

Scripture and Background Information for May 26-June 1

The Secret to Soaring

To prepare for discussion each week, group members should use the **Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scriptures at the bottom of this page. You will notice that we are continuing the pattern of your discussing scripture *after* the Sunday message on that passage.

Background for Hebrews 11:32-40

When an eagle flies, a powerful, unseen force makes the soaring possible. We see the same thing in our stories, and in the Scriptures: behind people of greatness are often powerful influences who provide life to their life. In this series we'll look at practical ways to unleash the best in yourself by discovering, developing, and deploying the best in others. In Hebrews 11, we see how the faith that we can have today stands on the shoulders of those who came before us.

In Hebrews 11, the author summarizes the story of the Bible in just one chapter. His theme for re-telling this story is faith. The author begins in 11:1, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." The rest of the chapter tells of how God chases after people throughout the Bible through the stories of those who were heroes of faith.

The author mentions Noah, Abraham, Moses, and others as having a faith worthy of imitation. In verses 32-34, the author continues to mention heroes of faith and their accomplishments as a result of their faith. In verses 35-38, these same heroes of the faith paid some high prices for the mission they had accepted in faith from God.

In verses 39-40, the author concludes all of these stories by reminding us that their stories are only now completed. All of these heroes of the faith had faith in what God had promised them or their ancestors. They did not know the full story of Jesus who would come and die in our place. However, their faith in what God was doing in their lives allowed us to stand on their shoulders. It is a great reminder that our faith is founded on the whole story and that we can have confidence in living and sharing that story with others.

*Verse 35- Some, by faith, were able to see their loved one's resurrected. Others were able to accept their fate and torture because of the faith they had in a resurrection to come.

*Some may ask how people in the Old Testament are saved before Jesus. The answer is the same for what saves us today: Faith. Faith in Christ is what brings salvation to us today, but for Old Testament people it was faith in what God was doing (faith that God was on the move, doing what He said He was doing). They had faith in Christ, but they just did not know they had faith in Christ. They just had faith in what God was doing for them and Israel.

Scriptures for the upcoming weeks:

June 2

Acts 9:26-28