

Hebrews Bible Study - Part 6

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[0 : 0 0] That's very true. And having gotten off to that start, how about if we pray before we go on? That would be great. Awesome. Thank you. Oh, wonderful God. We come to you towards the end of this day and all that it's brought.

The good and the hard, the blessings and the challenges. And we just invite you to be here with us. And I ask that you be present, very present with Linda in her home and that you continue to guide and uphold her during this really challenging time.

And we just pray. We just pray. And we ask you to hear us as we look to your word for guidance and support in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

So, Kelly, did I hear that? Did I get the impression from something you said? Maybe it was on your devotion that you're back to work? I am. I am.

Same company? It is. It was. And it's OK that this is public because it was a very humbling experience. I had been working at this advertising firm for 12 years. I'm going on 13 now.

[1 : 1 3] Great place. I have a great boss. And over the years, he has allowed me to be super flexible. To make a long story short, I was down to one day a week, which I loved before the pandemic.

Dan was gone literally all the time traveling. And so with two 17 year olds, it was beautiful and I appreciated it. But when the pandemic hit, they had a big layoff.

And the boss called me and said, we're going to include you as part of that. And it was it was humbling. And but it made sense. I totally got it. But then I started back at the end of September.

So I'm now I'm wanting to go probably a little more than I am right now. I'm two days a week now. But that is actually working out great because I do an awful lot with my mom and dad during the week.

So if it stays two days, that will probably be a blessing as well. I remember calling Pastor Sherry when it all happened and I just said, I feel like I've lost my identity.

[2 : 1 5] And she said the most perfect thing. She said, your identity is in Christ and you need to not feel like you've lost a thing. So it gave me great empathy.

I thought I had empathy before for people that have lost their jobs. But it definitely gave me great empathy. And, you know, and then I had COVID. I said, I'm just experiencing this whole pandemic.

Like, I don't know what's next. But like if it happens in the news, it's going to happen to me. One of the and I'm happy.

I think when one of the times that we talked, which would have been before you went back to work, you didn't know what was going to happen. And so I told you. Yeah. Yeah. And I just didn't know that you'd gone back and whether it was the same place.

And I sort of peeked into the devotions for a few minutes. And so I heard you talk about turning your son's room and Jack's room into your office and devotion place.

- [3 : 20] And and so when I heard that you was your workspace, I was like, wait, I need to ask you about this. It's lovely. I'm sitting right in front of the window. I can see the neighborhood.
- I'm not going to want to give it back. He comes back at Thanksgiving. I'm just going to lend it to him. That's right. That's why Roy's going mine in the basement. Ah, they when I one of the blessings and challenges twice, I got a message from Adrian.
- Let me check. I'm sorry.
- OK, it's OK. He's. There's there's two different settings in terms of this layout.
- And typically what would happen is that once we went to live stream, people would be able to hear you, but only see me.
- [4 : 32] And right now they're seeing all three of us, which Adrian said isn't a problem as long as it's what we want. And that's kind of up to the two of you in terms of whether you're OK with it.
- I'm fine with it. I'm OK. As long as Jack's not watching. Hi, Jack. They when I was the first time I was appointed to a church in Rochester in Penfield, it was kind of at the tail end of the demise of Kodak was largely the worst of it had passed, but the victims were everywhere.
- And all of us. OK, hold on. Just doing what doing what the boss tells me.
- He knows what he's talking about. He's sure done. Way better than than I do. He's awesome. He really is.
- He's a gem. All right. All right. They. So there were so many people who had lost their jobs.
- [5 : 51] And then a number of years later, after being a super, I left there to be a superintendent. And then I came back to south of Rochester after being a superintendent.
- And there was so now it's well passed and the economy has improved. But there are still people who had either retired or had worked their whole lives with Kodak.
- But at Penfield, there was a man who literally found his ministry with other men who had lost their identity, who had you know, they were the primary providers for their families.
- And they didn't know what it would be like to not have a job and not be able to support their family. And so he had gone through that and had found a job.
- And so he began this really intentional ministry of seeking out men who had were going through these experiences to help to help them because.
- [6 : 57] They're men and and he he taught me a lot, not that I probably didn't know it before, but I had no need to articulate it, that for for many of us, our identity is it is in what we do.
- The difference with women is that we also claim is our identity mothers and providers in our own right. But it's a very diverse sense of identity, whereas men surely their fathers, if they are and husbands.
- But they're not there. They're they're not wired in terms of our culture for their their identity to be too far away from what they do and how they provide.
- And my own father went through a period of of unemployment. And I began to realize that. When how frequently when we meet people, men or women, and we say, well, what do you do?
- And when what you do is laid off or unemployed or whatever it is, that that that that can that can create some shame. And so how do we rework the conversation around?
- [8 : 13] You know, you have Sherry saying your identities in Christ, which is the truth for anybody who is a person of faith. It's not necessarily what the world says.

Mm hmm. So, you know, Pastor Tom always had a funny story. I don't I don't think there are places in the villages, but he talked about the villages down in Florida.

And he said, you go from being employed and everybody says, what do you do to down in the villages? Everybody says, what do you play? What's your card game of choice?

What do you play? That's right. That's right. And that. Oh, there's a more recent kind of ball that they play. Oh, pickleball. Yeah. Yes.

It. So it's good to me. You do play pickleball. Right. Right. In their their golf carts and things like that. So we're we're going to spend this evening in Hebrews 11, which is probably one of the best known because it has the the litany of the saints story of all the faithful.

[9 : 25] And so we're going to get there just as we did last week. But we're going to start by looking at ourselves. And as we think about how these the writer of Hebrews decided on these people, you know, we know there could be way more.

But these are the people. They were great people of faith. So the question I want to pose to you is what how how do you define faith?

What if you faith is? What? Trust in God. Believing in something you can't see.

Just confidence. I think the belief that God exists. Without proof, like you said, very much.

So the next question about what is faith is what is faith look like? If you think about people that you know that you consider to be sort of some of the people that you think are people of great faith, what does that?

[10 : 45] What are the characteristics that that make that the case? I always talk about peace that passes understanding. I always believe my father always has had that, you know, just and as a young person, I was I was wrestling with a lot of things.

And I just would think of, you know, he doesn't have the most glamorous life, but he has this peace that I believe is from God. Yeah, that. So what what characteristics does he have that show you that?

How do you know? How do you know? Yeah, he's just comfortable with himself, I think. And probably a lot of that comes with age, too. But just a trust that things will work out and that there's a bigger plan and things might be hard at a certain time.

But that in the end, it's it's all worth it. And and Jesus wins and we win. And yeah. And I think you can sometimes just feel that from people that feel that sense of they're not worried about tomorrow in the way that some people are worried about tomorrow.

They're true to themselves, true to their values. So what else? Linda, did anything come to mind? My dad came to mind.

[12 : 08] He was always very wise, man of few words. But when he spoke, you listened.

And also my sister in law who passed away from ALS last year, she was the ultimate if there was a picture of the fruit of the spirit, Linda's face would be there.

Just. That was just her. Yeah. Peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness all the way through self control.

Yeah. And all through her ALS, my brother set up until she couldn't smile and could literally couldn't smile anymore.

She was smiling and laughing and joking. Yeah. And just always had that faith. Always had that trust and knew where she was going.

[13 : 16] Mm hmm. Without a doubt. It's pretty beautiful. I think some of the people that I have known and I there are too many to count and I think that I don't think it's a disadvantage necessarily that they're not in my family.

And that in terms of I don't have anybody that was near to me growing up who could show me that. But it also meant in some ways because of my eagerness to find it, I saw it in so many other people along the way.

And they just that sense like like you said, Kelly, I know people who they know who there are.

They are. They are. They don't apologize for who they are. They don't think less of themselves, but they don't build them. They don't build themselves up in front of people.

They're the same. They're the same person of faith that you would see in their backyard as in their front yard or at church. They're the same person of faith that they're the same person of faith.

[14 : 25] And that their presence is open. Presence is open for other people because they're their own stuff isn't taking up so much room inside of them that they're open to whoever's whoever's in front of them.

And that is a is a it comes from faith. It comes from I don't have to worry whether somebody likes me or of course the people, the one woman who comes to mind.

There wasn't anybody who didn't like her because there wasn't even when she talked about the times when she get mad at her sons. She had polio and she was confined to a wheelchair.

And so she ended up doing most of the work raising her four sons because her husband traveled and people were would be like, oh, I can't believe that she has to raise these boys by herself.

Oh, she was a woman of great grace and openness, but she could wrangle those boys like nobody's business. They knew they were smart enough to know to be afraid.

[15 : 31] Right. She would get them into their bedrooms so they'd be on their bed and her wheelchair would be there and there was no getting away from the conversation, which would lead to prayer and all would be well.

But it just she was an amazing, an amazing woman. They have you ever heard a speaker or a person, preacher, motivational speaker?

It doesn't even sometimes there's a person who speaks that you feel the faith, even if they don't articulate it. But that someone who moves you or has moved you.

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Let's see. There's Patsy Claremont. There's Lucy Swindoll, who passed away, by the way. Oh, did she? Yeah. I knew she was.

I knew she was. Yeah. Hovering. Today or yesterday. Um, all those, uh, Angie, is it Angie Smith? Okay. Yeah.

[16 : 35] Her husband is in Selah. Oh, yeah. Yep. Yeah. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Yeah. Um, Lori Jagow at times too, just the way she tells her testimony and her story of her son.

Mm hmm. Yeah. Um, some of the people, some of the big speakers and performers and things like that, um, that we see as models of faith.

We don't actually know how they live their lives. We don't know how genuine it is. And, and in recent weeks, I've heard of two very significant music people who have fallen from grace and it's, uh, one of them is David Haas who wrote here I am and be not afraid.

Um, and that was, that was just devastating to me. And the other one is Chris rice. Really? Yeah. I haven't heard either one of those all. Oh, so it's, it's in the reason I bring them up is because it creates in us this turmoil.

Mm hmm. Wait. So we look at these mentors, these teachers, these leaders and guides who, whether they've written music or preach sermons or whatever.

[18 : 09] Um, not talking about the names that, that you mentioned, Linda, that we sometimes find ourselves in a position of being so disappointed when we find that what we thought we saw wasn't what we saw or what we saw was real, but it's a person who just fell, who just simply lost their way.

Um, right. Yeah. David did. Yeah. There are many, many in the Bible that we can see who lost their way.

Um, and so what are the kinds of life experiences that we might encounter that make us worry or wonder about our faith?

We've talked a little bit about this before, but like wondering, do I believe, am I sure I believe? Um, how, how might we find ourselves in not in a position of falling from grace like that so dramatically, but I think that we all fall from grace at least an inch or two on occasion.

Um, yeah, I think anytime, you know, especially when somebody passes away, you know, even if it's somebody not necessarily that close to you, it makes you confront your own humanity and think, do I know for sure where I'm going and that there is something beyond this life that really does make you question.

[19 : 46] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. The first time I saw a dad carry this little tiny casket to a grave.

Um, there was, I, I, I didn't, I didn't doubt my faith, but there was this God, I'm telling you, you know, you, you better help these parents.

You better be holding that baby. Um, and I don't necessarily have any doubt, but I think there are some things that we see, um, or experience that we just can hardly believe that it's real, that this kind of suffering, um, happens.

Um, yeah. So I think that there's a, I don't know if you remember this, but there was, uh, the story of the Chilean miners who were underground for 70 days and the, their shift supervisor.

Um, I wouldn't be able to pronounce his name. Um, Louie or Zua, but I'm sure that's not how you say it. He underground organized, supported, um, encouraged and, um, prayed with and prayed for all of those miners to try to keep them, not just from dying, which of course is very important, but to not try to keep them from wanting to die from keeping that to keeping them, um, in a place where they, they believed that it would, they were going to be rescued.

[21 : 31] And we can imagine that for a couple of weeks. I mean, as awful as, as that might be, I mean, it took them two weeks to even find out there was anybody in there. And then, um, and then all the more days that it took to actually get them out.

But one of the things that they talk about in this story of those miners is that they, the feeling, we can't know the truth, but the feeling above the ground was that once they got any clue that there were people there that were alive, they, they never gave up thinking that they would eventually get to them and help them to get out.

And that the people in the mine, um, as weak and in bad condition as they were, uh, primarily this, this shift supervisor, can you imagine?

I mean, you're just in charge of the shift. You're just doing your job. And then you end up being in that position. And, um, I'm guessing that there were times when they doubted.

Yeah. Um, maybe they didn't doubt God, but I'm guessing they might've doubted that they were going to survive. Um, or if they prayed to God to be rescued and they were still there the next day.

[22 : 52] Um, that, that mindset of, I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe for 70 days. Um, I consider that to be a pretty remarkable test.

Yeah. Yeah. I'm guessing that there are other stories that are, um, different in some manner where it doesn't have a happy ending. And people believed and they believed and they believed.

Um, I always think about when I think about 9-11 and I think about the people who knew they weren't going to survive and, um, that, that sense of, they know this is going to happen.

It's going to happen. Um, and that sense of, we can't know, I believe, I believe, I believe we can only hope and pray that that's, that was the reassurance they had as they saw things unfold.

And we can think of a number of other circumstances. I was telling Sherry when we were looking at confirmation that around, um, the Columbine shooting many years ago, one of the biggest earlier big ones.

[24 : 08] There was a young woman who, who died, but her. The understanding, first of all, she was a Christian and that her, her sort of last moments were still moments of faith.

And so there was a whole like campaign among the Christian community. Um, say yes. I remember. Do you remember that? I do too.

We, we changed up our whole confirmation, um, to be, uh, the service itself and the last few weeks to being say yes, say yes.

If to the parents, to the kids. Um, and I think that, that it was kind of like that moment of that.

We don't know. We don't know what we're promised. We don't know what could happen outside on the curb or whatever. Um, so say yes, when you have the chance, um, hopefully a genuine yes, but just such powerful stories of life and death.

[25 : 18] And we, we hope and trust a resurrection, not physical resurrection here, but resurrection and, and with God and with that healing.

Um, that was such a powerful story. I remember like questioning myself. Would I be as strong as this young girl was? Mm-hmm.

Who, uh, cause I, I think the gunman gave the impression that if you said no, he would spare your life. And if you said yes, he would kill you. And I thought, right. I truly hope that I would say yes.

I say, I will say yes, but yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Um, it's, we, we hope that we won't be put in that position.

Um, and I think it's okay to be inspired by others who are, um, trusting that we most likely won't ever be in that position. But I think it's a very helpful question to ask ourselves, not in a blaming or I couldn't or I wouldn't, but that, that, that reassurance of, I hope, I hope, I pray that I would say, um, what was true and honest for myself.

[26 : 37] Um, I don't know. Um, so part of what we're going to do is, uh, first of all, we're just gonna, we're gonna, um, we're just gonna go through, uh, Hebrews 11.

Um, just looking at it, not reading it, just kind of taking your eyes down and, um, take turns saying the names of the people that are listed here.

And so there may be some that might be at the beginning of a sentence and their names really clear. There might be some that are later that we might miss, but we'll together, we'll catch them all.

Um, are you all right with that? Yep. I'm gonna start and, um, Abel. Yeah.

Enoch. Noah. Abraham. Isaac. And Jacob. Yeah. Um, Sarah. And Jacob. Um, Sarah. And Jacob.

[27 : 47] Um, Sarah. And Jacob. Um, Sarah. And Jacob. Yeah. Um, Sarah. And Jacob. And Jacob. Yeah. Um, Sarah.

Um, I think that's the. Oh, okay. Joseph. Uh, we, we already said, did we say Abraham? Yep.

But okay. So, and then there's Isaac, Jacob. Uh, Jacob. Uh, Jacob. Joseph. Okay. Moses. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Mm-hmm. I don't see his name. mm-hmm i don't see his name but joshua because of jericho falling jericho's right jericho's listed good one and rahab the prostitute rahab yeah and then um gideon barack samson jephthah david samuel prophets what based on just what you know about the ones you're familiar with um are you familiar with all the names i think so yeah i'm trying to help yeah um which which of the ones do that are listed here do you think face the most adversity in their uh struggle to be faithful and some of that might depend on how you define struggle or adversity joseph for sure yeah i'm thinking abraham i was just gonna say abraham being asked to leave his land and fall and sacrifice his son yeah that's that's the biggest one that's that's uh yeah that's a that's a big one um yeah yeah yeah i was thinking you know noah had to risk all the ridicule ridicule and all these things but i think there's not much that tops you know trying to kill your own son and thinking god to do it yeah um um let's see moises's parents it's interesting like they're listed in verse 23 not just moises but they're not too much for parents but they were not afraid but they were not afraid yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah because they could have been killed all three of them yeah um they you know when i think about what moises endured trying to lead the people to the promised land um when we think of some of the the ridicule and the heckling sort of that noah got when he was building the ark oh my gosh putting moises in charge of people um and having to take them that far and we sometimes make light of the the whining and you know we'd rather die and you'd sort of think of this almost um almost humorous right because it gives you the impression of uh sort of spoiled people who don't have enough food and they don't da da da da but truly it likely had to be an incredibly incredibly hard journey the risk of taking them through the red sea um um right and it's um and not even making it it didn't even make it but the people that we're we talked about earlier when we talked about the people we named and we look at some of these people um

um not everybody got to finish what they were called to do not everybody got to rest in that place of faith and accomplishment um and that they they might have done everything god asked them to but then they died just look at the disciples and some of the the death that they endured after being so faithful and obviously that story wasn't written yet because you could imagine that if it was a story that was written after the the lives of the disciples you would surely hope that they would be on this list um and so what do you think the the rationale is of them of this listing of all of these people i think encouragement very much you know that like we even do today you know if they can do it you can do it just as an example yeah yeah and remember you go ahead go ahead no you i don't want to i was just say conversation and it also remember your roots and i think that i think that's a very powerful um the that that sense of i didn't come from right here i did not begin on the day that i was born um one of the things that there were some bishops in some eras of ordination that when you ordained i i missed it my husband got it but i missed it was they would they would go from your ordination so it would go from me to um bishop stith to bishop yakel and then go all the way back all the way back to one of the apostles um now how they do that i don't know um but that this person posted a picture of it on facebook recently when they were going through things um and i think that one of the one of the things that we sometimes have to be reminded of is our reach that we came from someplace and that it it may be you know both of you talk about your fathers but where did they come from and where did that person come from and you can just um i don't i'm not a person who has a lot of interest in genealogy for genealogy's sake i leave that to my son um who when we did all the 23 and me and all the the contacts and everything it's like talk to jordan talk to jordan talk to jordan but what does interest me are the stories the stories of faith where can i follow the how far back can i follow the journey of faith in my family and it kind of zigzags um because i was able to observe in the the gent my generation and their parents on both my mother's and my father's side you could almost at a glance you could see which families were people of faith um they they had their struggles with children and things that happened even addiction and death

[36 : 31] but they just there was just a difference there was a solidness in their family um that no matter how off things happened it was still there and i i can remember my own my mother's family there wasn't there was none of that to be found couldn't find it not biologically much of anywhere um and then there's of course matt's family and so that the some of the decisions about that the people that i'm related to and i can see i can see faith i can see faithful people uh not perfect people but people of faith in the way they live their lives and um you know my my father's mother was the daughter of a methodist minister but she bailed on all of it um he was preaching and back then you preached against grant drinking and dancing and smoking and jewelry and gambling you know you couldn't do anything um and she at a pretty young age decided to do everything um and she she married my grandfather on a dare he was a single school teacher and i'm guessing she was pretty outgoing and rowdy and i'm guessing that some people dared her you know see if you can get that school teacher um and she she didn't find whatever she whatever journey she might have been on she never found happiness or peace or even consolation but then there's her father and there's her father's um sister or brother that i know or knew um and you could sort of zigzag around and i found that to be just a wonderful story um in terms of it's not all happy it's not all pretty but if you can find the stories then you can go back and find maybe who who was a part of my faith that i never even met because of these generations right do either of you know where your dad's your father's your father's sort of faith story came from mine is definitely my dad's mom my grandma holmes and she was just yeah the most faithful woman and i didn't always like what she said but i think i mean she i loved her but i remember you know i a couple of times in high school when i would achieve something she'd say you know i hope you don't get conceited about that like give me a minute could i just have a minute okay thanks go ahead you ever say that to any of your either of your children no i told them that story you know i mean i just wanted her to say good job i'm i've always been a people pleaser but um you know she the funniest story in our family about her is um she and my grandfather made something for the last christmas dinner that we were all together i think was bread pudding and they forgot an ingredient like a baking um powder or something but they apparently together had decided that was never to be spoken of that it was gonna taste okay it was great and so we all were together and it ended up being her last christmas and my grandfather who could be a pistol said you know i'm glad you guys really like it because there's no baking powder in here and she said clifford clifford you are and we were like bracing ourselves you know we're like oh our

sweet little grandmother and she goes lower than the ants and then she came back and cried and apologized because she had said he was a little bit of the ants like that was the worst thing that she could think of we my brother always says the rest of us had a whole lot of words going through our but she couldn't think of them you know and it was her father um whose last name was nut walter nut my dad's named after him the nut family n-u-t-t that's my nuts but it was him who was really um he wasn't a minister i feel like there's a minister in his background but he was just a really gone somebody's ringing my doorbell oh that's you know that linda that's jack calling me on facetime yeah right better not answer that oh my goodness i wondered if that was your doorbell or hers yeah it's a perfect it was a perfect doorbell sound wasn't it it was like avon calling ding dong doesn't sound like that yeah mine doesn't work half the time but that's okay she probably wants to hear when she comes back about like your dad how your dad became a minister i won't i don't want to make you tell it twice but i'm curious yeah that is kind of a funny story i don't really remember well my granddad passed away before i was born my dad's dad uh-huh um kevin and sue were little when he passed away oh and i should probably just wait a minute but yeah i think my grandparents went to salem in tonawanda oh okay united methodist is that united methodist yeah sorry that's okay my doorbell only time it ever rings is when uh somebody's dropping a package and they usually if they ring the doorbell at all they just ring it and go right so i wasn't gonna go but then when it rang again it was actually autumn craft who thought that her parents something that was because of the time what she did like if it was after that she fell for because she's gonna lose her and it was like she's jamie did that's a lot of knights and she had to hold her on her but what she felt is like was like she was from winter um and that's um thehak bug which was like you sometimes no one Herren struggle and and she was like misscode you watch she saidje you know really she did one've all one more of those videos make eyes is that i've done it and i mentioned fashion everything samuel and she had to address relationship with the organisation and she has to relate to that and it was all well could see that i was on the computer she said tell the church i said hello oh that's so she looks good she looks really good oh yeah so did you talk about your family at all linda i started but i stopped i said my my dad's dad passed away before i was born and if i remember correctly because my grandmother my dad's mom i was in high school when she passed away i think she was a christian scientist for many years interesting but my dad and his brother were both raised catholic and when my uncle was always i'm going to be a priest i'm going to be a priest and my father his very first time at confession and the priest i don't remember exactly how it came about but he left the confession booth and said to himself how does that priest know what's in my heart and he turned his back on god and for it was a proclaimed atheist for a long time and when my younger brother was little my dad joined

the army and moved to california and my mother followed him out and they were going to there was a lutheran church out there having a seminar on creation so they went to argue for big bang evolution and atheism well jesus said uh-uh not tonight they came away and they gave their lives yeah they um accepted christ that night and it was a couple more years down the road when my dad was spending all of his time at the church lutheran church down in wellsville i believe it was and my mother said you're always at that church you're never home with me well it just so happens i love god more than i love you my mother said so then why don't you go be a pastor he said i will and that was the end of the story wow you know we we know that that we're supposed to love god more than then we love our families but we're not supposed to tell them that um they right we're not supposed to say that i don't know a hard time with that at times but i have come to realize that it's the truth but it is it's it's hard to yeah you just don't want to emphasize it with those if you don't want to articulate it yeah but um obviously they were married almost 54 years but um and i i think i was telling kelly i think that my mom's parents belonged to salem and in tonawanda so but i'm really not sure what all you know i think further back than that the other part of this is i i happened to start it by talking about my actual physical family and ancestry and faith i think that probably before i came to that revelation um actually i was already in ministry by then i was looking into my uh this grandfather who a great grandfather who'd been a pastor but in the meantime the people of faith who influenced me directly who were my faith family even though they were not biological um that offers yet a different set of stories about who are the people and how are we influenced by some of these people that aren't even they aren't even related to us um and so i think that we can look at our story and i think that sometimes we may find people might not find anything no matter where they look in their family they might not find the heroes of faith or the influence or the inspiration um chances are good they wouldn't be looking if they didn't already have some um and it's it's i think that uh we talk sometimes about there's our family by blood and then there's our family that we make our family and for me most of those people have come out of um relationships in a faith community um so it's you know it's an interesting it's an interesting thing to think about when we think about the legacy and they um they they we think about the heroes and how they understood god's plan and i dare say that when we read through this list

if we ask them if they could come be present with us now and we ask them did you understand what it was that god was trying to accomplish um i'm not sure that they they certainly would have only understood because they're all old testament they would have only understood the the the hint the spark of a promise but not the reality um i love watching your dog i'm so sorry no no no i i really like it i went to linda's house and got a cat fix and now i'm watching watching your dog and getting a dog bag my packages i gotta roll around um and so there's because we have this building story through the old testament and you can find in the the gems in the old testament of where the promise of jesus is mentioned um probably way more than i've ever found i'm guessing it's because we have the you know the whole handles messiah it's all built on the proclamation of jesus coming but jesus wasn't jesus yet um that we can know and so many other you know that's a piece of music but it comes obviously from scripture right so many other places that that there's the promise of jesus but not not how it's going to happen or not not any expectation that would happen to any of their lifetimes jesus but the legacy was still there it's just that they didn't know all of it because when we look at it um this one commentary says many of the earlier heroes grasped only a small part of the plan abraham hoped for family and land moises for freedom and a homeland for his people um and then it grew by the time david assumed the throne the prospect included a royal dynasty which became the basis for israel's hope in the messiah so you can see how it it builds um and and and and yet they didn't know they didn't know they didn't know or weren't able to experience um jesus and so we think about um even when we look at this story and we look at what we've read in hebrews and we're still only looking at the beginning of the story that we know we're we're you know yes we know the old testament to a great extent but the jesus story was just getting started when we read these words um from hebrews and i think that um god was sort of now kind of birthing this whole new thing in these these people who had heard the good news of jesus christ um and we think about when the author says when he talked about the when in verse 40 god provided something better for us so that they wouldn't be made perfect without us that's what mine said yeah same thing since god would plan something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect um it's it's it seems like we know by reading this and doing the study that we know that the people were bailing you're or thinking about some had already bailed out of christianity others were on that sort of uh iffy place i imagine of course we glamorize it i imagine what must it have

felt like to be there at the ground when the at the birth of the christian church and i think exciting and energy in the holy spirit when what we know is that it was a very difficult life and they were often persecuted but i still i still would would love to be able to um watch a part if there was something that jesus did what would what what story would you have would you love to put yourself in and actually physically see wow i just thought of that question i just wanted an amazing question gosh yeah the first story that comes to my mind is um the woman with the issue of blood and i i don't know if i can say why but that's because there was revelation on was sort of a jesus was amazed just like the woman was amazed and how long she had been faithful um and there's um the dedication and the the the hardness the hard life that she had experienced and as one author puts it she did what she had the power to do which is to get to jesus and touch him she couldn't so many things she wanted to come is she the one who touched his yeah yeah so that was i don't know if that would be the one i'd stay on but that's the first one that came to mind as you were talking i was thinking about the one where he um you know let them let him without sin throw the first stone i think oh yeah he's alter largely because i i'm still so intrigued by what he might have been writing in the dirt and somebody take a picture yeah right and they tell us so much but you know purposefully god didn't reveal that so or didn't leave it as a permanent record for us to know but maybe there's purpose in the unknown you know that we can each interpret it the way but i would love to be there and see what he was writing you know people i think you probably know so much i'm sure you know so much more one of the commentaries that i read said something about you know perhaps he was listing the sins of some of the men around or you know i don't know what else i don't know i think that and i think that people can speculate all they want but i don't think anybody that we know of really knows for sure um and we can't prove it now but i think about him writing their names for the sins because how would he know their names or did he write it's hard to say i think the sins um he probably would have needed some time for that but anyway i think we can think of all things all kinds of things that he might have might have written there did one come to you two came to me of course lazarus you know just the emotion that jesus went through himself he wept he cried he loved lazarus yeah even though he knew what he was going to be doing he still had that empathy for mary and martha and all those around and the other one was when he gave the widow her son back so they're both resurrection stories i just think of the one casting crown song that they do about um it's a song about peter and but that was then and this is now and how i saw you do all these things i saw a dead man take his breath how could i deny you how can i be the

[56 : 54] man i was before i like casting crowns yeah i like some of their music too and i think that it's um um when we think about the faith of these early heroes um who ultimately were heroes of an incomplete faith and yet they they and their stories were what god wanted us to hear they were to be known and to be listed as the heroes in the biblical story in the old testament and i i also um have to believe that the people listening would have known those names they would have known those stories if they had been faithful jews they would have known these stories and so by bringing up people that they know and how great their faith their faith was of course i'm not sure how that convinces someone to leave judaism but he's he's connecting the author is connecting i know what you know and i know that that's not the end of the story so he's he's kind of bringing them once again kind of reeling them in with i get it i get it but that's not the end of the story the end of the story is the good news of jesus christ don't don't give up and i think that we people for all these hundreds and thousands of years are still inspired by the same old testament um heroes why else would every vacation bible school i've ever seen use the old testament because they do so often that jesus is in there but so often the stories are old testament and i used to wonder well why is that i don't really know other than um they make for better maybe vbs scenery huh there's scenery better scenery adventure i mean you don't read in the gospels about people hiding in the mountains and people running and huge things happening like people turning into pillars of salt and the red sea passing you don't read that kind of stuff in the new testament yeah and you can't talk about the water into wine no yeah no we talked about that when i i went to to youth group on sunday evening to serve communion to them and we did a different different we did it the whole consecration and we actually had real bread and real juice um but the liturgy that i used it had included because it's from scotland it had included mostly wine instead of juice or we talk about the fruit of the vine or whatever we want to call it um so i changed some of them but i didn't change all of them and something early on one of the young men said something about well it's it's the wine the wine is blood right and so well not exactly but you know and so he was talking and interestingly um as the conversation unfolded i had the chance to explain to all of them that it did used to be wine and this is that's what they would have been drinking at the table and um this particular liturgy made it clear that that this was at the end of the meal they'd already eaten they'd eaten lamb they'd probably eaten some vegetables that had bread and that this is what was left on the table that they did communion it

wasn't a beautiful loaf that was just all perfect it would have been what was left from the meal um and then i explained to them how it is that we came to have grape juice instead of wine um and helped introduce them to mr welch because mr welch from welch's grape juice was a big influencer in um not drinking no alcohol use this grape juice yeah wasn't he a methodist too was he yeah yeah yeah so it was uh it was it was it was fun to be it was really nice to be with them um i think they found it fascinating yeah yeah it was it was at the end of youth group and so there was a certain amount of time factor and then there was the hard copies i didn't know that adrian could put it up on the screen or i would have it would have taken me seconds to have emailed it to him have him bring it up on the screen but no i'm up in the office copying and copying and copying and things are one side of the page goes that way the other side of the page goes this way um but it was still it was it was wonderful to be able to do communion and have it be a conversation and and also um to be able to say okay who wants to read and let them read parts of the consecration um so that's awesome um so we think about in um and what does your hebrews 12 1 say we're not going to go into 12 but what does verse 1 say it therefore therefore go ahead linda therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us fixing our eyes on jesus the pioneer and perfecter of faith it it could easily be verse 41 in hebrews 11 yeah um i mean it does follow obviously if you're reading it then you go to one in verse verse 12 but i think that this that i think that uh chapter 11 is a great description of a cloud of witnesses yeah absolutely that's some of that is why the invitation for us to consider you know who are our clouds of witnesses um and we're not at the end of our lives so that we're not uh not necessarily in that mindset where we're thinking about what we leave behind but we can be aware of just how many people biblical and real life and the written word whether it's scripture or other places that are a part of our cloud of witnesses um which then create this this motivation to run the race with perseverance don't give up don't give up you have all these people behind you don't give up um and that i think that that verse verse one in chapter 12 is it's one of my very favorite and it's one of my um favorite ones to to use to to observe that a person had run their race they had accomplished their call they had followed the the cloud of witnesses it usually that would be in a funeral but

um but i also told someone today who um they were describing they were talking about stubbornness and i said it sounds like the spiritual gift of perseverance which of course isn't one of the listed spiritual gifts but i'm sure it's implied in there and um in that sense of um it's okay to give up for a minute it's okay to recognize everything doesn't depend on me sometimes it's helpful if we recognize how little depends on us um your fuzzy friend back there he depends on you and dan um and your cats and things like that um but the well-being of the world does not um depend on us and in ministry uh sometimes people will say um did i talk to you about baptism about the baptisms i'm doing at the church yes you did mention that you're doing a lot um trying to think what as a ministry that it's changed it's a change from the previous practice which was really which is a it's a it's not everywhere but it's a relatively common practice um and i can remember being challenged about that and i said you know if even one person in all of those that was about weddings or baptisms i can't remember i said if even one of those people even one even one if their life is changed because the door opened and they came through it and they found their way to god then isn't all of that worth it isn't it worth it amen and especially i can say that because it's me doing the work you know it's me doing the work with the couples and doing or the parents or whatever so um if it's so it's easier for me to say that because it's um it's my hope and if it ever takes away from anything else that i'm called to do then uh then that's maybe a different story but we're all called to different parts of the mission field mm-hmm absolutely that's how i felt too when i was at gawanda if just one person in that congregation needed to hear the message that god had given me for that week and i was doing what god needed me to do and if nobody says it you just hope and pray that god will use whatever you said um because god will and god did um in ways that we we never even know about um and it's it's just a something something to behold um they um one of the things that there's a woman karen armstrong who wrote a book called the spiral staircase and she notes that religion like faith is not about accepting 20 impossible propositions before breakfast but about doing things that change you abraham got up and left home moses turned his back on royal privilege jesus laid down his life in doing these things they changed not only their own lives but the world and they moved us all a step closer to god's desire their models of faithfulness can help us live worthy lives and give us hope to reach the final goal that they saw only from

a distance um and then we are called to keep going that that same distance and so if we went to each one of these people that are named and went back and read their story we would not only read what they did in faithfulness we would read what they walked away from what did they have to do to be faithful and i wish we also knew more about the lives that the disciples had before jesus went around and called them um some people will say that when jesus called them it didn't mean that they came by themselves some people will say that they brought their family maybe not everywhere they went but there's descriptions of the um settings where it you might think it's just the disciples but it probably wasn't just the disciples um we don't know who those people are but i would be interested you know is that is um is that do we hold up their lives as individual people who follow jesus um without ties without connections um is that have any influence on the celibacy of priests i mean i know jesus is the primary um thing because of the the belief that jesus was celibate um but what about the disciples if if they did in fact go by themselves then that meant they abandoned their families or their homes or maybe they didn't have them i don't know but i would we know it's gonna say we know peter did because didn't jesus go and heal peter's mother-in-law was it peter um i believe you're right we know that jesus had siblings that you know however you want to call them you might call them step brothers or whatever but they're they're the siblings we know that mary and joseph had other children um so it's the question is what was the other choice what was the other way um do you do you ever have you ever been in a place in your life where you've looked back and said if i hadn't if i hadn't found jesus if i hadn't come to faith where might i be yeah i have mm-hmm and a story for another day but i'll tease you with it is in college i dated a young man who was mormon i try to make it clear that at the time i dated him he was not a practicing mormon but he was raised in a very um strict mormon family and as a matter of fact married one of my sorority sisters and she became mormon um but i often think about it was a that was probably like one of the bigger trials of my faith um just that i knew that that was not for me but it was so appealing he was so appealing because he had wonderful morals and right you know they really do they they're very disciplined people they're you know there's a lot of good that goes with it his family wanted to embrace me it becomes like you know a little group that they help you find jobs they get you into schools it's you know i don't mafia-esque or you know um that's probably not

great to say either well it's it's just a different culture yeah but they take care of their own they really do they they certainly do you know and and that was what made him so appealing to me you know but i i went through it all i think they had me go meet with the mormon bishop and it was just it um it really that's what really solidified that no i am a christian this is not for me as handsome as he might be and as what wonderful morals he has it's still not for me you know so um it was an it was a really interesting time um from salt lake city mormon so like really really more so when you met the mormon bishop did you go to salt lake city yes wow i was in salt lake to see his family and they had me meet with him alone which was really i mean i was 20 years old and i'd be terrified i was and they and i had it was the late 80s early 90s probably maybe 90 and i i had on like long shorts and and uh tights and a big jacket and that was not appropriate so his mother gave me a dress to wear so i am i'm wearing his mother's dress i'm sitting in the office talking to this like 60 year old man and the the the best thing was i'm i'm a big crier but i would i would did not want him to see me cry and i tried to just be very you know straightforward with him and one of their tenants as you probably know is that they believe that marriage continues into heaven exactly as it is on earth and so they say like marriage is forever and he tried to really get me as a young woman i say because he said you know don't you think that it's it's wonderful that rob wants to marry you forever like forever not just this earthly life and i with the deadpan face i said to him i just thought maybe we'd give it 50 60 years trial basis and he said i think we're done and you sent me out oh my goodness and then i burst into tears you were expelled from the bishop's office well yeah and the women were they were on one side of the church and the men were on the other and i was a young college very feminist young woman and i was so mad i'm like what are those men discussing over there work because we were discussing recipes and sewing and child rearing and it was really something it was a real window into totally different cultural that's um it's it's quite why did i bring that up what did you ask that i brought that up for i can't remember oh where would the path that we would have taken oh that if we if we did not follow um or find a path of faith where might we have gone so that was that's where that's where that came from yeah yeah did you know reverend sellers the senior reverend sellers ron he was my parents pastor at northridge church while all of this was going on and they had me go to him too and he was very wise to talk with um he was not as hard to speak with he was just pretty soft and accessible kind of a person yeah it was an interesting time yeah and i give my parents so much credit because they let me figure it out on my own and to this day i say to them why didn't you say like what are you doing you know and they said we

[77 : 04] just knew that you would probably like him more if we forbid you or we told you that it was wrong or and i'm like oh i don't know that i'm gonna have that restraint you know as a parent i'm gonna be like oh it's it's very it's very difficult um yeah it does and you watch your kids grow up and um i think from a i think we we as people of faith who raise our children in the church we have hopes for or well we have a picture in our mind of what that's going to look like for our children that they will find the person that they love and that they will find a church home or stay in the one they grew up in um something like that and it's uh i think as we talked about before when linda talked about how hard it is when you're your dad you want to be have your dad as a pastor and you know things like that and and my kids used to be able to get away with saying that they're they can't they can't do that anymore i haven't been their pastor in so long um but to watch to stand back and watch them be on their journey and um and as i i said last week to hear to hear sarah talking about god and to hear jeff's mother talking about god and but if we push or we make it a thing i think that maybe there's a sense that some of that feels okay because they know that we're pastors but we didn't bring it up they just know it's a safe topic um right i suppose i fortunately haven't been challenged with the idea that it's a safe topic that means that they could say terrible things that would be really hard but that's not not what happened yeah so and kelly my mother was the one to voice her opinion very strongly which is probably why i made some of the decisions i made in my life but it's also why i might just say something subtle to scotty and let it go and put it in god's hands sometimes sometimes it's hard but i have found that that is what works best yeah i'm preparing myself to just let them let them find their way you know yeah i think it's it's one of those places that where you are kelly is then in that place that will continue to be um a message is i was faithful and i did the best that i could and you'll be you and dan will be there for them always and that's no matter where our children find themselves i think that um helping them to know why are we so strong what gives us the love that overcomes difficulties uh they they they don't forget that um and they don't forget the church that birthed them um into that into that experience my oldest son who might poo poo some of the people in the church that he grew up in um at harris hill as being kind of conservative and narrow-minded and there certainly were people that were quite conservative um but they never didn't love him they they never the the children and the youth just like in pendleton um they grew up and they were loved no matter what and so even in this recent hospitalization they are the ones who sent him cards some of the ones but when when when i said suggested to a couple of people that being in

there for seven weeks that it might be good if he got some mail um it was somebody from the harris hill church who got right on it because they know him they've known him since he was 12 and so it's just um they might even reject it but it's not gone it's it's just a temporary not practicing right um and that we don't know maybe they'll come a day when any one of our children when some pastor um in a virtual bible study says what's your faith what's your who are the heroes in your faith and oh my gosh i hope that somehow even if i'm in heaven i have ears to hear that that that they look back at us and said that we were part of what influenced them in their lives they would say it now but there's not some pastor other than me that's going to ask the question right now um so um so we're we're going to next next week we'll do the last chapter of hebrews and um so there's a couple of things that i just wanted to um so i wanted to finish up with in terms of the some some direction and one is there's there's sort of two parts one is continuing because i plan on continuing the bible study no matter what it is that we decide and no matter who's here um and they uh we have we have a choice of going into another book of the bible um or letter or whatever it is that that we feel so moved to do um um and then the question is during for example during advent do we want to do something that's more geared to advent um just putting it out there i'm very open um i am too yeah so we'll just you'll just go where i lead you yeah all right all right and i i guess now i have an opinion but i was thinking you know there's so much about advent in the services and things that um maybe if there's something that is not you know purely advent focused but that's a little bit i think there's so much in the bible that i don't know i feel like i'm probably being overly confident but the the christmas story and the build up and the advent i study a lot but there's so much i haven't studied and i think that that makes perfectly good sense um is there any book of the bible that particularly intrigues you hmm gospels or um an old testament i mean just generally you don't have to pick something but what kind of neighborhood i'm i may decide something that's not what you say but i'm just interested in what you have to say linda when you did that i have not done the disciple classes one or two when you did those was um was there a book or books that that you found like that you hadn't studied that you were really glad that you did or it was it actually wasn't when i was doing disciple it was when i was out at gawanda um part of the lectionary took us through parts of job and i always dreaded job until i had to write sermons on job and then it's like i think i get it now um i don't know that that's one that we would really want to get into

in a bible study but um and with disciple one maybe maybe uh i think job is very interesting it maybe would be better when the world around us isn't in such a bad place yes right i told mary i started reading job when the pandemic began and she said oh my gosh why would anybody want to read that during the pandemic i'm like well put it in perspective you know like that's you know it's also sometimes better if you read that out of the message oh yeah sometimes books like that are easier to get through yeah when you're reading the message but or even even side by side you know yeah to have to read um an rsb or something um and to have anyway to have some different different right yeah so all right well because part of the advantage the advantage of not going in the direction of advent is that um is that whatever we start doesn't have to either be interrupted or whatever that we just kind of we just go yeah yeah that's yeah that's fine all right it's the the are the the content the questions the exploration is this kind of style um helpful i like i'm enjoying it yeah me too okay and kelly i'm enjoying being able to have a bible study with you i know you know i shouldn't probably say this publicly on the on the internet but this would normally be choir time 7 8 30 and i so i've never done a bible study at church so i'm selfishly enjoying enjoying it um yeah there are some of those things that we find ourselves having access to that we didn't right yeah um so all right well my dog wouldn't be here and let except that dan is not here she is tied to dan with a very short leash she adores him and he went to go see a soccer game a couple of the young men um from our bible study the team oh i think he might have just come home he has the most in tune ears she like i don't exist when he's around but when but when you're around then you're it and he's not yeah all right well um i uh offer god's blessing to both of you as you go out into this night and whoever might be listening to us out there on the live stream blessings and blessings and it's good to be together um i look forward to when we're together again yes awesome thank you thank you i love you um so it fail it

About it so it it I so