structure and follow an outline found in Reformed Worship magazine.]

Welcome and Candle Lighting (Chad)

Call to Worship: Psalm 50:

The Mighty One summons us from sunrise to sunset.

Out of perfect beauty, God shines forth.

God calls to heaven and earth

“Gather to me my faithful ones

Who made a covenant with me”.

The heavens declare the righteousness of God,

The judge of people and nations

Let us not forget God, but with thanksgiving

as our sacrifice, let us be a people of justice.

Let us worship the God of our salvation.

God's Greeting (Chad)

Song: Open the Eyes of My Heart <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=idQ1n3cdgfo>

Reflection / Children's Message (Pastor Chad)

This past week we hosted our on-line Rocky Railway VBS. Who can tell me what the overall theme of the week was? – Jesus' power pulls us through. We heard some amazing stories of how trusting Jesus and his promises helped people. Some of those stories were from the Bible, like Ananias who had to trust Jesus enough to do what he was being invited to do. Or like the ship Captain, who had to trust Jesus's promises as they were told to him through Paul.

We learned that Jesus' power helps us do hard things (Trust Jesus!), Jesus' power gives us hope (trust Jesus!), Jesus' power helps us be bold (Trust Jesus!), Jesus' power helps us live forever (Trust Jesus!), Jesus' power helps us be good friends (Trust Jesus!).

Trusting can be hard, but it gets easier the more we know someone and know that they care about us. Did you know one of my main goals as a pastor is to help you, and your parents, and your grandparents, and aunts, and uncles, and friends, and ... well ... everyone to get to know Jesus better.

So, this morning I want to read a couple parts of this book to you. It is called “Notes from Jesus: What your new best friend wants you to know” and takes something about Jesus from the Bible and writes it like a letter to you.

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me and don't stop them.” In this it is like Jesus is saying, “I want you to know I love being with you. You know how some mornings you wake up happy because you'll be with a special person that day? Maybe a snuggle-close grandam is coming for a visit. Or you get to hang out with

your best-ever buddy. Or maybe you and your mom are taking a bike ride together. Well, that's how I feel when I'm with you. I'm always happy to see you. Always glad when we're together. I like being with you. Did you know that? That I like being with you?

"It's true, and I hope you feel the same way about me.

"I want you to know I'm not surprised when you mess up. I know you sometimes do bad things. Think mean thoughts. And sometimes you're selfish and disobedient. I know that's true about you because it's true about everyone. When you do something wrong, please talk with me about it. If you're truly sorry, I'll forgive you. And I'll go with you when you try to make things right with other people. When you say, "I'm sorry" to that friend whose feelings you hurt. Or you return something you took that wasn't yours to take. As we become closer friends, you'll grow to be more like me. More patient, kind, caring, and forgiving.

"But you'll still mess up sometimes. And I'll still be your friend when you do. Because I'm not your friend only when things go well. I'm your friend all the time.

"I want you to know I know it's hard when you can't see me. Your other friends come over to hang out. But me—I'm invisible. That may make it hard to remember I'm there and that I care.

"But I am there. If you've decided to follow me, I'm closer than any of your other friends. They live down the block but, through my Holy Spirit, I live in you. And every minute of every day, I'm at work in you and around you.

"When you feel moved to help someone, that's me.

"When you see love in the world, I'm behind that.

"And when you feel peace even when things are hard...yup, that's me.

"I'll help you remember and believe, but you've got to do your part too. You've got to look for me. Believe in me. Listen for my voice.

"Because I'm there."

As we've been studying the book of Hebrews in the Bible, one thing that we've noticed is how this book is written by someone who wants to help other people trust Jesus. Today we are going to read through one whole chapter of that book. Chapter 11. This chapter talks about all kinds of people that learned to trust God, and to walk by faith. In what follows you will hear the phrase "by faith" a lot. Every time it is said, I want you to join in. To see how others have lived by faith, have learned to trust, so that you might learn to trust a little more as well.

Before we read these passages, let's pray together.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. From everlasting to everlasting you are God. Speak to us now as you have spoken to us throughout the ages. Help us to hear your Word. Give us the grace to respond in faithful obedience. Amen

Leader: The grass withers and the flower fades,
but the word of the Lord endures forever.

God is Faithful - Melissa Kuipers

Scripture (Hebrews 11:1-7, NIV)

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.

By faith ... we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

By faith ...Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did.

By faith...he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.

By faith ... Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: "He could not be found, because God had taken him away." For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

By faith ... Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith."

Song: Your Power Will Pull Us Through (VBS)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xS48-KihC0>

God is Our Guide: Judy Van Haren

Scripture (Heb 11:8-16)

By faith ... Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

By faith ... he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

By faith ... even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

By faith ...all these people were still living when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them." (Hebrews 11:8–16, NIV)

Song: His Eye is on the Sparrow (Birthday song Edyth Brouwer)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ku2RUdcku_w

God Hears Us: Lotte Bartels

Scripture: (Hebrews 11:20–31, NIV)

By faith... Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future.

By faith... Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

By faith... Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his bones.

By faith... Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

By faith ... Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

By faith... he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.

By faith... he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

By faith... the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

By faith ... the walls of Jericho fell, after the army had marched around them for seven days.

By faith... the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.”

Song: Praise to the Lord the Almighty <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEh7Vt9sxmc>

God Perfects: Rob Luymes

Scripture: (Hebrews 11:32–40, NIV)

“And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”

Congregational Prayer (Pastor Chad)

Song: Hold Me Jesus

We Will Not Grow Weary: Pastor Chad

Scripture:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:1–3, NIV)

Reflection / Sermon (Chad)

“Therefore...”

Here the writer, or preacher, turns his attention towards the listeners, the readers; towards us. He has outlined quite clearly throughout this book how Jesus is superior to everything that had ever come before, or will come in the future. Remember, there

are four main sections to this book which are organised around key events or people in the early part of the Bible. In these sections we learn that Jesus is superior to angels and the Torah, to Moses and the promised land, to priesthood of Aaron, and even to the sacrifices, the temple, and the covenant made at Mount Sinai.

The writer has two main goals in these sections. First he wants to remind people just how amazing Jesus is, and second he wants to encourage (or even challenge) the people to remain faithful to him, even though times were hard.

The main point of the book is to have an impact on its readers.

To have an impact on us.

To make a difference in our lives.

To help shape us into people that reflect the life of Jesus to those around us.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.” (Hebrews 12:1a)

Let us give up the selfishness that hinders our ability to see things from another person’s perspective. Let’s give up the anger, the bitterness, the complaining. Let’s give up the greed, the divisions, and the envy.

Let us instead, pursue the good things God wants to work in our lives as the Holy Spirit shapes us more and more like Jesus. Let’s cooperate with the Holy Spirit so God can produce good fruit in us. So that we can become more loving, joy filled, and peaceful. Let’s continue to become people characterised by patience, goodness, and faithfulness. Let’s be gentle and self-controlled so that the world will be able to see the new creation being born in us as we run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

“let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” (Heb 12:1b-2a)

And most of all, let’s keep Jesus central to everything we do. Clayton Jennings describes him this way.

"Jesus Is" By Clayton Jennings.

He’s more than you could ever need

He’s more than the eye could see

I don’t deserve His love, but He’s always been there for me

You see, Jesus met me when I was at my lowest

And if you don’t know Jesus, know this:

He’s the greatest example of generosity this world of greed has ever seen

And when Jesus hit the scene, He changed the scenery

And met diversity with serenity

If you’re looking for peace, He offers plenty

Jesus was, and Jesus will forever be King

And when the Angels sing, they sing of the grace that was displayed for sinners like me

I can’t explain Him, and I can’t describe Him

Because if I could He wouldn’t be Jesus

Because you can’t explain eternity and you can’t comprehend the galaxies

But it was the loving hands of Jesus, who spun them into existence

And created man, knowing He would go to the cross to pay our sentence
There was a certificate of judgement with a period after the sentence
And we were sentenced to death long before He said, "It is finished"
He's a father to the orphan, a shelter for the homeless
A hiding place for the abused and an anchor for our storms
He stormed the gates of hell and came out on top
And the power of His gospel cannot be stopped
Even when the world tries...and they try a lot
He trade places with Barabbas and became a catalyst
Of missions across the world covering every portion of the atlas
If you're in need of rest, I know of a mattress
If you don't know Jesus, your future is tragic
But He'd gladly embrace tragedy so we could live in His presence of majesty
His presence is presents
And it's His presence that presents preciousness to a world of peasants
He's far from pretentious, but still loves those who are
He's a light of the world that hung on the stars
He brings the dead to life, but delivers life to the dead
He took a crown of thorns on His head
So we can put crowns at His feet
And I can't wait until the day I get to kiss His feet that were nailed to the cross for
me, and for you, and for every other person around the world
He loves the world and I love His word
Because His word became flesh
And in His flesh, He demonstrated the word to the world
He's an example to every boy and every girl
He's a lover of black people; He's a lover of white people
He's a lover of the un-churched and the assembly under the steeple
He doesn't see the believer's failures; but still takes time to celebrate their
faithfulness
It's His spirit that enables us
And gives us boldness, even when the world labels us
And if you wanna label me
Please call me a "Jesus Freak"
If that freaks you out, good
Because it's better to be good with God
Than to fight being misunderstood
By a world that could never understand
So let it be understood that I don't worship man
I worship Jesus
And although He doesn't need us
He still sees us, and pleads with us
To run to the cross where He bled for us
His heart bleeds for us; His heart grieves for us
But still graciously grants us a pardon for our treason in a season where the world
tries to explain away the work of the spirit with human reasoning
And here's the reason why they can't:
Because His spirit is like the wind, and the wind cannot be seen
But loved is he who believes without seeing the unseen
I'm telling you, Jesus is something
He's something more; He's something great
And if you wanna know Him, you don't have to wait

He stands at the narrow path with a key to the gate
And all you have to do is reach out and embrace His grace
I don't care who is president, I have a King who is always present
I don't care who hosts musicals, celebrities; the voice of the Lord will always be
the sweetest melody
I don't care who owns the riches of the globe; my Jesus has more wealth with
more ruby on His robe
I don't care who's the strongest or the fastest; nothing matches the creator of the
universe and His immortal, infinite status
I don't care about religious leaders who died and stay dead
I worship the One who conquered death, and wears a crown on His head
His name is Jesus, and I'm telling you He's something
He was faithful yesterday, He's faithful today
I can feel His presence whenever I pray
And when the time comes for me to fade away
I would remember the day I heard Him say,
"My name is Jesus."

Let us always centre our lives on the one who is greater than anything who has
ever come, or will even come, and let us live our lives for him.

Offerings:

1. Woody Nook Ministries
2. World Renew - Beirut

God's Parting blessing (Chad)

Song: World Outside Your Window <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpB7s61jOgM>