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COMMUNITY **DISCUSSION**  
**gr:ups** **GUIDE**

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**SERMON PASSAGE:** Hebrews 10:32-11:2

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**REVIEW THE SERMON**

1. Read the prep verse (Hebrews 10:32-11:3) and the sermon's Bible passage to recall the content
  2. Briefly review the sermon outline
    - a. Introduction
      - i. Faithfulness originates with God.
      - ii. Faithfulness is a strong conviction of truth, a confidence, and an assurance that produces constancy and consistency in life of the Christian.
      - iii. Faithfulness means staying in the fight, enduring the race.
    - b. The challenges to our faithfulness (Hebrews 10:32-39)
    - c. The content and conviction of our faith (Hebrews 11:1-3)
      - i. Galatians 2:8-9
      - ii. "Assurance" also used in Hebrews 1:3 and 3:14.
    - d. Examples of faithfulness (Hebrews 11:4-12:1)
      - i. Faith does reward with the currency of the world.
    - e. Christ's faithfulness (Hebrews 12:2)
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## DIGGING DEEPER

### 1. "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

We sang this familiar hymn on Sunday. The words were written by Thomas Chisholm in 1923 and William Runyan composed the music for Chisholm's poem. Chisholm's aim in writing poems was to incorporate as much Scripture as possible and to avoid flippant or sentimental themes. "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" is inspired by the simple realization that God is at work in our lives on a daily basis. Chisholm wrote:

My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health in the earlier years which has followed me on until now. Although I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness.<sup>1</sup>

Chisholm realized that God is faithful during the ordinary circumstances of our lives.

Chisholm based his poem on Lamentations 3:22-23:

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;  
His mercies never come to an end;  
They are new every morning;  
Great is your faithfulness.

Jeremiah, the "weeping prophet," authored Lamentations under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Jeremiah was in tumultuous circumstances when writing Lamentations. He was called to reveal the sins of the people and the punishment to come. The people to whom he prophesied did not listen, and Jeremiah was ostracized and completely alone because of what God called him to do. He also lamented the consequences of the people's faithlessness. God allowed them to be conquered by the Babylonians, resulting in their entire world being laid to waste. But in the midst of that utter devastation, Jeremiah still offers them hope on the horizon: they are not completely destroyed because of the God's compassion and faithfulness, and in the morning things will be better.

Whether we are at a place in our lives where everything is pretty ordinary (Chisholm) or whether we are in a period of grief (Jeremiah), God never changes and is faithful to us, sustaining us in His compassion and faithfulness each and every day.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://hymnary.org/text/great-is-thy-faithfulness-o-god-my-fathe>

Runyan wrote of the hymn:

This particular poem held such an appeal that I prayed most earnestly that my tune might carry over its message in a worthy way, and the subsequent history of its use indicates that God answered prayer.<sup>2</sup>

Does this hymn impact you as Runyan and Chisholm intended?

Read and reflect on the lyrics below. Praise God anew for His faithfulness, regardless of what season of life you are in. The circumstance of our lives wax and wane, but God does not change. He is faithful.

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father.  
There is no shadow of turning with thee.  
Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not.  
As thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:  
Great is thy faithfulness!  
Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see.  
All I have needed thy hand hath provided.  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. [Refrain]

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow;  
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! [Refrain]

## 2. Hall of Faith

When reading Galatians 5:22-23, one may ask “what does the fruit of Spirit faithfulness look like?” God’s Word does not disappoint as it provides a succinct summary of what faithfulness looks like in Hebrews 11.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-great-is-thy-faithfulness>

Hebrews 10:38–39 prepares the way for the great Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11 by quoting Habakkuk 2:3–4 and the reference in v. 39 to “those who believe.” The Hall of Faith is presented in two sections:

- a. Verses 3–31: The author selectively surveys key figures from the Old Testament from Genesis 1 through Joshua 6 who were characterized by their faith.
- b. Verses 32–38: The author continues in this same vein, but with the marked difference that the author employs short, staccato like examples to contrast those who won great victories by their faith with those who suffered and were martyred for their faith. The contrast is only in the end result: some were victorious through miraculous means while others suffered and died. The point of the author, however, is that whether in life or in death, all were victorious “by faith.” Their victory was not just the result of the fact that they had faith, but was the result of the working of God in their lives in response to their faith in Him.

Read and reflect on verses 3-31.

- a. How are these figures of the Bible examples of faithfulness?
- b. What was the source of their faithfulness?

Read and reflect on verses 32-38.

- a. How are these figures of the Bible examples of faithfulness?
- b. What was the source of their faithfulness?
- c. Are you willing to exhibit faithfulness to the point of dying a martyr’s death for Christ? Are you all “in”?
- d. Visit *Voice of the Martyrs* to learn about the persecuted Christians who are exhibiting faithfulness: <https://www.persecution.com/>

**Highly recommended books about the “cloud of witnesses” who have gone before us to challenge you:**

- Foxe’s Book of Martyrs, <https://amzn.to/2PczGWE>
- Imprisoned with ISIS: Faith in the Face of Evil, <https://amzn.to/3uFAN1p>



## PRAYER

1. Praise God for His faithfulness!
2. Praise God for the past and current martyrs that stood/stand for Christ.

3. Pray to God that we will be faithful in both the small and big things He has called us to in our lives. Commit to increasing your intimacy with God so you are able to discern what God wants you to be faithful in.
  4. Confess if you've been unfaithful in:
    - a. Obeying Him
    - b. Spending time in His Word
    - c. Expanding His kingdom
    - d. Discipleship
    - e. Generosity
    - f. Prayer
    - g. Upholding the member covenant of Living Hope Bryan
    - h. Other?
  5. Pray for F.A.I.T.H. = Forsaking All I Trust Him.
  6. Pray that you can truly exclaim: "To live is Christ, to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).
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