



HEROES FROM HEBREWS

Got Faith? – Hebrews 11:1–3
Jon Culver | May 20, 2018



I want to start with the idea that our planet has been invaded by superheroes. I don't know if you knew that or not, but it has. Not in the way it happened with "The Avengers," that group of individuals from different worlds who came together to fight good versus evil. Our superheroes haven't come to this world in a physical way. Rather, they've come in the form of the obsession our culture has with superheroes.

You don't believe me? "The Avengers" has already made almost \$1.5 billion, and it's estimated to make almost \$2 billion by the end of its run. I believe it is the third installment of "The Avengers"—I'm not actually as much of a Marvel Comic nerd as some of you might be, but I tried to learn something along the way as I watched the movies.

"The Avengers" comes on the heels of "Black Panther," which came out a few months ago and has also made a lot of money, in the billions range, and the guess is that those two movies together will make about \$4 billion. That right there is a lot of hero worship—and that's just with two movies. Marvel Comics actually has 15–20 movies out so far, so the total is upwards of \$15 billion—and that's just on the movies. That's not including the T-shirts and figurines and the happy meals and all the stuff they brand and market to us. We are obsessed with them. I get that to a certain level. I'm drawn toward hero figures. We want to believe that there is some power out there that's protecting us and fighting evil.

I was reminded of this even as I heard the news of another tragic school shooting this past week, where more kids were the victims of senseless violence. It makes sense that some of us would like to escape to a world where good does conquer evil. I get why the world longs to believe in heroes.

And that's just talking about Marvel. There is also Justice League, Superman, Batman, X-Men, the Incredibles. There's all kinds of stuff out there. We long for heroes. I'd love to take time to interact with you a little bit today to find out who your favorite superheroes are and why. It would be interesting to see what answers you would give. Of course, there would only be one right answer to who the greatest superhero is, at least from my viewpoint, and that's Batman.

I realize some of you are going to have a hard time listening to the rest of this sermon, because you're a Spiderman or X-man fan, so this is really going to bother you. Or you might just be wondering how I can hear from the Holy Spirit while I'm wearing my Batman T-shirt. I kind of apologize for that, but when else can I wear a Batman shirt and preach, and it actually kind of works?

What makes a superhero a superhero? I think if we collected your responses to that question, we'd find that these are individuals who often have flaws. They're complex people who aren't perfect. Many of them are trying to overcome things from their past or other obstacles and fears—fear of spiders or bats or whatever. Some of them have had relational issues. They might be trying to compensate for something, or they're trying to find some level of redemption for themselves or someone else. All of them seem to have some sort of faith in a higher power.



Today we're kicking off a series called "Heroes from Hebrews." Over the next few months we'll be looking at some heroes of a different kind, those found in Hebrews 11—what's often called "The Hall of Faith" chapter. As we look at these men and women, we'll try to understand why their faith qualified them to be mentioned in this list by the author of Hebrews.

You see, many of these "heroes of the faith" have some of the same characteristics as the superheroes we just described. They were flawed. They were complex. They may have been overcoming something from their past that was difficult. They were in search of redemption and they were trying to follow God in the midst of some hard circumstances. Ultimately they had faith in something that was so much bigger than themselves.

As you'll hear over the next week, these heroes were definitely flawed. We see that they included adulterers, prostitutes, drunkards, murderers. These were some big-time sinners. They were men and women who indulged in inappropriate and dysfunctional relationships. Yet even though they messed up, in key moments they displayed some incredible faith in God, believing that He would be faithful to keep His promises. There is something we'll see in these individuals that we need to understand and grasp.

Yet if you're like me, this whole idea of faith is a little hard to put our arms around. What is faith? What does it look like? What are its characteristics? We talk about faith all the time, but do we really understand what it means? People use the word all the time—and not just Christians. Someone will say, "I have faith that such and such will happen." They believe something will take place, even if they don't tie that belief to God. Some of us have more faith in a superhero than we do in God—or more faith in ourselves or in others.

So what is faith? What does authentic faith look like? As I was thinking about this, I came across a true story that seems to illustrate this in a way that at least made sense to me. It's a story about two siblings, a brother and sister. The brother, who was older, was trying to convince his sister that if she just believed enough, she could take an umbrella and it would lift her into the air. Maybe they had just watched *Mary Poppins*, who by the way is definitely a superhero in my estimation, based on the fact that she could fly and work with children.

This brother told his sister that if she believed, her umbrella could lift her. The girl wanted to have faith, so she went to the roof of a barn and jumped off. What happened? I'd love to say she floated, but she didn't. She fell. It knocked her out and gave her a minor concussion.

What was wrong? Did that little girl not have enough faith? If she had just believed harder, would it have made a difference? No. Why not? Because the object of her faith couldn't do what she was believing it could. To me, this illustration helps us understand how we often approach faith. "If I just tried harder, if I just did more good than bad, if I just believed more, then God would prosper me." This applies to however we see the word "prosper" applying to our lives: financially, relationally, in our marriages, with our children. "My kids will be successful. I'll get the house I've always wanted. Maybe I'll get the promotion at work, if I just have faith that God wants me to be happy, safe and comfortable." Of course, in many ways God does give us these things, but He ultimately desires that our hearts will trust and have faith in Him.

So we'll be looking at these questions today using our text in Hebrews 11:1–3. My goal this morning is to set the stage for the rest of this series by looking at these verses to discover what the author of Hebrews has to say about faith. Maybe by understanding what authentic faith actually is we'll be able to answer the question "Got faith?" So what are the characteristics of faith as it's described in Hebrews?

First, let me give you a little context for the book of Hebrews as whole. The letter to Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians in Palestine. The term "Hebrews" was used only to describe the people of Israel who actually lived in Palestine. Everywhere else, Jewish Christians were referred to as Jews. This letter then reflects the situation faced by the Jewish Christians in Palestine in the ten-year period before the Romans destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

We don't know definitively who wrote this book, as no author is mentioned. I'm not sure why that is. For most of church history, it has been believed that the Apostle Paul wrote it, because much of its language and timing and allusions are similar to his other writings. It could also have been something he shared with Luke at some point, or perhaps something written by Barnabas or Apollos. What we can be sure of is that the Holy Spirit is ultimately the Author, so we can trust what it says.

Hebrews was written to encourage Jewish Christians who were being persecuted and were thus being tempted to return to the Jewish religion. The writer took great care to show that the old Jewish faith had been completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He also showed how the religion of Christ is far superior to anything that Judaism offered. He encouraged his readers to put their faith

and trust in Jesus alone, because Jesus fulfilled everything the law required but was in itself incapable of accomplishing. Jesus was the better Mediator of a better covenant.

Join me in reading Hebrews 11:1-3:

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the people of old received their commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

My goal today is simply to create a foundation for the rest of this series. We're going to look at some characteristics of faith that will provide a framework for our ongoing study. This will help us evaluate how faith is displayed in the lives of the heroes we'll look at. Even more, it will help each of us evaluate where our faith is. Have we "got faith?" Is it authentic faith, or does our faith need a small adjustment—or even a radical overhaul?

Personally, God has had me on a faith journey over the past few years. I've had some struggles—physically, relationally, spiritually, emotionally and financially. God has called our family to take some steps in faith. So I'm living in this with you right now. I don't stand before you thinking I've figured it all out, that my faith is complete and I'm just going to tell you how it works. If you hear nothing else today, here's what I want you to know: Faith is hard, but God is trustworthy and deserves our faith.

I know there are several kinds of people here today. There are those of you whose faith is strong. It's not that you don't have issues or that you haven't been through some difficult days. At least for today, you're encouraged; you have an enduring faith and you're trusting God. I pray that you will be encouraged to go even deeper and farther in your faith journey as we move forward.

For others, your faith is a bit shaky right now. It's been a hard week, a hard year, a hard life. You may profess to believe in God, but you're struggling to live that out. You're facing some hard tests and you may even be questioning what role God is playing in your life. I believe God's Word has something for you today.

I think there's potentially a third category of people here today who have no faith at all. They certainly don't have faith in God. If anything, they have faith in themselves or in another person or another entity. If that's you, you need to hear from God's heart today what He wants you to know. He wants to be your Messiah, your Savior. He wants to rescue you from yourself and give you faith, if you will only receive it.

I don't know from which framework each of you is coming this morning, but I am praying wherever you are that God will speak to your heart. Hebrews 11 is intended by its author to inspire his readers. He describes what faith is, then he points to a series of examples of people who had lived before them. Many of these examples were people who were well-known to the Jews. The author is telling them and us, "Look to these people when you're feeling weary or discouraged, when you want to give up and return to your past beliefs. Remember those who have gone before you and learn to stand on their shoulders."

I'm going to work through five points, each of which could be a sermon in itself. A lot of these pieces will come up again in future sermons over the next couple months.

The substance of faith is a gift of God.

This truth isn't explicitly stated in these three verses, but we can't go any further unless we realize that faith is God's gift. It's not something we have in ourselves, nor is it something we can do on our own. It's not an umbrella that we can hold over our heads and believe hard enough to lift us up. We'll eventually get to Hebrews 12 where we'll learn that Jesus is the Author and Perfecter of our faith. He designed it, He gives it and He perfects it. Faith is His gift to us and it comes from Him alone. There is no faith outside of Jesus.

Paul reminds us of this in Ephesians 2:8–9: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."* We need to start there. That's the most foundational place, when we realize that faith is not of our own doing. Faith fundamentally comes from God.

We have a tendency to do one of two things. Either we believe that if we work harder and try to have more faith, that this is what will please God. Many of us fall on that side. But there is another side that says, "God kind of owes me faith. In fact, because He wants everybody to have faith enough to go to heaven, He needs to give us all faith." It's true that God longs for everyone to be

saved, but it is something we have to receive as a gift from Him. We must acknowledge that it comes from His hand. It's not something that's there whether we want it or not. We must respond.

The test of faith is suffering.

In addition to realizing faith is a gift, we also need to know that the test of faith is suffering. To be honest, I'd love to skip over this point today. I'd love to pretend this isn't in the Bible. Yet I can't. We heard this reality in the testimonies today. God doesn't always test us through suffering, but suffering is a primary means of His testing. He puts things in our lives that are difficult and painful to allow us to discover whether or not our faith is valid.

I've known this to be true in my own life. I had cancer a few years ago. I've had relational struggles. Twice I've quit my job, not knowing what I was going to do next. There are all kinds of testings that we can face. Some of you have dealt with persecution for your faith. Others have dealt with family dynamics that have been very trying. You've had financial issues. I don't know what your tests look like. It could be a child, or the loss of a loved one. There is suffering all around us.

But I want you to hear that nothing that comes into your life in the form of suffering is outside the control of the loving hand of our God and Savior. None of it is meaningless. None of it is wasted. None of it is an accident or something God didn't see coming. God doesn't say, "Oops, I didn't mean for that to happen!" Our tests are 100% from the hand of God. Our tests are designed to be worthwhile and meaningful, and they are used to embolden us and bolster our faith.

In those moments, we have a choice of two responses. We can either move toward God, choosing to depend and lean on Him. Or we can pull away from Him. I've done both, yet I've learned that only when I run to Jesus in the midst of my suffering do I find what I'm looking for. Only from Him can I gain the endurance to persevere through the suffering He has brought for my good. That's why James can write, "The testing of your faith produces steadfastness" (James 1:3). And not only does it produce steadfast endurance, it eventually produces maturity.

I have to be honest, I'm not jumping for joy when I suffer. That's not what we're talking about. That's ridiculous. Suffering hurts. We have to be honest about that. When I found out I had cancer, I didn't celebrate. But through the process, I began to see God's hand. He wanted to use that, not just in a physical way, but He wanted to transform my character. He saw blind spots that needed attention in my life, my marriage, my parenting and my walk with Him. I can now say God used that and I'm thankful for it. But I wasn't thankful in the moment.

Some of you are in the midst of some sufferings right now and it's different when you're there. Maybe you just lost a loved one, or you're dealing with a child who faces surgery, or you're experiencing some other difficult hardship. Our God wants you to hear Him say, "I'm totally in control of that and I will give you faith through that. Trust Me." He's totally sovereign, totally faithful and completely trustworthy.

We see this in our passage today. If you back up to Hebrews 10:32–39, let me read what the author states right before the three verses we read:

³² But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, ³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. ³⁴ For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. ³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. ³⁷ For,

*"Yet a little while,
and the coming one will come and will not delay;*

*³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith,
and if he shrinks back,
my soul has no pleasure in him."*

³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

You see, the author does not want us to have a temporary, flimsy faith that shrinks back to destruction. He wants us to have a faith that endures trials to the preserving of the soul. Such faith takes the future promises of God and makes them real in the present. Let me say that again. Faith takes the promises of God for the future and makes them real now. It's not just the hope of

heaven—it's the opportunity to know that God will walk with me through my trials today. He's with me now. I've experienced that in so many ways, as I've felt His loving hand in the midst of my suffering. He doesn't take me out of it; rather, He walks with me in it. He can do that, because He understands what suffering is—He's experienced it Himself.

One of the stories that's alluded to in Hebrews 11 is the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. I think it illustrates this idea beautifully. If you're not familiar with the story, three guys are told to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's big idol. They refused to do it and the punishment was to be thrown into a fiery furnace. I love their response. They said, "We're not going to bow down, because we believe our God will save us. But even if He doesn't, we still won't bow down to your idol."

That fire was so hot that even the people who got close to it were burned alive immediately, so it wasn't some flimsy wishful statement they were making. In that situation, God did save them. But their faith was so firm that even if God had not saved them, they knew they had a better resurrection coming. Even if they suffered the loss of their lives for being obedient to God, they had a better reward.

That's incredibly inspiring to me. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego ultimately did die. They did suffer death. And all but one of the characters we'll read about in this chapter died—all but Enoch, who was taken to heaven. Many of them suffered horrifically in the process. They were sawed in two. They were put to death by the sword. They were burned at the stake. They were eaten alive by lions. I mean, there was massive, horrendous suffering that took place. There are others mentioned who had difficult and painful sufferings in life. Yet they, like the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:18, believed that our present sufferings are nothing compared to the eternal glory that will be revealed in us. They had hope in a better resurrection and that's true for us today.

If nothing else, I pray you will be strengthened in your faith, that no matter what you're going through in your suffering, there's a God Who wants to walk with you in it. He has allowed that testing and suffering because He wants you to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. He does not desire to punish you, but to equip you to persevere in your life.

The object of faith is Jesus.

The only way we can endure the testing of our faith through suffering is if the object of our faith is Jesus. If you want to go through suffering and the object of your faith is not God and not the promise of Jesus Christ, you don't have a chance. Some of you right now are trying to endure suffering without Jesus as the object of your faith. I'll tell you—that won't work. It will never work. You need your faith to be in Jesus. Our faith is only as strong as the object of our faith.

Now I want you to actually stand up. Okay, sit back down. Those of you who stood up, how many of you thought, "Boy, I hope this chair will catch me when I sit down"? When you sat down, did you think, "Boy! It worked."

Now, if I brought a stool up here that had one leg falling off, it was cracked and it tilted, then I said, "Hey, come up here and sit on this. It will be okay," not one of you would sit down. The difference is the object of faith. The difference between your chair and a rickety stool is not small. The difference between my putting my faith in an umbrella or in the living God is total.

We see that, but I think in practice we miss that. We still try to put our faith in things that aren't secure—in ourselves, in other people, or in some other "god" like money or our career. We might put our faith in our children or in our spouse. All of those will fail us. The object of our faith must be Jesus.

Jesus is our ultimate Superhero, the only One Who is trustworthy, faithful and sovereign. There are two ways this passage helps us see that. First, we know that Jesus is the Creator. Hebrews 11:3 says, "*By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.*" God spoke the world into existence. Just let that sink in for a minute.

Have you thought about that? The world. The planet. The universe. He spoke them all into existence. "*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*" (Genesis 1:1). He didn't take a bunch of energy and matter that was already there and just kind of put it together, and then boom! He didn't just stand back to see what He'd done, thinking, "Hey, I hope that works out. I hope they don't screw it up. I hope they actually get created in My image."

No, He created the world by His word. The power of that alone should make Him the object of our faith, if we really understood that. It's become popular in some theological circles to discount Jesus as Creator. They grant that He was involved, but then think there were some other factors at play. But I'll tell you—that's a lie. That is wrong. Scripture tells us it was by God alone that the

world was created. He took what was invisible and He made it visible. I believe it is foundational to our faith that we acknowledge Jesus as Creator.

Secondly, we have to understand that Jesus is our Savior, our Messiah. We need to be saved from ourselves. We need to have faith in something that is superior to what we can know and understand on our own. That's what the author of Hebrews is trying to communicate to these early Palestinian Hebrew Christians. He's saying, "Don't be tempted to go back to your former religion." It's kind of like the Israelites who longed to go back to Egypt, where they had food and water, where they would no longer be suffering in the wilderness.

We tend to be similar to them, thinking "If I could just get out of this. If I could just go back to....it would get better." No, we need to be saved from ourselves and we need to understand that Jesus offers us a far better covenant. He's the far better Mediator of that covenant. Again, where the law came up short, only showing us our need, Jesus is able to meet that need. He came to earth as a man and sacrificed Himself on a cross so we no longer need a system of sacrifices. He became, once and for all, the ultimate and perfect Lamb that allows us to have our sins cleansed and removed.

If you've not made that decision, I pray that God would grab hold of your heart and that you would say, "I need to put my faith in Jesus alone." Our world is hungry for a Savior. As Derek mentioned, this is the International Day of the Unreached. There are seven billion people right now in our world, and two billion of them have never heard of Jesus. Seventy thousand people die every day not knowing Jesus, not having faith in Jesus. That is a sobering reminder. Yet it's not just the people who are out in the far reaches of our world; it's also the people we sit with at school and work, the people in our families and neighborhoods.

I was flying back from somewhere this week and was hoping to start a conversation with the person next to me. They just put their ear buds in and I chickened out. Many more times than I wish I get timid, even though I have the life-saving news of Jesus Christ.

This isn't to shame us, but it's to remind us that our world longs for a Savior. As He impacts our hearts, the overflow of that should also impact other people. Theologian and pastor, John Piper, says it this way:

Faith is a kind of spiritual tasting of what God has promised so that we feel a deep, substantial assurance of things hoped for; and faith is a kind of spiritual seeing of the invisible fingerprints of God in the things He has made. By the one we know God's power and wisdom to make us, and by the other we know His goodness and grace to save us.

For the object of our faith to be Jesus and to have a firm foundation, we need to understand that He both made us in His infinite wisdom and He's the only One Who can save us by His grace and goodness. When we begin to understand the weight and gravity and blessing of that, then we begin to display our faith.

The evidence of faith is confident hope in God's promises.

This isn't the kind of hope we often refer to, as in, "I hope I get something today. I hope you have a good day. I hope Jon's almost done with his sermon." It's not that kind of hope. This is a deep confident assured hope that's based on the truth of God's Word and His promises.

For Mother's Day, one of our kids gave their mom a little plaque that says, "Hope changes everything." That's been true in my life. There have been moments when I felt hopeless, and that's a dark place to be. Other times I've experienced great hope based on God's Word and His promises—and that changes everything. That's the hope we're talking about.

It's the hope of these early Jewish Christian believers. It was the hope of their ancestors mentioned in Hebrews 11. These people had deep hope. They weren't just thinking, "Maybe it will work out." You don't go to your death based on a whim, on wishful thinking. You go to your death believing God's Word is true. We need to have that kind of faith. What God has promised, He will do.

But we need to make sure we're standing on God's actual Word when we claim a promise, for only then do we have assurance that God will do or give what He's promised. Faith has no power in and of itself. Hear that. Faith has no power in and of itself. It only counts when it's based on a clear, unambiguous promise from God. Anything else is just wishful thinking.

But friends, our God keeps His promises. He does not break them. And He doesn't make promises He can't keep. We had better make sure we're standing on His promises—not cherry-picking verses from the Bible, or saying things He's not saying, or putting

our hope in something He hasn't promised. God has promised us everything we need, eternal life, plus hope for today and for the future. We need to stand on His Word and we need to know what His Word says. As we'll discover, these heroes stood on the concrete promises of God.

We are to stand on those promises and put our full hope in Him—but let me say, that's hard. That's not a perfect journey. Maybe you're different from me, but my Christian life isn't a straight line, where I just slowly and incrementally look more like Jesus. No, while I'm moving toward Jesus, my life trajectory is up and down. I have days when I'm strong; I have days when it is weak. I have days when I almost give up, yet I run back to the cross, because I know His grace is sufficient for me in that moment.

It's not a perfect journey, friends, but it's a matter of recognizing that our confidence, endurance and perseverance is in God and God alone. He's the One Who gives it to us; He's the One Who sustains it in us. He's the One Who allows us to display it; He's the One Who provides hope for our souls.

The reward of faith is God's approval.

When we experience the display of that faith, then the reward of our faith is God's approval. The longing of my heart is for God's approval. Not as though He's some kind of domineering Dad who's just trying to beat His kid into submission, making the kid feel guilty over everything he does. "Oh, if Daddy will just be happy with me." I know some of us have experienced that with our earthly fathers.

God's approval is very different. His pleasure comes through knowing He's given us the faith. He's helping us endure the suffering and trials, and we're responding by saying, "God, I trust You. Give me more of Yourself. I love You. I know You're sovereign and I want to be with You." He increases our faith and we receive His approval.

As we'll see in a couple weeks, it is impossible to please God without faith. You can't please Him—you cannot receive His approval—without faith. We need to hear that and we need to understand that today. It's not just the hope of heaven and the reward of that, but there are rewards here today as well. We can take His promises and know that He will give us joy, peace, patience, kindness, love, strength and endurance in this world as well.

I want to close with just a short story referring back to the umbrella story I told earlier. This story is about another little girl who happens to own the umbrella I'm holding here today. This umbrella belongs to my daughter, Scarlett. Let me tell you a little bit about her, because I think this sums up well what I've been talking about. We'll be hearing a lot of illustrations over the next weeks—but this one is personal to me.

Scarlett came to know Jesus a couple months ago. She's grown up in a Christian home, so she's heard about Jesus. But a couple months ago she came to her mom and me and said, "I want to solidify this actually." That's a paraphrase, but she wanted to put her faith in Jesus. So we prayed with her and there was no doubt in my mind that she received Jesus in that moment; that she accepted Him as Lord and Savior. I think she had had a level of faith leading up to that, but she had recently and unexpectedly lost her great-grandmother and there were a couple other recent experiences that affected her.

As a parent, while we're thrilled about that, we were wondering how her new faith would be displayed. What would it look like? Would it be genuine or not? A couple weeks ago we dropped our kids off at my parents' home because we were traveling. So the kids stayed a few days with them and went to church with my parents.

The sermon that morning was on Matthew 6:6: "*When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.*" In other words, don't do it for show. Now, that doesn't mean that every time we pray we have to go into a closet. But Scarlett heard that and thought, "I should do that." It was kind of a novel idea to her. So she went home that day and told my mom before lunch, "I want to go somewhere and pray to God." Mom replied, "Okay. You can go into the guest room."

My dad came home later and went to talk with her. "What are you praying about?" She said, "I just need to talk to God. I heard in church today that I should talk to God." "Well, what did you talk to Him about?" She said, "I want to know why my Grandma died. I want to know why Mommy miscarried last year—that was really hard." He said, "Wow, those are really good questions. Do you think God heard you?" She said, "Oh, absolutely He did." "Well, did He answer you?" "No, but He will."

Sarah and I talked with her about this afterward and asked, "Where is your hope?" She told us, "I completely trust Jesus and I'm going to be with Him forever. And I know I'm going to be with that baby and I'm going to be with my Grandma forever." It impacted me so deeply, I wish I could share more of that story. It so moved me, because I realized, "That's exactly what God

desires for us." God gave Scarlett the gift of faith. She didn't have that in and of herself—He gave it to her. But she trusted Him and believed Him, and now she's walking with Him—in some ways, more than I am. She ministered to my heart. She's a little hero of the faith.

We're going to explore some heroes over the next few weeks, but that one—that just kind of brings it together for us today. That's what God wants. He wants us to trust Him; to put our faith in Him. Not in some umbrella type faith in ourselves, but He wants us to believe that He alone is sufficient for our faith. He wants us to trust Him completely.

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