



One Million MacArthur Study Bibles

We come to chapter 11 and verse 4 in our study, and ah, as we're going through this 11th chapter of Hebrews we're just going to take probably one of those characters each evening, ah, we may get a little further than that as we get further on in the chapter, but especially on this subject of Abel we wanted to spend some time even though our text is only one verse, let me read it to you. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.

Moffatt once wrote these words, "Death is never the last word in the life of a righteous man." When a man leaves this world be he righteous or unrighteous he leaves something in the world.

He may leave something that will grow and spread like a cancer or a poison, or he may leave something like the fragrance of perfume or a blossom of beauty that permeates the atmosphere with

blessing. Man leaves, he's either a Paul or a Nero. Dead men do tell tales. They are not silent, they speak. Witness the end of verse 4, "he being dead yet speaks." And that is said of Abel.

Now if Abel is still speaking, what is he saying? What is this individual who was the second generation of – of, of men since the creation, the dawn of the existence of man, what does he have to say to the 20th century A.D.? What does he have to offer to me? This man who lived only when the earth was new and born and there wasn't anything like there is today, what does he have to offer me? Certainly the economy of God in his day was different that it is now, God cannot deal with us as He dealt with them. What does he say to me? What is this chapter saying? This chapter is talking about one word, what is that word? Faith, and that is the message that Abel wants to give to you tonight. The theme of the 11th chapter of Hebrews is the subject of faith. And the message of Abel is the message of faith.

Now just for a moment of background, in the Book of Hebrews the writer establishes the superiority of Christ and the new covenant, you're well aware of that, if you get nothing else out of this series you will never forget that, because we have repeated it so many times. He is establishing the superiority of Christ and the new covenant

The second thing we saw about faith is that it furnishes sufficient conviction so that a man banks his life on it. And that we saw ... it is the evidence of things not seen. It is the assurance of these things to the point where you not only believe it but you bet your life on it. And faith is somewhat less than full faith when you only believe it but you're not willing to bet your life on it, see? That's like the lady who was flying in the jet and somebody asked her how she liked it, she said, I hated it and I never put my whole weight down the whole trip. There must be a ... if faith is to be legitimate it is not only I believe it, it is I stake my life on it. Okay.

The third thing we learned about faith is, faith secures for men the approval of God. And the only people who will ever enter into God's presence are those whom He approves of and the only way to get His approval is by faith, verse 2, "For by it the elders receive witness." Or approval. By faith men receive the approval of God. Verse 2 indicates that that is the case, and as you well know the Bible says, "without faith it is impossible to please him," and that's over in verse 6.

- NOW WE SAY THAT BECAUSE ADAM AND EVE
- THEY WALKED AND TALKED WITH GOD
- IT WAS ON EARTH BUT NEVERTHELESS THEY SAW THE
- NOW IT'S IMPORTANT THEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT ABEL
- NOW THIS TEXT IS DIVIDED INTO THREE PROGRESSIVE POINTS
- NOW TO UNDERSTAND THIS WE MUST TURN TO GENESIS

See what the philosopher can't discover and the scientist can't discover, faith discovers, that is that God created the universe out of nothing. Faith enables us to comprehend that which is not visible to

the senses. So then we've seen a definition of faith, it gives a present reality to a future fact, it furnishes enough conviction so that you bet your life on it, it secures the blessing and the approval of God and it enables you to understand what the philosophers and scientists of the world cannot understand, it enables you to perceive the things that are not open to the senses.

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