Where Have All The Heroes Gone?

Hebrews 11:30-40 (NKJV)

Please turn with me in your Bible’s to tonight’s scripture text in HEBREWS chapter eleven. And let’s read verses 30-40.

HEBREWS 11:30-40 (NKJV)

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.

31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:

33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—

38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,

40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.
WHERE HAVE ALL THE HEROES GONE?

When I was growing up my world was filled with heroes. Some were fictional characters, others were real, live human beings.

Remember back in the days of black and white TV when we could only get three channels if the “rabbit ears” were turned just right? Those were the days of Matt Dillon.......Bat Masterson.....Roy Rogers.......The Lone Ranger......the Rifleman.....Daniel Boone.....Superman and Ben Cartwright.

But we also had real life heroes too, like General Douglas MacArthur and General Dwight David Eisenhower.......and Mickey Mantle.....and John Glenn, and Neil Armstrong and John Wayne.

These iconic figures represented everything good about America. They were strong, courageous, principled people who seemingly always stood for what was good and decent. They were people we looked up to....people we respected........people we wanted to grow up to be like.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE HEROES GONE?

When you look at the most influential people in our society today you see greedy, corrupt politicians....... self-glorifying, over-indulgent Hollywood actors and actresses.........over-paid, entitled athletes.......and half-naked, immoral entertainers.

With few exceptions, these people represent everything that is wrong with America. They are people without principles or morals who champion the cause of everything that is indecent and immoral. They are the kinds of people we hope our kids and grandkids NEVER GROW UP TO BE!

HEBREWS CHAPTER ELEVEN is about “heroes.” Not the“gun-toten.......rootin, tootin..........bronco riding heroes of our childhood. BUT HEROES OF THE FAITH!
What Is A “Hero of The Faith?”

A hero of the faith is an ordinary person with an extraordinary faith in GOD.

A hero of the faith dares to swim against the current of a godless society and refuses to compromise his beliefs regardless of the risks, dangers or consequences.

A hero of the faith is a “torch bearer” who passes the light of truth from his generation to the next.

A hero of the faith models the kind of faith, holiness and righteousness that inspires others to follow their example.

HEBREWS 11: The Hall of Faith

Every student of God’s word knows this eleventh chapter of Hebrews is commonly called: “The Hall of Faith,” or “Faith’s Hall of Fame.”

Most of this eleventh chapter highlights the FAITH of some Bible characters who are very familiar to us: People like Abel......Enoch.... Noah......Abraham......Sarah .......Isaac......Jacob.......Joseph......and Moses.

But then when we get down to verses 30-40 we see some familiar names and some not so familiar like: Rahab......Gideon.....Barak.....Samson......Jephtah .........David.....Samuel..... as well as host of other nameless men and women whose faith was so incredible GOD chose to mention them in “The Hall of Faith.”

For the remainder of the message I would like to point out three things about THE FAITH of these “lesser known” “Heroes Of The Faith.”
First of all, I would have you to notice....... 

I. The **TRIUMPH Of Their Faith** (vs. 33-35a)

33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,  

34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.  

35a Women received their dead raised to life again.  

1. These great heroes of the faith experienced great triumphs and victories for GOD, not because of their own intelligence, or because of their own strength or power or abilities. 

2. They experienced great triumphs and victories because they put their FAITH and TRUST in almighty GOD. 

3. Just look at some of the incredible triumphs these great heroes of the faith experienced. 

    **BY FAITH** some subdued kingdoms. (Like Gideon subduing the Midianites) 

    **BY FAITH** some did works of righteousness. (Like Rahab hiding the Israelite spies.) 

    **BY FAITH** some obtained promises. (Like Joshua obtaining the promise of God's victory over Jericho.) 

    **BY FAITH** some stopped the mouths of lions. (Like Samson killing a lion with his bare hands, and Daniel triumphing over the lions in the lion's den.) 

    **BY FAITH** some quenched the violence of fire. (Like Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego in the fiery furnace.)
BY FAITH some escaped the edge of the sword. (Like the prophets Elisha and Jeremiah)

BY FAITH some out of weakness were made strong (Like Elijah who was fed by an angel of the LORD in the wilderness.)

BY FAITH some became valiant in battle (Like David defeating the Philistine giant Goliath, and Samson slaying 1,000 Philistitines with the jawbone of a donkey.)

BY FAITH some turned to flight the armies of the aliens. (Like Joshua in the battle with the five Ammorite kings)

BY FAITH some women received their dead raised to life again. (Like the widow of Zarapheth whose son was brought back to life by the prophet Elijah.)

4. When you look over this list of incredible triumphs I think you would agree these people were truly GREAT HEROES OF THE FAITH!

5. When others look at your life and mine do they see A TRIUMPHANT FAITH or do they see defeat and despair and discouragement written all over our faces?

6. BY FAITH do we overcome our trials and troubles or BY FAITHLESSNESS are we overcome by our trials and troubles?

7. If you and I would truly believe with all our hearts that there is NO PROMISE GOD CAN'T KEEP........NO NEED GOD CAN'T SUPPLY........NO OBSTACLE GOD CAN'T MOVE .......and NO ENEMY GOD CAN'T DEFEAT then we would experience the same kind of TRIUMPHANT FAITH as the Great Heroes of The Faith we read about here in the scriptures.

Next I would have you to notice........
II. The **TRIALS** of Their Faith (vs. 35b-38)

35b “.........Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—

38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

1. I’m sure you noticed not a single name appears in these verses. These are those **MANY “NAMELESS” HEROES OF THE FAITH** who endured great suffering and even death itself for their faith in God.

2. They weren't Kings or Prophets or Princes. They were ordinary, every day people like you and me who in some cases, “refused to accept deliverance” rather than to compromise their faith in God. Perhaps all they had to do was “renounce their faith” or “deny God” and they would live, but they chose to die instead.

3. Notice in verse 38 the Hebrew writer says, “the world was not worthy of these people.” Now what does that mean? It means these people were so holy and so righteous, the wicked, filthy people who took their lives weren’t even worthy to be in the presence of such **GREAT HEROES OF THE FAITH**.
4. Every generation of righteous people has had to pay dearly for their faith in GOD.

   For the past two hundred years or so, Christians living here in America have been able to practice our faith in relative ease. It is very obvious the tide has started to turn against us, and to one degree or another, our faith is going to be TRIED and TESTED in the coming days.

5. Our American forefathers didn’t have it so easy. Most of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were devout Christians. In fact some were even preachers of the Gospel. The British army hunted these men down like dogs, and nearly everyone of them was executed within a few years of the signing.

6. While none of us wants to be hated or persecuted for our FAITH, we must not whine and complain about the hostility we see being exhibited towards us today. The scriptures teach us that we should “rejoice that we are getting to share in the sufferings of Christ.” (I Peter 4:13)

We have looked at: THE TRIUMPH OF THEIR FAITH.
THE TRIALS OF THEIR FAITH.

Finally, let's consider........
III. The **TESTIMONY** of Their Faith (v.39,40)

39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,

40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

1. Here is what is so incredible about the **FAITH** of these **GREAT HEROES OF THE FAITH**.
   -They lived in the days before the birth of CHRIST. They knew nothing about His preaching and teaching. They knew nothing about His death, burial and resurrection. They knew nothing about the saving grace of GOD .......... and the promise of eternal life.

2. And yet they had so much **FAITH** and **TRUST** in GOD they were willing to lay down their lives for what they believed.

3. Some translations say they “obtained a good report” through **FAITH** ...... or to put it in today’s vernacular, “the got an **A+** in faith on their report card.

4. What a powerful testimony! What an example to all of us who live on this side of Calvary!

**CONCLUSION**

As we close this evening, I want you to think about some of **THE HEROES OF FAITH** in your own life. I’m talking about those people who didn’t just “talk the talk, but walked the walk.” Those people whose faith was so real ...... and so genuine it left a lasting impression on your life.

*Perhaps it was your **godly mother or father**.
*Perhaps it was a **Sunday School teacher** you had when you were a kid.
*Perhaps it was a **man who ministered at your Church for a number of years**.
*Or maybe it was a **Revival evangelist or a Missionary** you once heard whose faith seemed bigger than life.
Chances are your **HEROES OF THE FAITH** have already gone on to their eternal reward. But if by chance they are still living, why don't you take a few minutes this week and send them a card or letter to let them know how much their faith influenced your life.

As you think about the **HEROES OF THE FAITH** that had a great influence on your life, let me ask you something. Don't you think it is equally important that you become **A HERO OF THE FAITH** in someone else's life?

* **PARENTS**, our children need for us to be **HEROES OF THE FAITH**.

* **GRAND-PARENTS**, our grand-children need for us to be **HEROES OF THE FAITH**.

* **SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS**, your students need for you to be **A HERO OF THE FAITH**.

* **CHURCH LEADERS**, our Church needs for us to be **HEROES OF THE FAITH**.

Before we know it our time on earth will have ended. Our generation will pass and the next generation will rise. Have we succeeded in passing “the torch of faith” on to the next generation? Have we left behind a lasting legacy of faith that will live on the lives of our children and grand-children?

**Brothers and sisters.......WE MUST BE THE HEROES OF THE FAITH IN THIS GENERATION!**