

Studies in Hebrews



Lesson XIX

Text: Chapter 11:32—12:2 (NKJV)

^{11:32} And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again.

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in dens and caves of the earth.*

³⁹ And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

^{12:1} Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Questions for Group Discussion

1. As we near the end of the great “Hall of Faith,” the inspired writer reminds us that there are many others whose lives has distinguished themselves by their faith in God. Among them, are the individuals listed in verse 32. Significantly, each of these individuals was flawed and sinful.
 - a. How did faith make the difference in their lives? (vv 33-35)
 - b. How has faith made a difference in your life?
 - c. Why is it important to share you faith story with others?
2. One widespread heresy teaches the idea that God wants us to be wealthy and free of pain and sickness in the here-and-now. All we need is enough faith. This is known as the “word of faith” movement, or “name-it-and-claim-it religion.”
 - a. Do verses 35b-39 support this point of view?
 - b. How is faith affected by suffering?
3. One paraphrase of verse 40 may help us to better understand its meaning: “God had a better plan for us: that their faith and our faith would come together to make one completed whole, their lives of faith not complete apart from ours.”
 - a. Sincere there were no chapter and verse divisions in the original letter, how does the last verse of chapter 11 ties in with verse one of chapter 12?
4. Jesus is the a _____ and f _____ of our faith (vs. 2a).
 - a. What does this mean?
 - b. How does this thought tie in with Philippians 1:6?
 - c. How are we made complete (perfect) before God? (vs. 2b)