

## **Hebrews 10: 38-39 and 11:1-2 - The Witness of Faith Series: "Faith and kingdom keys"**

Intro: Many identify faith as: keeping a positive attitude, hoping for the best, speaking or praying only the good things they wish to attract, or even believing in a higher power, god, or spirits/spirituality. But, what is biblical faith? How can it be identified? What does it depend upon? What good is it for and how is it sustained? What does the author of Hebrews pursue by addressing the witness of faith?

- 1) The author addresses the witness of faith in the context of exhortations and admonitions to the church calling them to persevere. The witness of faith encourages believers to persevere by refining/magnifying their focus on God's gospel promise, while it closes the door on those who willfully reject gospel hope. The witness of faith in gospel proclamation for ongoing persevering faith and repentance to the end functions as kingdom keys to spur believers on their way to heaven while condemning apostates and unbelievers in their willful rebellion and idolatry.
- 2) The witness of faith speaks with the redemptive/new creation realities of salvation in Christ. Biblical saving faith receives the testimony of such realities for us as accomplished by the cross work of Christ. Biblical faith unites us to such realities by trusting/resting/believing them in Christ for us. Biblical faith is saving faith because it unites us with Christ's accomplished redemption for sinners as the sole object of our hope.
- 3) The witness of faith provides an objective assurance in the gospel promise that is not tied to any subjective feelings, emotions, circumstances, works, or even our own sense of faith. It calls sinners to the assurance of salvation by looking and trusting in Christ alone. Such objective assurance may/will produce a subjective assurance of sense in varying degrees as a result of the ongoing primary direct witness of the promise; yet, the latter can also be much affected, diminished, as well as not felt often times.
- 4) The witness of faith is God's way of communicating, convincing, assuring, and encouraging His saints with the merciful favor of God's redemptive grace for the outward/public manifestation/demonstration of spiritual realities apprehended by faith and justified/vindicated in the world by our works/lives as the fruit of faith. Such manifestation/demonstration is not an end in itself but the ongoing witness of God's advancing victorious kingdom for His glory in and through His saints.
- 5) The witness of faith strengthens saints while condemning devils and unbelievers with Christ's glorious victory. It is the binding and despoiling of Satan as God's kingdom advances in and through the proclamation of the gospel of Christ and the perseverance of His saints. Such proclamation is adorned with the public testimony of the loving service/works of the saints for the sake of Christ in an advanced eschatological manifestation of God's final judgment.
- 6) The witness of faith in its outward or public demonstration provides an additional evidence of grace at work in our lives. While such testimony should not be depended on exclusively or primarily for our assurance of heavenly realities and salvation, God does work it in us and through us as further demonstration of the reality of His redeeming presence and power. No saint will be completely bereft of such outward/public testimony for the glory of God, the advance of His Kingdom, the benefit of neighbor, and the humiliation of demonic powers.