Bloomington, IN March 24, 2019

Sunday PM

Faces of Faith

Fixed Faith

Scripture Reading: Daniel 3:1-7

Introduction: Hebrews 12:1

In this series of lessons we are looking into the Bible at various men and women to see what we can learn about their faith.

The Hebrew writer tells us that their lives are placed before us as testament to faith.

You and I need good role models. People of character, people with a strong faith.

* Our children need to know these real heroes of faith.

Unfortunately, in our country there is a growing ignorance of the Bible. And even worse a growing ignorance of the God’s Word among His own people.

What this means is that the world and God’s people are losing its greatest role models, these men and women who walked by their faith and were found pleasing unto God.

Men like Abraham, Abel, Moses, Daniel, Job, Noah, Othniel, Timothy, Peter, Titus & Paul.

Women like Sarah, Debra, Ruth, Esther, Mary, Martha, Elizabeth, Tabitha and Mary the mother of Jesus.

Our thoughts on faith this afternoon come from a couple of passages -

1) Colossians 3:1-2

* God’s people are to set their affections on things above.

2) Hebrews 11:13

* The promises of God were so real these pilgrims of faith embraced them.
* The latched on to the unseen and would not let go. It kept them pressing on.
* May I suggest that their faith was an established faith, it was a firm faith, it was a faith that ran deep, it was a fixed faith. Conviction…

I. Slide Conviction Defined

 A. Conviction

Click 1. A firmly held belief, Click a belief you hold to and will not change.

a. i.e. Do you believe God exists? Are you convinced of this great truth?

b. Is your faith fixed, grounded, established, is your mind made up?

 1) Upon this truth I will not change.

2. Hebrews 11:3 – “by faith we understand that the worlds were framed…”

a. This is my conviction.

b. The truth that God exists is evident in creation itself.

c. This truth is fixed within my mind. It is bedrock part of my faith, it is

set, and therefore my mind is set on things above.

3. My belief in God will not be swayed by my peers, by a college professor, by

any government, by my family, by a threat of jail time or a lawsuit; Not even

the threat of death.

a. Is my faith, is your faith a fixed faith or are you and I tossed to and

fro?

II. Slide The Cloud of Witnesses – *A Fixed Faith*

 A. **Joseph**

1. Genesis 37-50

 a. What would you do if you were hated by most of your immediate family?

 b. How would you feel if you were sold as a slave not by a stranger but by your

very own brothers who hated you?

c. What if you were them separated from your family for years and would spend

the rest of your life in a foreign land?

d. What if you were thrown into prison and completely innocent of all charges?

e. Would you continue to be an unwavering servant of God at all stages of your

life?

 2. Joseph’s faith and attitude serves as a great example for all of us.

 a. Click Genesis 37:2 tells us that Joseph was 17 when he exposed the bad

behavior of his brothers to his father.

 1) It is hard to stand up against your family when there is sin but I believe

Joseph really loved his brothers.

 Verses 3-4 b. Their hatred for Joseph grew as they saw how much Israel loved Joseph.

 Verses 5-11 c. Then Joseph starts having dreams given to him by God about his family

serving him and this fueled the fire of hatred even more.

 d. You know the story how they conspired to kill him but instead he is sold to

the Ishmaelites and taken to Egypt.

 e. How do you overcome something like this? You fix your faith in God.

 1) You set your mind to living your life to please God with unwavering

service & devotion.

2) Joseph could have chosen to let anger, hatred and bitterness fester

within, but he chose to be consistent in his faith.

 3. Click Genesis 39:1-6

 a. Joseph had real character. He is a Bible character with whom it is hard to find

any fault.

 1) Now a household slave but highly successful under God’s watchful

care.

 b. But then in the midst of Joseph making the best out of the situation his

master’s wife cast her eyes upon him. (7)

 c. The Bible says that Joseph is handsome in form and appearance. (6)

 d. And suddenly, on a daily basis a married woman is asking him to lie with her.

 1) Talk about testing his faith, BUT Joseph’s mind was already made

up.

 e. But, his relationship with God was at the forefront of his life

 1) Genesis 39:8-10

 f. Genesis 39:11-12

 1) She is determined, **but Joseph’s faith even more determined.**

 a) He fled her grasp and ran outside.

 b.) “flee fornication” – I Corinthians 6:18

2) Click His mind was made up to be an unwavering servant of God.

 4. God would continue to bless Joseph at all stages of his life.

 5. Click Great Faith - Genesis 45:7-8 - he saw that it was God’s plan all along.

 a. Who was at the center of his life? God, his faith was fixed.

 6. Click Hebrews 11:22 – He knew Egypt was not his home and by faith he made

provisions to have his bones carried back to the promise land.

 a. His mind and affections were was set on things above.

 B. **Joshua**

 1. Numbers 32:10-12

 a. Joshua and Caleb “wholly followed the Lord”

 b. Wholly – Completely, Entirely, Fully, to be filled or full.

 c. Click – A fixed faith totally follows the Lord

 2. This phrase “wholly followed the Lord” fitly describes the rest of Joshua’s life.

 a. Click Joshua 1:1-for 40 years he would be Moses’ faithful assistant.

 1) He was encouraged by Moses

 2) Click Exodus 24:13-18 He was on the mountain when Moses

received the ordinances of God.

3) He was with Moses when the tables of stone are broken.

4) Click Exodus 33:11 He is in the tabernacle when God spoke

face to face with Moses.

b. When Moses dies, Joshua would lead the Israelites into the promise

land of Canaan.

 1) His humble leadership is worthy of imitation.

 2) Hebrews 11:30 - when God gave peculiar yet very specific

instructions on how to take the first city of Jericho with faith

Joshua led the way.

 c. He did so because he was wholly committed to carrying out the will of God

 1) Click Joshua 1:6-7 - “do not turn from it”

 2) Click Joshua 11:15 – “he left nothing undone”

 3) Click Joshua 24:14-15 - “we will serve the Lord”

3. Yes it can be rightfully said of Joshua, he “wholly followed the Lord” a. Here is a real role model for our children.

 1) He did not waver in his service to God.

 C. **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego -** Daniel’s three friends

 1. Script. R. Slide Daniel 3:1-7 Nebuchadnezzar sets up a 90’ x 9’ wide

 a. 4 Slides – of 90 foot tall statutes.

 2. Click Daniel 3:5-6 Nebuchadnezzar the most powerful earthly king orders

everyone to bow and worship the image and anyone who did not bow

down would be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

 3. What would you do if you were Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego?

 a. You worship Jehovah God of Israel.

 b. Would your faith waver and you would immediately begin to excuse

yourself? “I’ll bow down but I won’t really worship and God will

know I’m heart

c. **OR** would your faith be set, fixed, convicted in devotion to God?

 4. When Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were exposed for not bowing down

to the image, Nebuchadnezzar’s anger was hot. (13)

a. Look at what he says (verse 15) “And who is the god who will

deliver you from my hands?”

 5. Click Daniel 3:16-18 Listen to their response

 a. They were all in.

 b. Click Their faith was fixed and they were going to be totally

dedicated no matter the consequence.

 c. A fixed faith is a totally dedicated faith.

  1) Their dedication to God was first in their lives.

 2) These three young men had strong convictions.

 3) Their trust in God is an incredible testament of faith.

 6. You may never be confronted with such a choice in your life, but you will

not successfully navigate this life without a strong conviction in the things

of God you know to be true.

 7. Click Daniel 3:28

 a. They influenced the king.

 b. Notice the Bible says they “trusted” God.

 c. Notice they “**yielded their bodies** that they should not serve nor

worship any god except their own God!” (28)

 8. Daniel 3:29 Never underestimate the influence your faith will have upon

others.

Conclusion: Hebrews 11:34 says that faith “quenched the violence of fire”

Slide

 What a great cloud of witnesses we are surrounded by.

 Devotion, Dedication, Total, Unwavering, conviction are all words that describe the faith of these good men that we have studied.

Invitation: Will you accept the Lord’s invitation to become a new person a Christian this afternoon?

Your conversion begins with faith. A faith that comes by hearing the Word of God.

Romans 10:17

When you get into the Scriptures you will find that you must believe in Jesus.

There is salvation in no other name.

You will learn the importance of repentance. Sin takes you away from God but repentance will bring you back to Him.

You will find that you must confess your belief in Jesus. You must not deny Him.

In the Bible you will learn the necessity of baptism to wash away your sins.

Romans 6:4 “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

You be faithful to death and God promises you a crown of life.