

Hebrews 11 (Conrad Bowman) (March 2005)

This is a great chapter. This is a terrific chapter, especially for a Bible church. Because we aim ourselves a logical detailed rational approach to coming to an understanding of what the Word says. And we're in Hebrews chapter 11 now. And quite often the position we find ourselves in is we come to believe what the Word says because it's logical. It's rational. And it follows, one right after the other, and literally we agree with that. Okay. That's not faith. Okay. That has nothing to do with faith. Sarah believed God, but skeptically she laughed. Abraham believed God, and because he believed God, the promise was accorded to him. But, when God told him, when he was in Ur of the Chaldees, I want you to leave your country. I want you to leave your family. I want you to leave them all behind. I want you to go to a land that I'm going to show you, a land of promise. Now, that is given to you in Genesis. You back up just a few verses to the previous chapter in Genesis, it says, Abraham left Haran – the dried up place – the desert, after his father died. So, instead of leaving Ur, and leaving his dad, and leaving his family, he struck out with Terah still in tow. As a matter in fact, Terah was still in charge of the family. So he left under the authority of his dad, and took his dad – you know what his dad's name was? Terah. Terah, which means, delayed. Okay. You remember our Genesis studies? We got through this in Genesis. He took his uncle with him, and his uncle's name was Nahor. Do you know what Nahor means? Snoring. Snoring. So, Abram leaves Ur, because God told him to go to the land of Canaan, and he takes "Delayed" and "dull as dirt, snoring Nahor," with him Okay. Nahor had a son. His son's name was Lot. Lot means self-seeking. Self-serving. That was Lot's entire approach to life. Now, God awarded the promise to Abraham in spite of his disobedience. Why? Because it's not your work that He's after, it's your life. He made the award based on their belief and faith. Not on what they did. What they did demonstrated to them and others around them, that they had appropriated God's promise. But God's not impressed with our work. He owns the gold in every mine and the cattle on a thousand hills. He's got it all. If He needs money, He can extract it. If He needs production, He can produce it. He's not impressed with our work. It's our life, the inner life, of faith, that God wants. Now that's a hard lesson for us to learn. It's a difficult lesson for us to learn. Okay. We send our children to Campus Crusade. We train our college students to go to California and mow grass at headquarters, and we'll support them in that. We never question their inner life and motivation. And we do the same thing as adults. You know, get us in a hard spot, we'll grab that genie and the lamp, and we'll polish that lamp with out prayers and promise God all kind of stuff, you know. Oh God, you know, I'm really sorry about what I've done, and the mess I've made. If you'll change this, I'll do this. That's the same thing.

Gentleman. Let's make a deal.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah, let's make a deal, on a spiritual level. But God's not impressed with that. This whole chapter, chapter 11, starts with certain people, one after the other, who God blessed, not because of what they did, but because of the inner faith that drove them to do it. Even if they were skeptics, He still awarded them His promise because He's faithful to His own words. Okay.

There're four papers over there on that table. I brought ten more copies of Hebrews Notes that were last revised in January. So if you don't have a copy of Hebrews Notes, you can take one of those. There's a paper over there called, "A Heavenly Church." And on the back of it is another one called, "Why The Law." And there're really good background for the continued study of Hebrews. There's a paper over there called, "Thy Precepts." It came right off a web site by a guy that I've never seen before. I was looking for something by somebody else, and I found this. And this is a web site. The Christian's heavenly place and calling is eviscerated by messing in Judaism, the camp set aside. And the sovereignty of God in Romans. There are three or four papers in here. These are re-prints of 1800's papers, and this guy puts it out as a journal. And there's some over there. You ought to get acquainted with them, and you might want to just get on his list. You'll find it in there. There's another paper in there, and there's a few copies of it, called, "The Burning and the Eating of the Sacrifices from Hebrews Thirteen," and we'll be there in a couple of weeks, I suppose, or a couple of months. But I was listening to Tom this morning, sitting out here in the commons area, and his references on Leviticus – this is a marvelous tie in to that. A marvelous tie in, because it discusses our priestly work tied into the high priestly work of Christ, our ascended Lord. And our work as intercessors is only possible because we have a high priest in heaven who's interceding for us and has interceded with His blood. And it's continually applied that keeps us and the way open from us to the Father. It's such a marvelous tie. So Hebrews – you get Hebrews in one hand, and you get Leviticus in the other hand, and you're studying those two things together. It's a marvelous combination.

Now let's get Hebrews chapter 11 and move through it. If you have questions, raise your hand and stop me if you can, and we'll slow down. Otherwise, I want to get through this chapter if we can.

1. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for [or the substance, it says in the King James], the conviction of things not seen.

So when you look at that and you start looking for a definition, it's like my opening comments were, faith is not, faith is not the natural result of the rational mind. Faith is

accepting something that someone superior has told you, and moving on that. The moving part simply demonstrates the appropriation of it, but faith is declaring God to be true, and every man a liar. And so if He says it, I believe it. I don't understand it, but I believe it. And that's faith. The faith then, and my reaction to it, becomes the evidence of things that I can't see at all. My mind can't wrap itself around it, but I'm moving in it anyway. That's faith.

2. For by it the men of old gained approval.

3. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God ...

This is Romans 1.

... by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

God called the earth into being out of nothing. He called it into being. He declared it to be true, and that's the original creative act – something out of nothing.

3. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

4. By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony [God accepted his offering] that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

The picture that's drawn for us from Scripture – and I'm not going to stop and read it. But, the idiom that's applied in Genesis says, that after Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden – they were expelled, and they set up camp right there by the gate. They didn't like being expelled from the garden, because life was good in there, life is thorny out here. Okay. But, there was one pattern that they obviously taught their children, and that was to make animal sacrifice. The only thing that had been killed by man to that point had been – actually been killed, and it wasn't by man, was that lamb that was stuck in a fence, from which God made a covering for Adam and Eve's sin. The evidence of their sin. That was the pattern. Now, there's a Greek word, its "*sphatto*," which means to take a knife, and ceremonially cut the throat of an animal to be sacrificed. It's not the word for murder. It's not the word for kill. It's a specific word used for the ceremony of sacrificial offering. That's the word used of Cain killing Abel. He didn't hit him in the head with a rock. He didn't beat him to death. He took the

knife that Abel used to offer his sacrifices on the altar that Adam had built outside that gate, and Abel would cut that animal's throat and offer him on the altar. Fire would come down – remember there was a flaming sword at that gate. The idiom instructs us that fire would come down and consume the sacrifice on that altar when it was made. So Abel was in the practice of doing that. He took the animal from the herd and offered it. The Flood had not come yet, had it. Ok. Man was a vegetarian. He didn't eat meat at that point. Remember God had given him grains, vegetables, seeds – everything had seeds – would be for food. He didn't give any meat for food until after the Flood, when he declared, after the Flood, now every living thing shall be food for you, just as I have given you the grains. So until the Flood came, man was a vegetarian. Okay. He didn't eat meat. The sacrifice Abel made cost him nothing. He was giving back to God that which God had provided for his own use. Didn't have any use for man. Okay. When Cain killed Abel, it was the first distorted religious act that was ever performed. Cain goes to the field and he brings produce. He's got grain, he's got corn, and he's got whatever. He was growing it. He took that and he brought it to God as an offering, and he laid it on the altar. He was giving up something for God. **God does not want your production. He wants your life.** He does not need your efforts. He needs the spot in your where He can put a new heart. That's a tough lesson for us to learn. We want to bargain with God every step of the way. Abel brought his offering and put it on the altar, and fire came down and consumed it. Cain brings his offering and puts it on the altar, and nothing happens. Now I can see two brothers standing there. You know. I don't see graciousness on Abel's part. He's telling Cain, you've messed up. And I can see this sibling argument, whereby Cain ends up taking a knife, and cutting his brother's throat. The first act of religion. A misapplied process.

4. By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony [God demonstrated His acceptance] that he was righteous [because God accepted his gift], God testifying about his gifts, and through faith [Abel did that], though he is dead, he still speaks.

5. By faith Enoch was translated [he was taken up] so that he should not see death ...

Enoch walked with God, it says, and then he walked no more. Because he was taken, a friend of God. Now,

... HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.

He walked with God and God was happy with him. Wouldn't you like to have that kind of relationship with God? Whew mercy! To where God would demonstrate from where He is that He's happy with your walk. That's a stretch from where we are, isn't it? Anyone of us can say that he's seen God demonstrate His pleasure with your walk in this life? No. doesn't work that way. No. No. We look at it and we know that there're things we're doing because of our inner motivation that are not pleasing to God, because we're still tied to the flesh. Until we're delivered from that, until we're delivered from that, we're going to be plagued by it. Enoch had such a life and walk with God that God demonstrated His pleasure with him.

6. Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is [and has the basis of faith – there's that belief] and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him [He's faithful to His word].

7. By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen ...

God told him, it's going to rain. Until the Flood came, he'd never seen rain. You understand that. Genesis tells us, remember from our studies, that there were a mist up from the earth that watered the whole face of the earth. There was a canopy around the earth. When the Flood came, the canopy was broken up. The water descended. The fountains of the deep – the water stored under surface of the earth – gushed up. There was a chaotic upheaval in the surface of the earth. We've already seen just recently what can happen when the earth just shifts a matter of 12 to 14 inches. Can you imagine what happened when the fountains of the deep worldwide broke up. Whole continents were moved. And that's what is being referred to here.

7. By faith Noah, being warned by God about things never yet seen were coming. In fear, and reverence ...

"Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," we'll learn later as we go. Noah learned it firsthand, because God said, a flood is coming. I want you to build a boat. He'd never seen a boat. He'd never seen water that deep. He'd never seen water coming that much. But nevertheless he acted on what God told him, and accepted it.

By faith, he went ahead and

... prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, by contrast.

Noah then was instructed to enter the ark, God shut him in and sealed it, and that crude boat took Noah and all the animals right through the midst of the Flood. The waters are

down, the waters are coming up. He's buried in this mainstream of water. He preached 120 years without results. Preached 120 years. If he had had any results at all, they would have joined him in the ark. But there wasn't but eight people in that ark. Okay. Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives. And the animals. No wonder, it said, while Noah was in the ark, God remembered him. Can you imagine all those animals to be cared for. God made provision for that. He remembered Noah, and everything he had to do, for the period of time he was in that ark. But, He didn't reward Noah for his work in building, He rewarded Noah for his faith in believing. This chapter is so important in this regard. God doesn't want our work. He could have given him and ark. But He rewarded by faith Noah. Okay.

8. By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Did he enter the land? No. Abraham never entered the land. He never did. He died along the way. But he didn't get to enter the land, because of his response. He believed God, originally. Then he went out and he had Isaac. But in the meantime he had – who? By Hagar. Ishmael. Ishmael. He had that little breach in there, where he said, this is not working, you know, You promised me a son, a seed I'd have forever, and here, I'm 100 years old. You know, and my son's not here yet. So, Sarah cooked up a deal, he bought it, he went into Hagar, he had a son by Hagar. Ishmael. We're fighting that battle today. Okay. That battle is still with us. It's not going away. But God rewarded Abraham anyway in spite of that breach, because of his faith in accepting the promise. God doesn't want your production. He doesn't need it. He's perfectly capable of doing that on His own. He wants your life. Now, because Abraham gave Him his life, because Abraham gave Him his life, we, today, pattern our faith after Abraham's belief, and his faith. We are children of faith. Just like Abraham was. There's the pattern. And it continues. He obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance, and he went out, not knowing where he was going, but he delayed. He took his father with him until God pushed him in the desert, in a dried up place, and until Terah died. Then he took Lot with him and he kept going. Finally when they reached this place, here was this nice lush plain, and these hard hills and mountainous region, and he gave Lot the choice. What did Lot do? He looked at that lush valley, had a few cities in it – one Sodom, one Gomorrah – and Lot said, Oh, I'll choose the bottom land. So he took the plains and the bottom land that was rich, and Lot and his family moved out into that Sodom and Gomorrah and set up shop. And Abraham took the high ground and went into the tough country up in the hills. And we know the story. Lot was taken captive. Melchizedek, the king of Salem, had to rescue him. And Abraham participate with that. He came down and – yes?

Lady. May I ask you a question?

Conrad Bowman. Sure.

Lady. In chapter 12 ...

Conrad Bowman. Of Hebrews?

Lady. No. In Genesis, it says here, that

5. Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan.

6. Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh.

So was he not in the land of Canaan for a while?

Conrad Bowman. He wasn't in the land of promise. The land of promise was located within Canaan.

Lady. It wasn't all Canaan?

Conrad Bowman. No. No. Canaan was a big area. But remember, they've come up to Jordan, and Abraham never went into ...

Lady. What about verse 9?

Conrad Bowman. Huh?

Lady. It says in verse 9 ... [inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. [quoting Genesis chapter 12, verse 9].

9. Abram journeyed on, continuing toward the Negev.

Carol Johnson. [Inaudible]. In Hebrews, it says,

9. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;

Lady. [Inaudible]

Conrad Bowman. Never took possession of it.

Charles Pirtle. It hasn't been taken possession of yet.

Conrad Bowman. No it hasn't. Nor will it until God effects the delivery of that land to Israel. That's part of the Millennial Reign. See, they never had possession of the land. Abraham approached it, but it was Canaanite country. Canaanite was in the land. That's what Genesis tells us. He went into Canaan, before he took possession of it, there was a famine, what did he do? He escaped to Egypt. He went to Egypt. Where all the people went into captivity. But he never took possession of that. We can go back to our Genesis notes on that, if you have it from when we went through that period. But Abraham never took possession of that. Just like he left Ur of the Chaldees on his way to Canaan in response to God's direction. But he didn't go. Instead of leaving his family behind, it was a façade. He left to go in the direction of Canaan, but he went to Haran. And he stayed there until God took his father away from him. And still he took Lot with him. See. So its incomplete obedience, is what we're dealing with. When God tells you something, He wants your – He wants complete obedience. He wants you to act totally on what He's told you. Because faith is the substance of things hoped for, the demonstration and evidence of things that you have never seen. And you don't get there unless you completely obey. God's plan is not alterable by man. What Abraham did was, he tried to edit the promise. Edit this sucker. We're going to edit it out, and put some footnotes in there. You know. That's what we do. So he never obtained fully that promise. That's the reason God delivers his seed spiritually through the children of faith, and that's you. You. You are the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. You are the immeasurable, innumerable eternal seed promised to Abraham. And the only way you got there is by faith being joined to the seed. One seed. One seed. That's the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Leave union out of that, and the whole structure of promise to Abraham comes crumbling down. Just like those skyscrapers in New York. They just come down because of the fire. Ok. You can't edit God's promise. So we bury ourselves in this thing. But, in order to understand it, you have to look at this right here, this right here – Acts chapter 2 [Conrad holding up the Bible and partition's the Bible at Acts chapter 2]. Here's what was written to us. [Conrad holds up that part of the Bible written after Acts chapter 2]. To us. That's a quarter of an inch. Okay. That's a quarter of an inch that was written to us. Here's what was written for our benefit. [Conrad holds

up that part of the Bible written before Acts chapter 2]. Okay. It's about an inch and a half. It was written for our benefit. This was written to an earthly people. This much of it – and you get right here to Exodus 19, and from here to here [from Exodus 19 to Acts 2] this was written to Israel specifically. This was written to the children of Adam and Eve and the children under promise. This [part] was written to Israel. Here's ours [after Acts 2]. Here's ours right here. Now if we understand what God was trying to tell Israel, His earthly people, He can throw so much enlightenment on His character, and His attributes, and His faithfulness, and what's to come, because He's not through with them yet. He didn't write an inch and a half of stuff here just to toss it away. He's going to come back to that and that's what this is all about over here. Right here. This is the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. But this is ours, right here, from Acts chapter 2 through the Pauline epistles specifically. Now we've already seen in there is a message to Jews in the first of the Church Age that is very specific to them. That's James and 1st and 2nd Peter and Hebrews, which we're studying now, that's very specific to that transitional Jew who was born under Law, and now is faced with a choice of leaving that structure of Law and accepting the freedom and the obligation of grace. Because grace does have its obligations. The obligation of grace is quite constructing your own rules for living. I want your life. I'll direct it. I'll tell you when to move, by the Spirit within. When did God ever join Himself on earth to one of His chosen people in this period [before Acts chapter 2]. He didn't do it. He didn't do it. He didn't do it in all this [before Acts chapter 2]. He didn't do it. But when it comes right down here, from Acts chapter 2 – the Upper Room at Pentecost – everyone who comes to Christ in faith – and that faith has been infused in you – everyone who comes to Christ by faith, the Holy Spirit enters your physical being and fills your life full with God's presence. How much of that oozes out? The flesh is a powerful filter, isn't it? A powerful filter. It preserves what's inside. It wants its own way. It wants its own way. And it's got a powerful ally in our personalities, in our physical being, in our ego. Because our egos love to take credit for anything. That's why it's my contention that at the Bema Seat of Christ, we're going to stand in front of the Lord Jesus, and we're going to offer Him all the work we've done that we believe qualifies, and it's going to go up in smoke, and we're going to stand there naked as jay birds. There's not going to be a thing covering you. There you are in your birthday suit before God Almighty. And He's going to point out that you have a robe of righteousness that you've put on, and it's provided by the Lord Jesus. And then He's going to show you the work He's done in your life that you haven't even discovered, and He's going to give you crowns of righteousness because of that. And those crowns will be things that you never even knew existed. And that's the Bride's dowry that she gives back to the Son. Grace demands that it be that way. Grace wouldn't have it any other way. There's nothing we produce that could equal the least thing that the Lord Jesus has done in our life. It's all of grace. It's all grace. It's hard to take in because our egos don't like that. We like to think about the things we've done,

and if we could just secretly see behind that veil, you'd see the hand creeping up over your shoulder patting yourself on the back. And it all goes up in smoke. Okay. Because if the Lord's work is done, and I credit myself for it, it's gone. That one skidded away. Skidded away. It's His life in us that counts. Okay. That's what this chapter is all about. He was looking for a city – oh, in verse 9, of chapter 11, Abraham

9. ... lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;

10. for he was looking for the city ...

The city is the core of the promise, that God had promised Abraham. A place he was looking for. Now, as he moves through the land, his intent – you remember when Lot chose the low ground, he chose the low ground because it had those big fancy cities in there. Walled cities. He didn't know but that what it was doing was walling in the sin that was there. Sodom and Gomorrah. And Lot is in there trying to impress these people with his self-righteousness. Self-righteous Lot. He's demonstrating his self-righteousness. He's all puffed up. Ok. Before these sinners, he's not as bad as them, he's a lot better than them. And so you know what end Lot came to. He finally – his wife is turned into a pillar of salt, and Lot was a total failure, because of his self-righteousness. His – that hand has gotten around there and he's patting himself on the back so hard. Abraham, on the other hand, lived in a tent, which means he didn't have the protection of the walled city. Marauders could come charging through his camp anytime. He's living in tents entirely dependant on God. He's exposed to what the world is doing. I'm learning, at this stage of my life for the first time, what it means to live exposed to the world. I've lived sixty-nine years on the basis of my wit and understanding, human understanding, and ability to engineer my circumstances. I wouldn't trade this last year for anything. Nothing. Nothing. Because we've got to live dependent on God and exposed in the world. And I'll get my voice back in a minute. This class understands that. The class that was here ahead of us, in my estimation, is probably too young to understand that. It takes a frost top to understand that. [Laughter]. Doesn't it? Because there's a reason this stuff turns gray [Conrad pointing to his hair]. There's a reason for it. And the reason is the test. It turns gray in response to heat, I think. God turns up the heat under us. But we learn to live in dependence on God, and exposed to what the world offers us. And when we do, we discover the faith of Abram. That's what's there for us. The treasure, that he lived in dependence on God. Bill Merlin used to say – I don't know whether any of you are familiar with that name. Bill Merlin was an associate pastor under Bob Thieme down at Barack church on Sage Road, back when Bob used to claim to be able to do one-arm push-ups. That'll tell you how long that is,

because he's in a wheelchair now. Bill Merlin left Barack and went to Jackson, Mississippi, to a little church called North State Bible Church. And we left at the same time and went to New Orleans – job change – and we decided to leave New Orleans. And I joined Cutter and got in the medical profession and moved to Jackson and into North State Bible Church, because we wanted to be back under Bill's teaching, Bill Merlin's teaching. And one of the axioms he used to say, we handle the charge of the elephant fine. We take the biggest gun we can find and we knock that sucker down. The charge of the mosquito drives us crazy. It just drives us crazy. And that's the way the enemy works. Okay. He doesn't sent big ole tanks out there. He sends a million little worry-warts to drive us nuts. You'll get an itch here, and an itch here. And a little pain here. And somebody over here is aggravating you. Somebody you offended, and they didn't like what you said. They didn't like what you did. And so your ego takes a few shots. Alright. The next thing you know our eyes are all on self and how we're reacting to things – not on the source of our faith. The charging mosquito is the most dangerous thing in the world. The first thing you learn in sailing. You let that sail drift, and you'll be two points off in the wind. That two points off is not that much. Okay. You run out two miles and you'll miss the stake two hundred yards. You'll never make the turn. Okay? The charging mosquito. Fine tuning. We come in those doors, and we sit down in those pews, and the man stands up in front of us. What he says is invaluable, coming out of the Word, in different ways to each one of us. I love that lesson this morning. I was eavesdropping out in the commons. I love that man. The boy is growing beyond his years [speaking of Tom Douthit, the Pastor]. He's feeding in a pasture that most are not. And week to week we are blessed.

10. Abram was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

11. By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.

Even though she laughed at the idea because it was preposterous. I'm going to do what? I don't think so. Yep. It's so. Because she believed God, her faith was accorded to her and the promise was delivered. Not because she laughed. Not even in spite of it. Because God is faithful to His promise. Even if we say we believe not, Scripture says, yet He our God is faithful. Think about that. Once having declared yourself, and are placed into union with Christ, and your faith is shaken to the extent that you express the idea that you no longer believe what you did have, yet He remains faithful. God is faithful even in the face of our disavowal. And what that means is, you act as your own faithful servant, and He will clean your clock in time, because He owns you for eternity.

Now from that grows an idea that the flesh is the difficulty. That human suffering and difficulty is because of sin in the life. That's not true. It may be true, specifically true, but it's not generally so. One man suffers in order for God to get his attention and bring him to the point of understanding and listening. One man suffers because of your need, and your need, and your need, to come to grips with truth in your life. One man suffers just because God wants to demonstrate to an unbeliever outside that he can sustain through the most difficult circumstance. It's not for us to decide why God is doing what he does. It's for us to continue to believe that God is faithful. He'll never put on you more than you can bear. But what with every test there's a way to escape. That word "escape" does not mean escape and get away from it. It means to bear it. To escape what you can't bear by giving you the strength to bear it. Alright. Now, so Sarah,

12. Therefore also there was born of one man, and him as good as dead [that's Abraham] at that, as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE [all those were born].

13. All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

So you see they died without having seen the eternal fulfillment of the promise. That's what I was saying about Abram going into the kingdom. He never say that thing owned. Okay?

14. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.

15. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.

16. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

17. By faith, therefore, Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son.

Boy, but what a pattern that is with God. Abraham raised the knife and attempted to cut his throat – what he had just told his servants when he walked up the foot of the

mountain. You guys wait right here. The boy and I will be back down in a little bit. And he loads Isaac up with the wood to burn his body, and he takes him up there and builds an altar. And he lays the wood down, and Isaac says, whoa, where's the sacrifice? And he said, God will provide his own sacrifice. And he put his son on that altar and raised that knife to do exactly what Cain did to Abel. He intended to cut that boy's throat. And God stayed his hand. He had every intention of cutting his throat, because he believed that He would resurrect him. Bring him back to life, right there on the mountain. He'd already told his servants they were going to be right back. We'll be right back. How much faith have I got? How much faith do I have to have? What's the quality in our faith? Geez. And it face something that's tough? I think it's tough. It's not tough to die. So what do I do? I retreat into the faith that He's given me to believe in His deliverance.

18. It was he to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR SEED SHALL BE CALLED."

19. He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

20. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come.

21. By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

22. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones [because he expected to be buried in the land].

23. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

24. By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

25. choosing rather to endure ill-treatment [there's the cost of obedience] with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

26. considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.

That's motivation. He believed that the treasures promised were greater than the pleasures at hand. Okay. There's our test. Day by day. Day by day. We need to consider what God has promised to us, weigh it against the cost of disobedience. Okay. And where do we get the strength to do that? I don't get it laying at home in a dark room. I don't get it plugging in my walkman at night to drown out the pain so I can go to sleep. That's not where I get it. Where I get it is when I hear you, and you, and you, and you, and everyone of you express God's faithfulness in your own life. We feed on a collective source. The faith that sustains me is your faith. The faith that's embodied in this church. The faith that's embodied in the Body of Christ scattered across the world. Ann Butler has been a source of extreme blessing to me because she brings me the things that she gets that I wouldn't ordinarily get my hands on. She brought me a book by a guy named Fenelon. Fenelon was Louie the 14th's

[TAPE ENDED]. [This recording was transcribed on a tape recorder, and transmitted to a digital format. The earlier recordings, of which this is one, were made on a tape recorder. Some are more audible than others].