

COMMENDED BY GOD
Hebrews 11

“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.”

Corrie ten Boom

Why they were commended (10:39 – 11:2)

Faith is not determined by intensity; it is determined by objectivity.

Unseen does not mean uncertain.

The first leg – taking God at his word (11:3-16)

(Trusting God with few resources)

What they had in common:

Lived by faith, died without seeing the completion of the promise

Estranged from their old life; united to a new “country”

Once transformed they didn't look back

The second leg – the expanding company of the faithful (11:17-39)

Commended for faith

Great deficiencies did not negate faith

Temporal deliverance was not guaranteed; temporal disaster did not signal disapproval

Faith was verified by other means

The third leg ... (11:40)

The character of faith

- Most experienced a crisis point in life or faith
- They saw beyond their own day by faith; none saw the completed goal
- All experienced a change in their status before God
- All experienced some form of marginalization from the world

Small Group Homework - Week of April 24, 2016

On Sunday we talked about faith. Before we dive into this week's homework, write down what you think might be a popular definition of faith.

Now write down your own definition.

Digging deeper

1. Read through Hebrews 11:13-16. These verses are a commentary on the early followers of God. Jot down the qualities that defined their faith.

Now read Hebrews 11:6. What are things that might tempt you to return to the "old country"? (11:15)

Let's look briefly at a case study in faith. In each question, do a follow-up statement about how this might show up in your life. You can read the whole chapter if you would like, or just the following verses: Daniel 3:1-6; 3:12-16.

2. What would represent the "old country" (Heb 11:15) for these three Israelites that would lead them to immediate comfort and deliverance? (Follow-up – what compromise in your life would you think would make life easier?)
3. What was their response? (Daniel 3:16-18) How does this fit in with Hebrews 11:16? Try to put into a sentence what is the "better country" that you look forward to?
4. What does Daniel 3:18 say about their certainty that God would deliver them? In the *biblical sense* does this betray a lack of faith? Why or why not?
5. In the final part of Jim's study, he spoke of us running the final lap of the race. How would you characterize your faith run? Are you just working to get along or to you have a longer goal in mind? Explain your answer and try to be specific.