

Hebrews 11 #1 Introduction “Living Transcendently”

Hebrews 11:1-6 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. 4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. 5 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. NKJV*

Definition: To live transcendently is to live above the fray of the cares and desires of this earthly life by being captivated by the eternal and unseen (by natural eyes) realities of our eternal existence with our Maker and Father. To diligently seek to know Him through His Son and to live in this fallen earthly realm with our hearts firmly fixed on pursuit of eternal things. Transcendent living is the life of faith and the life of faith is to live transcendently.

Hebrews 11:1-6 An Expanded Paraphrase

1) Faith is the living out as present reality those things that are unseen assurances; being confidently assured of the things that are invisible to the point of influencing the choices and actions in the now of our lives. That is to say that the eternal/invisible realities that now are and are to come have greater influence on how we live in this present age than do the fears, cares and pressures of this earthly realm. This causes us to transcend this mere natural existence and give evidence of the eternal-invisible alive in us. This is what we would call “living transcendently” or living a life of faith.

2) By living out this kind of assurance in the unseen promises as a lifestyle the following respected saints of old obtained a righteous testimony of living a transcendent life of faith.

3) It is by this confident assurance in the invisible that we have come to understand that the ages and the world itself came into being by the spoken word of God Himself, which is to say that the things which we view as real and tangible have their source and fulfillment in Him who is invisible. Assuredly then, the invisible, which is the realm of the Eternal One Himself, precedes and produced the visible and is therefore viable and reliable reality though unseen by natural eyes.

4) By living out as present reality a lifestyle of assurance in the unseen during the time of his life on earth, Abel offered up to the One who is invisible an acceptable and more excellent sacrifice of worship than did his brother Cain. It is by Abel's action motivated by knowledge of and assurance in the Invisible One that prompted an acknowledgement from God Himself that this action and the person from which it came are deemed as being righteous. This is the kind of assurance in the invisible that constitutes an eternal example of a transcendent life of faith.

5) Enoch also has a testimony of living on earth in this natural realm with a view to the eternal and invisible to the point of being deemed by God in the scriptures as one who pleased God. Enoch so pleased God by living this way that he was taken away into the eternal-invisible realm to be with God that he should not see death. Restating this, Enoch, so transcended the natural realm in his day by setting his focus and affections on the eternal-invisible that God caused him to transcend the natural barrier of death and took Enoch to be with Himself in that same eternal-invisible realm. (Is this not evidence that living a transcendent life of assurance in the invisible while in this temporal existence can lead to breakthroughs or an invasion into the natural order of things by the eternal-invisible and leads to a pronouncement from the eternal of true righteousness?)

6) Without living out as present reality the unseen assurances of the invisible realm it is impossible to be pleasing to the only eternal-invisible God. This is because anyone coming into relationship with Him must believe that He is “Eternal Reality” and that He is the “Eternal Rewarder” of those that diligently seek Him while in this earthly realm.

A. Seek First the Kingdom and His Righteousness!

Mt. 6:33 *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

1. The whole of the sermon on the mount is both the fulfillment of the law and the description by Jesus of the coming kingdom and the character of its citizens. It is a description of the things not yet seen on earth of our future existence and inheritance.

2. The hidden reality of the kingdom is at once a present personal pursuit as well as a future manifest reality. As we seek the rulership and government of God in our lives and families we are swept up into the reality and release of the

ever-increasing influence of the kingdom around us. In this way the invisible invades the earthly realm and those in the earthly realm are prepared for the coming kingdom.

B. Seek Those Things that are Above!

Colossians 3:1-4 *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*

1. The things that are above are not only the spiritual elementary principles or deeper doctrines but also the actual divine descriptions of eternal invisible realities and future end-time events which when meditated on lift us out of earthly thinking and always include an expanding revelation of Him who is eternal.
2. In our journey through Hebrews eleven we will be seeing how eternal invisible realities of a coming nature instilled into those saints mentioned a vision of the eternal that radically transformed their outlook and lifestyle.

C. Lay up Treasure in Heaven!

Matthew 6:19-21 *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

1. Heavenly rewards and heavenly treasure which are eternal are a motivation that while seeming at first glance selfish, are a legitimate vision of the invisible/eternal that prompts a transcendent lifestyle.
2. Moses in Hebrews 11:26 was able to forsake the treasures of Egypt and the "passing away pleasures" of sin because he "looked to the reward" this is motivation for desire the transcendent life of faith!