
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

SOME PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the highest) how satisfied are you with 2014? Why?
2. What do you want to leave behind in 2014?
3. What do you want to bring into 2015?
4. How well did you take care of your body, mind and soul? What's something you're thankful for in 2014?
5. How would you have managed your time differently?
6. What was the biggest risk you took this year? Would you do it again?
7. Knowing what you know now, if you could write a letter to yourself that would travel back in time so that you would receive exactly one year ago, what advice would you give yourself?

SOME GROUP SHARING

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the conviction of things not seen. For by it the
people of old received their commendation.

Hebrews 11:1-2

Faith = Understanding + Agreement + Trust

1. there is *notitia*, or understanding. Understanding the truth being claimed.
2. there is *assensus*, or assent (agreement). One must accept intellectually that the claim is, in fact, true. Not just understand but agrees with it.
3. there is *fiducia*, or trust.

REASONABLE FAITH
RELATIONAL FAITH

By faith we understand that the universe was created
by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made
out of things that are visible.

Genesis

Origin, divine — within this we are given purpose and meaning. not simply animals. But even greater, it opens our eyes to our relationship with the spiritual, the supernatural. But the author of Hebrews, starts here because he is saying, we have a reasonable and relational faith — because — We Exist.

Our very existence. The very existence of the world suggests something greater.

8-9 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise

This faith of Abraham, it is not unreasonable — it was founded in a promise from God. Relational, in that he believed that God would be true to his word.

13-16 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. *But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.*

Knowing that they are, we are part of a greater story.

It's something that is a stark contrast to the culture of Now that we live in. Faith is the trusting in the power of delayed gratification.

24-26 By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, *choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.* He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

A reasonable Faith, a relational faith -- choosing God, instead of short term satisfaction.

The reproach of Christ — that actually means, the suffering of Christ, suffering for God, greater wealth than the treasures of heaven. Suffering for God is greater than earthly treasures.

32-34 And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

35-38 Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

FAITH.
WHAT'S THE WORST
THAT CAN HAPPEN?

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

Hebrews 12:11-14

FAITH.
YOU CAN'T JUST SAY IT.
YOU HAVE TO LIVE IT.
