“Assurance and Conviction of Faith”

**Heb. 11:1, 12:1-2 (see also Heb. 11:1-40)**

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Sean Hoisington, Hayden Bible Church, 12/26/21)

Last night my daughter and I prayed next to the bed of a dear, old saint. Though it was only in whispers, she spoke clearly of her love for my daughter and how she prayed for her every day. When I prayed for her peace and comfort, she stopped me and said she was completely at peace- she knew Who she belonged to and where she was heading soon. This friend exemplifies the message from Pastor Sean: her assurance and conviction are rock solid. Jesus has washed her sins away and has gone to prepare a place just for her!

Before she became bedridden, this dear friend was a shining light for the gospel of Christ, in words as well as actions. Her welcoming smile and plentiful hugs made everyone feel wanted. She took the Great Commission seriously, even at over 90 years of age. The foundation of her faith- our faith- is the once and for all sacrifice made by Jesus for His children (Heb. 10:10). Is this what you believe? Is this reflected in your actions?

Assurance. Read Heb. 11:1, 3:14, and 10:22-23. Assurance is certainty of mind based on confidence in God’s character and His faithfulness. Faith is the conviction of things not seen. Faith is resolve in the face of things not working out as you had planned. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world! Read John 16:33, Rom. 8:37, and 1 John 5:4. Does your faith move your feet in assurance and conviction? (Q1)

Noah’s faith led him in the opposite direction from the rest of the world. Abraham planted one foot in front of the other in assurance and conviction. All of these Old Testament saints lived by faith and died in faith. They were all seeking a “better country” (Heb. 11:13-16). (Q2) They all had received a promise, and looked forward to their reward ahead.

Faith obeys God. Faith moves its feet based on the hope and promise and faithfulness of God. In faith, Moses’ parents did what was right in the face of an ungodly mandate. Moses himself chose to be ill-treated along with God’s people, rather than pursue the pleasures of the royal palace. He moved his feet by faith. All the heroes of faith mentioned in Heb. 11:32-40 accepted torture, looking ahead to a better country, a better resurrection. They kept their eyes on the coming Messiah, the One who would save them. (Q3) (Q4)

The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us. Those of us who have repented, believed in His name, and chosen to follow Him have nothing to fear. This same Word of God is our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6). Come, let us adore Him! Fix your eyes on Him. Let your faith in Him move your feet in assurance and conviction. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world! (Q5) (Q6) (Q7)

**QUESTIONS**:

1. As a follower of Christ, what is your assurance?
2. What is this “better country”?
3. According to the ads on TV, what will bring you peace?
4. (personal) How is your life marked by faith?
5. Read Heb. 12:1 again. Part of the race set before us is the Great Commission. How could you take these marching orders more seriously in 2022?
6. Now read Heb. 12:2. Jesus endured the cross “for the joy set before Him.” **WE** are that joy! Isn’t that incredible?! As a group, stop now and thank God for this incredible gift.
7. One more verse from Hebrews: 10:24-25. How does hanging around other Christians affect your assurance and your convictions?

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee” (Henry van Dyke)

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flow’rs before Thee,  
Op’ning to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;  
Drive the dark of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
Fill us with the light of day!

Thou art giving and forgiving,  
Ever blessing, ever blest,  
Wellspring of the joy of living,  
Ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother,  
All who live in love are Thine;  
Teach us how to love each other,  
Lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the happy chorus,  
Which the morning stars began;  
Father love is reigning o’er us,  
Brother love binds man to man.  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
Victors in the midst of strife,  
Joyful music leads us Sunward  
In the triumph song of life.