Lay reader talk, week 3

**Faith Empowers God’s Stewards**

The writer of Hebrews defines faith: *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen”* (Hebrews 11:1). Faith enables us to be God-pleasing stewards. *“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him*” (Hebrews 11:6). The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is known as the “Faith Chapter.” From Abel down through the ages, the writer names the heroes of faith, listing their accomplishments, preceding each one with “by faith.”

Through faith, we understand that our stewardship is God working in and through us. It is not what we do, not what we give, not how we serve – but what God does, what God gives, how God serves, and our response to His love and gifts to us. God has shown us His plan for our lives. *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them”* (Ephesians 2:10). This is the definition of stewardship: doing the good works which God has prepared for us to do. God empowers and equips us to be faithful stewards. God has chosen us to carry out His work on earth. *“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit...”* (John 15:16).

It is through faith that our pastor confidently enters the pulpit to speak forth the Word of the Lord. It is God’s message, God’s gift, and he is only the channel through which it flows. Through faith, the servant humbly steps forward to serve. His only motive is that God may receive the glory as he offers his hands, feet, lips, his whole body, soul, and mind in service. Through faith, the teacher diligently prepares her lessons, seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit, studying the Word of God, and looking into the hearts of her students. God creates the learning; His Spirit creates the faith. As stewards, we are the faithful vessels that God uses. Through faith, God can make us into His faithful stewards.