

Hebrews 11:1-3

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[0:00] 11th chapter of the book of Hebrews, of all the chapters in the book of Hebrews, this is the one that more people are familiar with than any other. For all of its complexity, for all of its deep issues or deep matters of thought, the book of Hebrews is really known for this 11th chapter.

And as one commentator said, unfortunately many people try to take Hebrews chapter 11 and separate it from the 10 chapters which precede it and the two chapters which come after it. And we have to take it in context and we have to take it in its proper setting.

While the 11th chapter of the book of Hebrews is very encouraging to us, we refer to it often as the heroes of the faith chapter and it shows us those who have lived according to faith, we also want to take it within the context of the book itself.

So we'll seek to do that as we come together and we read it and we'll hopefully be able to set this entire chapter. And while we can find practical encouragement for it throughout every circumstance of our life, hopefully we will find the encouragement to what the author intended it to do.

One thing we need to remember when we open up the Bible is these chapter breaks are really new. And while I say new, it's not like they happened recently, but they weren't in the original writing.

[1:12] The author of the book of Hebrews did not write 13 chapters. He wrote one letter. And when he wrote that letter, he intended for that letter to be read at one sitting and to be read publicly to the church and to be re-read and re-read and re-read.

Now, you talk about a long-winded pastor. If we were to sit down and we were to open up the book of Hebrews and we were to read it in its entirety, many of you would probably be ready to leave by the time I got to Hebrews chapter 11. But that's okay.

We have finally made our way here and we will find encouragement from it. So, if you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you'll join with me as we stand together and we read the Word of God.

I'm going to step back one verse. And I'm going to read Hebrews chapter 10, verse 39, because I believe that sets the context for our text. And read through Hebrews chapter 11, verses 1 through 3. The author says this, Let's pray.

[2:32] Lord, we thank you for this day. And we thank you for this opportunity. Lord, we thank you more for your Word and for the opportunity which we have to open up your Word and to read it publicly and to hear it being read.

Lord, we pray now as we have read your Word, that your Word would speak to our hearts and minds. Lord, that we would come to a fuller grasp of what it is saying, not only in times past, but what it is saying in the day present.

Lord, we pray that the truth of your Word would grip our hearts and minds and that it would transform and change our lives and bring us closer to you. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated.

A very brief text which we have before us this morning, but a very rich one. If you recall, as we make our way through the book of Hebrews, we see this one grand theme, that the author of Hebrews is writing for us, that Jesus is greater.

He is superior to all things. He is superior to anything that any individual is ever trusting in or putting their hope upon or counting on for security for eternal matters.

[3:33] Jesus is greater not only for the day to come, but Jesus is greater for the day in which we live. And the author here has highlighted a number of reasons up until this point of why Jesus is greater.

We want to put it in proper context because, more specifically, the author is writing to the Hebrew people, that is, the Jewish people. And he is probably writing to those people who had been scattered through the diaspora, those scattered outside of the realm of the promised land or the nation of Israel, the landmass of Israel, throughout the Roman Empire.

And he is not writing just to some vague Jewish people. He is writing to people who had heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, maybe given a little bit of assent to the gospel of Christ, that, yeah, that seems to be right.

And now we're really on the verge of, are they going to go all the way with Jesus or are they going to go back to trusting in what they have trusted in in the past? Now, this shouldn't seem very unfamiliar to us because we know that the Apostle Paul, if you're reading through the book of Acts, through the yearly reading plan, which many of us follow, you know that the Apostle Paul testifies over and over again that God saved him and appointed him to be a minister to the Gentiles. But the way he took the word of God to the Gentiles is he would go to the major cities throughout the Roman Empire and he would always find an open door for proclamation or an open door to share the gospel.

[4 : 54] And he found that open door in the Jewish synagogues. Now, it's amazing to me. Let me just stop right here and say, this is where I go, man, God is so good. Because God had so scattered his people throughout the strongest empire of the world of that day and his people so wanted to follow and seek after him, they built these places called synagogues so that the rabbis of that day could stand up and read the Old Testament to them.

And I think the only reason God allowed that to happen is so that Paul would have an opportunity in the fullness of time to go into the major cities to preach Jesus. And you say, well, I don't know about that, but I do.

And it's pretty wild, isn't it, that Paul had an open door because a Jewish individual could walk into a synagogue and the practice was, if anyone has something to say, let him say it. And Paul would have been trained in the greatest school of Jewish thought.

God knew what he was doing, by the way, when he met Saul on Damascus Road and started calling him Paul, right? God didn't just choose somebody. He chose the one body who was going to do something, right? And he brought him in there and he would begin to say these things and to teach Jesus.

So there were these Jewish people who had been going to the synagogue and learning about the law and now all of a sudden they were learning about Jesus and they were confronted with a decision. Is Jesus better or is the law better or the Old Testament?

[6 : 13] What do I put my hope and my faith and my trust in? Because the reality is that you cannot trust in more than one thing. Now you can say you do, but the reality is is that you will only put all of your hope and all of your trust and all of your confidence in one primary thing because anything that is a secondary issue in your life is really a non-issue.

Secondary matters don't concern us that much. It's only the primary matters that gather our attention and garner all of our focus. There are a number of us that have a number of things going on in our life and we understand some of them are primary.

That means you will give them your attention regardless of what happens today. You will give it your attention. Other things are secondary and that is if you have time, you will get around to it. Always share that illustration. It's probably one of the best illustrations that I've ever had of when my wife had a Honda Odyssey. Now I'm not dogging Honda Odysseys. We had two of them, all right? We ran the wheels off both of them.

One of them we called Pearl because it was a pearl color. The other was Old Blue and Old Blue died before Pearl did. But anyway, I remember when we had Pearl and there was this little piece that fell off and Carrie gave it to me.

[7 : 23] She said, honey, this fell off of one of my pedals. I don't know if it was the gas pedal or the brake pedal, but it was in the floorboard. I remember looking at it and I thought, well, that's not a very big piece. And she showed me that while I was driving and she handed it to me and I did what every good husband would do.

I took that piece and I put it in the door pocket and said, well, if I ever find out what it goes for, I'll do something with it. Now I'm sure the manufacturer had a reason for that piece on one of those pedals. I never put it back on.

I don't know what it did. It was just a piece of the vehicle. Now that's what happens when Jesus is a piece of your life. You can set it in the door and you'll deal with it when you need it.

Now Old Blue, that transmission went out. And when it went out, I had to do something with it because it was what made it go, right? It's what made it move.

So when Jesus is a piece of your life, you'll deal with it when you get around to it. But when he's the engine or the transmission and what moves your life, you have to deal with it.

[8 : 22] And what the author of Hebrews is doing here is confronting the people with a choice. And he did it expressly in Hebrews chapter 10. That no longer can you be caught between two things.

Jesus cannot be a part or a piece or a portion of your life. He will either be all of your life or you'll cast him aside and say, well, when I think I need him, I'll get around to him. And he is encouraging the people to finally answer the decision.

Is Jesus better than anything you're trusting in? Is Jesus better than anything you've put your hope within? Is Jesus better? And if he is better, then what's holding you back from going all in with him? And friend, that's not just a message for the first century Jewish people. That's a message that transcends time. And that's the same call. This is why God allowed the book of Hebrews to be in the canon of scripture, which we refer to as the Bible.

It's because God still confronts us today with the same choice. Is if he is better, then we must put our hope and all of our faith and all of our trust within him.

[9 : 28] And Hebrews 10 ends with that. That encouragement here. This is an encouragement. Because Hebrews 10 has also said, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God.

So he has confronted the people with a decision. One day, friend, listen to me, one day, and this is not a scare tactic, this is a biblical tactic. One day, every man, every woman, every boy, every girl, every child, every individual who has ever been created in the mother's womb and brought to life, one day, every single one of us will fall into the hands of the living God.

And we will stand before him as individuals, and we will give an account of what was the best thing of our life. What was it that we put all of our confidence and all of our trust and all of our hope and all of our ambition and all of our efforts into?

And one day, we will stand there. And the author says, but we, we are not those people who are going to fall away. We are those who have faith, he says there in 39, to the preserving of the soul. Now that's a very specific faith. It is faith which preserves the soul. And then he defines that soul preserving faith in Hebrews 11, verses 1 through 3.

[10 : 49] My question today to you is not do you have faith because each and every one of us have faith. Each and every one of us walked in this door today full of faith. You trusted that that seat in which you're sitting is going to hold you until you're done sitting in it.

You're trusting that this building is not going to fall down upon you. You're trusting that the vehicle you got into would get you here. You're trusting that the roads which you drove was going to hold you up while you got here. You have put your faith in something.

Each and every one of us live our lives full of faith. We do. We have faith in a number of things and I don't know why it seems so crazy to some people to have faith and the one supreme thing and it is the Lord God Almighty based on what He has revealed to us through His Word and what He has shown us in His Son.

So the question is not do we have faith? The question is do we have soul-preserving faith? And He defines that for us. What does it look like?

In three verses He gives us a great synopsis of what soul-preserving faith looks like. And then He's going to take the rest of the chapter and He's going to give us example after example after example after example of what soul-preserving faith looks like.

[12 : 05] Now I need to give you this warning in advance. I didn't say that it was flesh-preserving faith. It's soul-preserving faith.

Because I don't know if you caught on to it last time you read Hebrews chapter 11. But a lot of people die in Hebrews chapter 11. There's a couple of them that are transcendent.

Enoch and Elijah which are caught to God. They were Enoch was and then he was not right?

Because God took him. Everybody else dies in faith. There are some that are sawn in two.

They went about wandering about in sheepskins because the world was not worthy of them. They were cut in two with a sword. They were sawn in two with saws. They were killed by the multitudes because the world was not worthy.

But they still possessed soul-preserving faith. So many people are looking for the faith which preserves the flesh and neglecting the faith which preserves the soul. But the author of scripture has no concern with faith which preserves the flesh.

[13:04] Rather, he is concerned about the faith that keeps the soul. Because this flesh and blood will one day lay down and only that which has been preserved for all of eternity will exist.

And we see it defined for us in three simple ways here in Hebrews 11 verses 1 through 3. Number one, faith which preserves the soul is a faith that searches the horizon.

It is a faith that searches the horizon. And I love what the author does here. The author starts where we would normally end up so he works his way backwards and I believe the reason he works his way backwards is because he's going to go backwards to forwards and then go forwards to backwards.

He's going to work his way from what is usually the last thing and come back to the first thing and then he's going to go from the first of scripture and his examples to the last of scripture so you'll see it as we get there.

Maybe that's just Billy Joe Calvert's interpretation because I'm a very linear thinker right? I think things should fit in order and I think the scripture is very ordered and I just think that it should work that way. But if I'm wrong maybe I'm wrong you just let me know.

[14:09] But we see here that he is starting where we usually end up. So number one faith that is a soul preserving faith is a faith that searches the horizon because look at what it says. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for. The literal translation of that means faith is the substance. That is something that is made up right?

Faith is the substance of those expectations we have. See the believer's hope is not an anticipation of maybe it will happen.

It is not a maybe a longing anticipation of if everything goes right this will happen. The believer's hope is a grounded expectation. Because it says that faith is the substance of those things which we expect.

This is the big difference. The world operates in hope so. The believer operates in expects so. I expect these things to be.

[15:18] I don't hope that there is eternity with God. I expect that there is eternity in his presence. I don't hope that there are roads paved with gold. I expect it because scripture says it.

I don't hope that there is life after this life. I expect it because over and over and over again it is testified to. I don't hope for the tree of life beside the river.

I don't hope for that. I expect it and that is a big difference. Because if we base our life on a hope so we will live exceedingly different than we will if we base it on an expect to.

I hope that I will see Jesus. That means there is a possibility I might not. Rather than I expect to see Jesus. Now think about that just for a moment.

what if each and every moment of our life was lived with a radical expectation of standing before the man, the man who hung on the cross for us.

[16:27] Not a I might see him, but a I will see him. Many of us know what it's like to have a meeting schedule where we know we got to meet somebody.

It's an expectation. And some of us we get a little bit nervous because we expect that this person might not be a good meeting or it might not be a friendly meeting. It might not be one that we want to take part in.

But our behavior is different because of the expectation. Not because we think it's going to happen, but because we know it's going to happen. And what we find here is the Bible tells us that soul preserving faith is that faith which searches the horizon because faith is the assurance of things hoped for or expected and the conviction of things not seen.

The very first thing we see that Scripture testifies to us is that true biblical faith is that thing which expects everything God has said to happen to actually happen.

To take the word of God literally and figuratively real that these things will come about. And it is a faith that is so assured of these things that it moves past a certainty to a point of conviction.

[17:44] Because I believe that when the believer gets to the point of knowing that these things will happen, when he settles or she settles the matter, no longer are they living their lives full of thought souls or hope souls or I think souls.

Now it is a matter of conviction. because I will give an account for all that I have done. The soul preserving faith is a faith that leads its life full of conviction.

Now conviction is not always comfortable. But conviction is always beneficial. When I am convicted of the truth of Scripture, then I realize there will be a day that everything God has proclaimed will come about.

And on that day, the things that concern me today won't matter as much. And when I live with that conviction, I want to tell you, my friend, it may do things that may harm my flesh, but it sure will preserve the soul.

Because I'm no longer living for what this flesh and bones think is pleasurable. Rather, I'm living for what my soul knows is eternal.

[19 : 03] And we see this. It is a faith that searches the horizon. Namely, it looks forward to that day soon approaching. That everything God has said will happen, does happen.

Now I've read it a number of times. And some of you have as well. There are so many prophecies in the Old Testament. So many words of prophecy given to the first coming of Jesus Christ.

So many of them. And we can go to the New Testament. This is the benefit we have that the believers to the author of Hebrews was writing to did not have, right? They didn't have all 66 books of the Bible.

They would have had the Old Testament. But we have the benefit of opening up the Old Testament and then opening up the New Testament and going, oh, wow, there it is. And seeing what he says over here and then going and seeing how it happened over here and going, oh, wow.

You know, this little one was like, oh, you little Bethlehem that was considered nothing out of you a Savior will arise. Nobody would have picked Bethlehem, right? Nobody would have done it. And boom, there he is. And then all these different places and everything that God said was going to happen exactly the way he said it was going to happen.

[20 : 10] And we can look over here and go, man, it did happen like that. But I've told you this before, and I think it's worth repeating. There are twice as many prophecies concerning the second coming of Jesus as there are the first coming.

And if every single one of them was fulfilled with his first coming, then friend, listen to me. We can expect God will fulfill every single one concerning his second coming.

And he's not coming back as a baby laid in the manger. He's coming back as a king riding on a horse. He's not coming back wrapped in swaddling cloths for shepherds to look upon him. He's coming back with eyes of flaming fire and the sword of the Lord coming out of his mouth, calling righteousness and men slaying based on what he says because the sword coming out of his mouth will slay them.

That's the very word of God, by the way. He will proclaim the word of God and he will rule. That's what I expect. And that expectation is not a blind faith.

We're not walking on blind faith. I'm walking on an assured faith. And God offers the assurance all throughout scripture. So there's a faith that searches the horizon.

[21 : 24] Number two, it is a faith that secures the present. You say, well, what good does what's going to happen do for me today? Well, the good thing about salvific faith, faith that preserves the soul, it is a faith that secures the present.

Because the greatest concern that man has presently, whether or not he will acknowledge it, that's one thing. But the greatest concern that man has presently is how can I be made right with God?

That's the greatest concern. Now you say, well, I know a lot of people who have no concern for God. You're right. Because they were confronted internally with that question. So they decided that the best way they could be right with God is if they convinced themselves there was no God.

Because if I can discount the reality of God, then I don't have anybody to give an account to. But the greatest concern which all people have is how can I settle this matter of there being a holy God and sinful man?

I don't need anyone to convince me that I'm sinful. I would dare say that none of us in this room need anyone to tell us that we do wrong because each one of us has a conscience which testifies to the reality that we do do wrong.

[22 : 26] And the greatest concern we have is how can me who does wrong, how can I who have infallible, I mess up, then I make mistakes, how can I be made right? Because there is something within us.

The author of the book of Ecclesiastes says this. There is this testimony inside of each and every one of us that says there is a holy God. There is an eternity. God has set eternity in the heart of all

men, it says in Ecclesiastes chapter 3.

And man has wrestled with this issue. How can I live eternally when I haven't even figured out how to live temporarily? If I'm not doing too good right now, how in the world am I going to do for eternity?

Because I don't know about you. Let me just take an aside right here. I praise God that I will not eternally be what I am presently. Because presently, maybe I'm the only one in the room. I'm a messed up sinner who falls flat on my face sometimes and I have to beat my chest and go, woe is me. And I praise God that through all of eternity, I will be as he is.

[23 : 31] And I will see my Savior face to face. And I thank God that he will make all things new, as Paul says. But the greatest problem man is confronted with, what are you going to do about today?

What about the present? And man answers that. Some men isolate themselves from all the world. They pull themselves away in monasteries or convents. And they say, well, I'm just going to completely separate myself from the world.

The problem is, is when you separate yourself from the world, you have all of a sudden isolated yourself with the greatest enemy you have. Yourself. Because even on our own, we're not good. So I'm going to pull myself away from everything. And the problem is, is that even when we pull away from everything, we are still with the only thing that is keeping us out of eternity, and that is ourselves. Some people say, well, then I'm going to indulge myself in everything.

I'm going to get so busy that I will not have time to think about eternal matters. By the way, that is the avenue in which we live in today. We are busier than we've ever been. We will always be the same we ever need to be.

[24 : 30] And Satan does a great job of making sure that mankind does not have time to think about eternity because they cannot even keep up with today. And that would have been a great place to say amen. But since you didn't do it, I will amen myself.

Because that is the reality. There used to be when man would sit around and think for hours about their eternal state of existence. Today, we don't even have seconds. Because the world is happening so fast, we are so busy, we are so busy, we are so busy, we are so many items. There's so many things flowing our way, so many information, misinformation, some true information. But there's so much to do, so many places to be, and so many places to go. I told Carrie this morning, I think the thing that harmed a man, there was a great man that used to come listen to me at Normandy.

Well, I say listen lightly because the poor gentleman was all but deaf, and he sat in the back of the church, and we didn't have speakers in the church, so I know he didn't hear a single message that I ever preached. He even told me one time, I can't ever hear you when you preach.

But he liked being present, but I loved him anyway. He was a great gentleman. I went to see him one day. I said, Mr. Wiggs, how's it going? He says, it's going great. He said, you know what killed America? I said, what killed America, Mr. Wiggs? He said, air conditioning.

[25 : 33] He said, before we had air conditioning, everybody went outside. Now we have air conditioning, everybody shut up inside their house. Nobody wants to go outside anymore. Air conditioning is what killed America. And I said, well, maybe so, Mr. Wiggs, I don't know. And I said, I kind of enjoy it sometimes, especially when it's hot and I can go back inside.

But I told my wife today, I said, you know, I think the thing that killed America was not air conditioning. I think it was the automobile. Because now we go so many places and do so many things and we're so busy and we've got access to ghosts.

How much simpler it would be when you were limited and confined to one location. You worshiped together, you lived together, you worked together, and that was it. So many things say, we're going to put ourselves so much into this.

This is the way people deal with eternity. I'm going to keep myself so busy today. I don't have to think about eternity. The problem is that there will be a day when today stops. Some people wrestle with the question, well, how am I going to deal with eternity?

How am I going to deal with this thing inside of my heart? How am I going to deal with today with the problem I have for tomorrow? And some people say, well, I'm going to worship this God that I can make with my own hands, be it money or an idol or some other graven image.

[26 : 33] And they're going to say, I'm going to make this the primary thing. The problem is those things are deaf, mute, dumb, and silent, and they don't do anything for you in all of eternity. They don't. See, we're asking the question that all men are trying to answer.

How can I secure myself in the present? Hebrews chapter 11, verse 2 says, for by it, the men of old gained approval.

For by it, by faith, the men of old, they gained approval. Who is it? Adam was approved by faith. Abram approved by faith. Moses approved by faith. Enoch approved by faith. David approved by faith. Think of the men that he's going to list throughout this chapter. Some of them very, very wealthy.

Some of them have more possessions than anyone would ever have. And yet he said they did not gain approval by their efforts. They did not gain approval by their works. They did not gain approval by their riches. They gained it by faith.

[27 : 35] Some of them with great big muscles. You know, we would say that Samson doesn't belong here. Guess what the word of God says? The word of God says Samson belongs here, right? He put him here and it is confounding me. Why?

Because Samson did a lot wrong in the flesh. But it says he gained approval by faith. Over and over and over again, we see the testimony throughout Hebrews chapter 11 that the only way to secure the present, the only way to settle the matter that plagues the heart of all men is to live in true salvific faith which preserves the soul.

It is the faith that says I know that what God has said is going to happen. I'm living my life today as if it is already happened and I'm living my life by faith, not by sight.

And I'm putting my faith in the very word of God and it is that which secures the present. The most grounded, secured individuals I have ever met have always been those with the greatest faith.

They lived with the strongest faith. And it is not faith in themselves. It is not faith. I've met people who've had great abundance and I've met people who have little of nothing.

[28 : 43] And each one of them have found their security in the faith that they possessed in the word of God, not in the size of their bank account, the size of their house or the amount of their possessions. Because the thing that was securing them in the present was not which they owned, but who it is they believed.

Security is a very fleeting thing, but one thing we have found in that Psalm says it. And I remember when we went to the book of Psalms, we got to it and I cannot remember exactly which Psalm it is, but I remember that as we were going through it on that Wednesday night, I told you that I had went on a trip one time and I'd reached in my pants pockets and I happened to be having some back issues at that day and I was with a group of men.

I'd take them on this, it was a deacon's retreat from a church I'd pastored before and we were actually hiking that day and my back was killing me and I was dressed and ready to go and I was just one of those days I didn't feel like moving.

It was pre-back surgery and it just wasn't a good day and I remember reaching in my pocket and I found this piece of paper and that's not really abnormal for me because my wife, she's a very loving wife and she's always putting notes in there.

And so I reached in my pocket and I pulled it out and it was that verse from Psalm says, the Lord will lead me to the rock that is higher than I. And I found that note while I was hiking on a trail to the top of a rock and I said, okay God, I'm going to walk with these men and get up to that rock and I was so encouraged but that's the reality.

[30 : 00] Here's the security that we have in the present. The Lord is the rock that is higher than us. So faith secures the present.

Third and finally, soul preserving faith not only searches the horizon, it not only secures the present. Friend, listen to me. And this is probably the most essential one because everything else, these other two, they hinge on this last one.

And this is why the author will take the rest of the 11th chapter and talk about this last one. Faith has settled the past.

Faith has settled the past. Look at what it says in verse 3. By faith we understand.

Again, faith isn't just blind hope. Faith leads to understanding. By faith we understand that the worlds, now that word worlds there is ages and we'll come back to it in just a moment, okay?

[31 : 00] By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God. Now, you cannot go any further in the past than that. The author goes all the way back to Genesis 1-1, in the beginning, right?

He goes all the way back to the very first thing that happened in history. But because before history he was still there. History does not exist outside of God's creating history. God created history when he said, let there be light.

All of a sudden there was light and he begins to create history. But pre-history he was there. So we go all the way back to the past. As far back in the past as our mind can fathom.

And the author stops right there. He says, we're going to settle the past here because if we can settle the past here, it will secure everything else moving forward. Because if we can look back and say God did it there, then we can look today and say God can do it now.

And then we can look ahead and say God can do it then too. Because what we view of the past will determine how we live in the present and what we expect for the future. And this is what he does.

[32 : 04] He says, by faith we understand. That is, we come to an intelligent understanding. I've tried to tell people this all the time. You don't have to throw your brain in the trash can to be a believer in Jesus Christ.

As a matter of fact, he'll grow your brain. He'll redeem your mind. He loves intelligent people when they come to him. He loves non-intelligent people.

I'm a testament to that, right? He loves the ignorant as well. And I'm that one. I fall in that latter camp. But we don't have to throw it out. As a matter of fact, we understand more things in Christ than we ever can on our own.

And it says that by faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God. Now that word worlds there literally means all things substance. The heavens and the earth and all the universe and everything you can see.

But it also means the ages or the time frame in which God is saying. So we have this picture of that everything. That is everything that is physical, everything we can touch, everything we can see, everything we can perceive with one of our five senses.

[33 : 08] Those things that are in existence, those things were created by the word of God. But also the things which we cannot perceive. That is like the passage of time and how Paul says God has appointed for us to live during this age, at this time, at this place in history that God has so orchestrated and divinely planned all things that all he had to do was speak it into existence.

And what the author does here is he goes beyond the realm of science. I've read a lot about this and I know this doesn't always make us very popular when we start speaking of this and a creationist view and all these things.

But by faith I understand that when God said it, it happened and that settles it. Science can't answer that question because science can't repeat it. And what science can't repeat, science cannot give me a scientific method for.

If there is no scientific method for it, then it is not scientific. It is philosophical. Man may think that it happens another way, but God has said it happened this way.

And by faith I understand that's the way it happened. And the question we have to ask ourselves, would we rather go by the way man thinks it happened or would we rather go by the way God said it happened? Now, our answer to that question, because it may seem so simplistic, but our answer to that question will greatly affect how we live today and expect for tomorrow.

[34 : 31] Because if I cast shadow on Genesis 1, that shadow looms all the way to the end of the book of Revelation.

But by faith, I choose to understand things from God's point of view. By faith, I can say, you know what, there are things I can't wrap my mind around.

And then he takes it a little bit further. He says, so that what is seen, what is seen, was not made out of things which are visible.

I love how S.M. Lockridge defines it. S.M. Lockridge says, God is so big that God took nothing and made something out of nothing and hung it on nothing and told it to stay there, and it did.

I love that. That God took within his hand nothing, and from that nothing, he made something, and he hung that something on nothing, and he told it to stay there, and it did.

[35 : 37] I remember I encountered an individual one time, told me he was God. I mean, he was fully convinced he was God. I told him he was crazy. He said, no, I'm God.

I said, no, you're crazy. And he was arguing with me. We were right there on the front street of Normandy, right there in broad daylight. All I did was ask him how his day was, how he was doing today, and he went into this great discourse of, I wasn't from around there, and I didn't belong there,

and I said, well, I guess I do.

I'm here, and I was just going to check the mail at the post office, and that's all he was doing, and he said, well, I'm God, and I said, no, you're crazy, and he said, no, I'm God, and he got to hollering at me in broad daylight right there. By the way, side note, this is why my wife made me keep my door locked the rest of the time I was down there, and he was just convinced that he was God, and I said, well, if you're God, then show me you're God.

He said, I'm God. I can take your life. I said, no, you can't. You're crazy. You can't touch me. He said, I'm God. I said, if you're God, prove it. He said, I'll kill you. I said, no, don't prove it by killing me.

Prove it to me by creating something. I said, but first of all, don't use anything you're standing on to create it because God already created that. I said, you better grab nothing and create something and show it to me.

[36 : 45] He ran off and got mad. You know, for the rest of the time, I pastored down there. I tried to talk to that individual. I would see him walk out of his house. He lived a block down the road from the church, and I would say, oh, here's my chance.

So I'd walk towards him, and it was the funniest thing. He was quite a bit more advanced in years than me, and if he saw me coming, he would literally run at a full sprint, cross the railroad tracks, go up behind people's houses, and loop all the way around just to ignore me.

Told you he was crazy because he could not prove that he was God. Because the reality is, see, I say by faith, what is seen was not made by things which are visible.

And since my God can do that, I don't have any problem with trusting him that he can do what I need him to do today.

And I don't have any problem trusting him with what I expect him to do tomorrow. That is a faith which preserves the soul. Let's pray.

[37 : 53] Lord, I thank you. I thank you for your word. I thank you for your faithfulness. God, we pray that your word would instruct our hearts and minds.

We pray that the truth of it, Lord, as shocking as it may be sometimes, would grip us to the very core of our being. Lord, that we would be those people who live and walk and exist in soul-preserving faith.

For a faith which brings comfort to the soul and leads us to eternity in your presence. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.