

excessive **GENEFROSITY**

Generous Living November 12, 2017

1. They Were Born into Blessed Circumstances – Job, Joseph, Moses, Jesus, Paul

- They were blessed not because they all did the right things, but because they were born into the right family.
- We are all gifted by God. You are His heir!
- God's blessing isn't in temporary gifts, but in His eternal and loving family
- God does not exist to make your dreams come true, He exists to build his family and glory.

2. They Were Broken by Circumstances – Hebrews 11:24-29

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them. ²⁹ By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.

- Once you find something real, you can never go back
- Everyone has been broken at one time or another; Our brokenness has helped shape who we are

3. They Chose to Embrace God Even Though He Didn't Remove Their Pain – James 1:2-12

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

⁹ Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, ¹⁰ and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass^[b] he will pass away. ¹¹ For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

- Most people embrace God to remove their pain; embrace God because He is God


4. They Moved Forward in Faith Knowing that God Would Provide – Hebrews 11:6

⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

5. Their Biggest Impact Came at the End of Their Lives – Hebrews 11:13-16

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴ For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

For reflection and small group discussion:

 **Read Acts 1:8, and listen as your leader reviews the purpose of our gathering.**
Reflect on these verses which exhort us to pursue God's purpose as we gather in our cells.

Hearing from God Together - Worship. Spend a little time listening to a song, singing together, or reading a psalm. Have you heard from God this week? Is God giving you a word to share with an individual or your cell group?

 **Building Up One Another in the Word**

READ Hebrews 11:1-29. As you read,

REFLECT – Meditate on the passage and ask questions. What is the context of the passage? Enter into the Biblical scene in order to “see” the setting, the people, and the unfolding action. What are some words and phrases that the Holy Spirit is drawing my attention to? Do I know what the words and phrases mean? Do I understand what the Holy Spirit is saying through these verses?

RESPOND – What do you feel? Read this passage and look for how it speaks to your life. What specific situation in your life today relates to this passage? Are there beliefs, attitudes, or practices I need to adjust to deepen my relationship with Christ? Respond very specifically to what God has revealed to you in Scripture that speaks to your life. This is your personal response to the text: asking for graces, offering praise or thanksgiving, seeking healing or forgiveness. In this prayerful engagement with the text, you open yourself to the presence of God.

REST – Read the passage again, but this time, rest in God's presence in what He has spoken to you about your life through Scripture. Simply rest in the fact that God has spoken to you. Worship God for speaking to you and find strength, encouragement and hope, knowing you have just heard God; you have come into experiential contact with the One behind and beyond the text.

Reflection Questions

1. What does it take to be in a “Hall of Fame”? Do you know anyone who is in a hall of fame? What did they do differently? Was it just about their abilities or something more?
2. Scan through Hebrews 11. The writer of Hebrews is reminding us of some of these who are in the “Faith Hall of Fame.” How were they different from others of their time?
3. Choose one of the people mentioned in Hebrews 11 that you relate to or admire. Why do you relate to them? What is their back story?
4. What does it mean to say that the people of Hebrews 11 were born into blessed circumstances? Do you believe you were born at a time and place where you could make a difference in God's Kingdom?
5. How were these people broken? How did God use their brokenness? How has God used your brokenness?
6. Read James 1:2-12. Do you count it joy when you meet trials? What do trials have to do with testing your faith?
7. How did these people move forward in their faith despite their trials? How do you move forward in your faith when trials arise?
8. Hebrews 11:13 indicates these people ended their lives in faith, not know exactly how things would end. How will you finish strong in your faith at the end of your life? Does that mean living in faith throughout your life?
9. This week, pray about how you can hear God and become more generous. What changes do you need to make?

If you would like to be a part of a small group, called a T-Life Group, stop by the Information Center in the Village or contact us at TLifeCells@NorthWoodChurch.org.



Share the name of someone you are praying for and with whom you desire to share Jesus. Have you seen any God activity in their life since you last met? Have you been *Bold as Love* in serving and sharing with them? Pray as a group that God would create circumstances in the person's life to make them open to receiving Jesus. Is any way you could show God's love to them as a T-Life Group? How are you serving OUT together as a T-Life Group?