Authentic Faith **Authentic faith overcomes fear**
August 19, 2012 **Hebrews 11:27-29**

There is no subject of greater importance to living as a follower of Jesus Christ than faith. That's why the teaching contained in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews is among the greatest in the Bible. Here we find explained and illustrated some of the most pressing questions: What is faith? How do we get faith? What are faith's benefits? What are faith's trials and obligations? Particularly in our present day, when counterfeit faiths abound, a study of authentic faith is essential if we are going to stand on solid ground.[i]

Discussion Questions: (Leaders please review each question and pick those that will be most beneficial for your group.)

1. Read Hebrews 11:27-29. In this passage we learn that **authentic faith overcomes our greatest fears**. First we see that **authentic faith overcomes the fear of persecution**. Matthew 24:9-14 says that the closer we get to the return of Jesus Christ, the more persecution Christ's followers will face. According to Hebrews 11:27, how did Moses overcome his fear of the Pharaoh's anger? What are some ways we face opposition today for following the Lord? How do you "see God" and how will that enable you to persevere in the face of opposition?

2. In Hebrews 11:28 we discover that **authentic faith overcomes the fear of God's wrath.** Explain why the Hebrews had to put the blood of a lamb on the doorframe of their houses (Exodus 12). What would have happened if they had not done this? God's judgment for sin is real and Romans 3:23 says "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" and because of this all are under the wrath of God and deserve eternal death. The only way you (or anyone) can escape God's wrath and judgment for your sins and know that you are forgiven and free from condemnation is by trusting in Jesus Christ "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). Is your faith in the blood of the Lamb?

3. Hebrews 11:29 tells us that **authentic faith overcomes the fear of death**. From the passage of Israel through the Red Sea (Ex 13:17-14:31) we see the same God who opened the Red Sea for one group closed it on Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The same is also true spiritually. Contrary to popular opinion everyone will not go to heaven. Looking at John 3:16, 3:36 and 1 John 5:12, what two groups of people do you see? Which group are you in today? If your faith is in Jesus Christ, how does he enable you to face death or his return, whichever comes first, and not be afraid?

4. Who do you know that needs to hear this message so they too may be saved from God's judgment for their sins and be free from the fear of death? Will you pray regularly for them and ask God to give you an opportunity to talk to them about this message?

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[i] Richard D. Phillips, Faith Victorious: finding strength and hope from Hebrews 11 (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P & R Publishing Co. 2002) ix.