

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on August 7, 2022:**

**"Honoring the Faithful
(Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16)"**

[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman, at church in the Y shows us, through Hebrews, that God wants us to be faithful in this life despite our circumstances.]

Introduction:

- Does God call us to be successful?
- “Yes” was not the answer Pastor Craig was looking for.
- God calls us to be faithful.

- Does anyone recall in Matthew 25, the parable of “The Faithful Servant”?
- What does Jesus say to us in this parable one day in the future? “Well done, thy good and faithful servant.”

- Pastor Craig and his wife took their kids when they were young to the “Rock and Roll Hall of Fame” in Cleveland.
- And for you baseball fans, what’s the purpose for the “Coopersville Baseball Hall of Fame”?
- It’s to honor and remember the baseball greats.

- Now, today, we’re going to talk about “The Hall of the Faithful.”
- And we’re also going to talk about honoring the faithful.

Hebrews 11:1 (NASB), Now faith is the certainty of things hoped for, a proof of things not seen. 2) For by it the people of old gained approval. 3) By faith we understand that the world has been created by the word of God so that what is seen has not been made out of things that are visible.

- In each example of the scriptures we’ll read, we find the same four elements:
 1. God spoke to them through his word
 2. Their inner beings were stirred
 3. They responded in obedience
 4. God bore approving witness about their lives

- And while waiting, a faithful person continues to obey God...
 1. even when they don’t know where God is taking them

8) By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he left, not knowing where he was going. 9) By faith he lived as a stranger in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10) for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

- And while waiting, a faithful person continues to obey God...

2. even when they don't know how God's promises will be accomplished

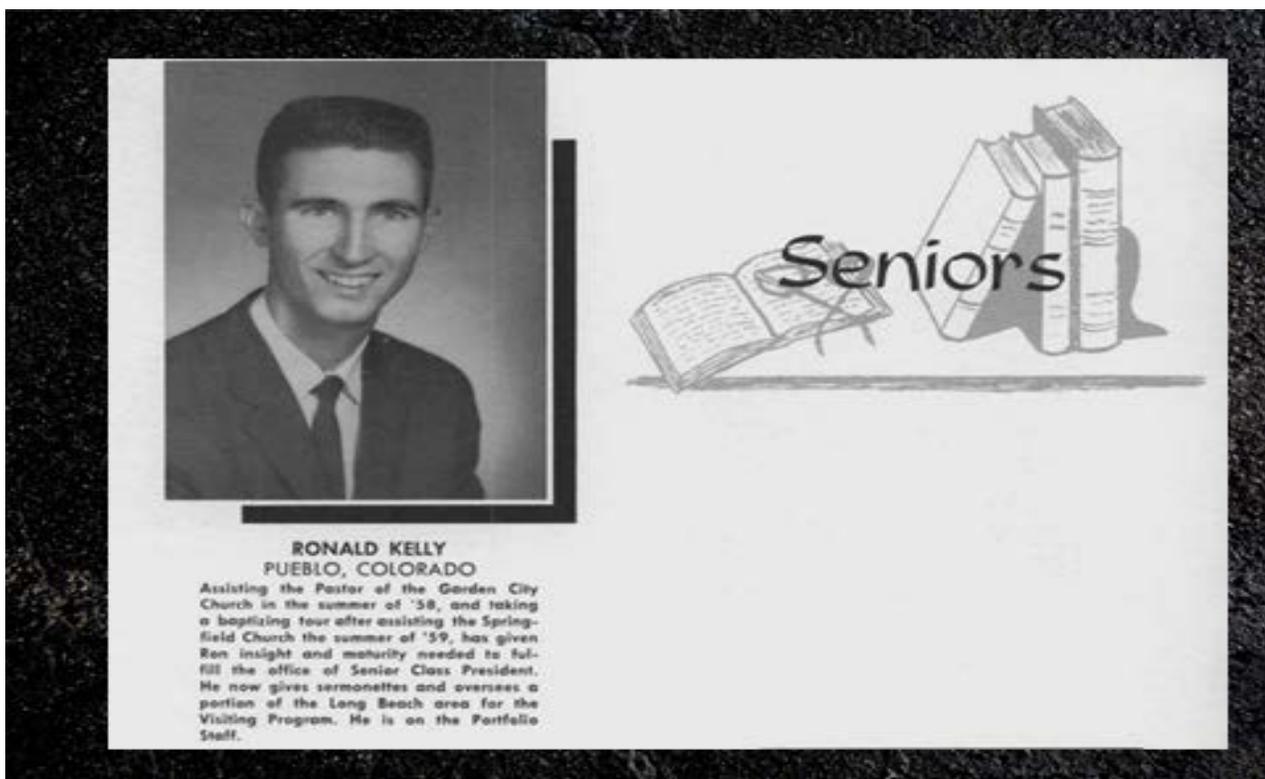
11) By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. 12) Therefore even from one man, and one who was as good as dead at that, there were born descendants who were just as the stars of heaven in number, and as the innumerable grains of sand along the seashore.

- And while waiting, a faithful person continues to obey God...

3. even when they don't know when God's promises will be accomplished

13) All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen and welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. 14) For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. 15) And indeed if they had been thinking of that country which they left, they would have had opportunity to return. 16) 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 a city for them.

- In this immediate context, that city is Colorado Springs.
- Now, you might not be able to recognize this gentleman, but Pastor Craig, had an epiphany last night, that this would be Ron Kelly's resurrection body.
- This picture was taken in 1960 when Ron was a senior at Ambassador College.



- Here's what's written underneath Ron's picture:

Assisting the Pastor of the Garden City Church in the summer of 1958, and taking a baptizing tour after assisting the Springfield Church the summer of 1959, has given Ron insight and maturity needed to fulfill the office of Senior Class President. He now gives sermonettes and oversees a portion of the Long Beach area for the visiting program. He's on the Portfolio Staff.

- Now, in a moment, Pastor Craig is going to give members the opportunity to express our honor to our brother, Ron Kelly.
- This will be Ron's last time attending church with us today and his plans are to move to Colorado Springs August 21st.
- Dan Rogers probably put it the most beautifully, "Ron is somewhat of a legend in our fellowship. And there aren't too many of them around anymore."
- Pastor Craig then said, "And so, we honor you today, Ron. We love you." (Applause then broke out from the congregation.)
- He then asked people to come forward to share their thoughts about Ron.

Jim Roberts:

- Ron is Jim's brother-in-law through his second marriage. Jim is now married to Ron's wife's sister, Kaye. (Ron's wife, Norva, has just recently passed away.)
- Jim talked about his friendship with Ron, which started when their daughters went to school together.
- Jim appreciates Ron personally as well corporately because of all the contributions Ron has made through the years.
- Jim really believes that Ron deserves this honor today.
- Jim believes that even though Ron is a very talented person, he is also a very humble person and has not been "a glory seeker", but has been a humble servant.

Larry Omasta:

- Their close friendship and being co-workers goes back over 40 years.
- When, HWA died, 4 presenters took over doing the "The World Tomorrow" television program and Ron was one of them. (Larry was the producer of the program.)
- Later on, we produced some videos for the church, and Ron was the on-camera host for the last video we did.
- Everything was shot over in Israel and Jerusalem. The video was about the last seven days of Jesus' life. (Video title: "Victory at Jerusalem.")
- There were just 4 guys that took part in the shooting of the video there, Ron being the on camera host and Larry was the producer/director.
- While Ron has made a lot of accomplishments for the church, you could never tell that by his demeanor.
- Larry feels that Ron is a very caring individual and a very humble individual.
- He believes that God does incredible work through individuals, and if they are one with God, they don't get the credit and glory, but give it to God.

Ralph Reid:

- Ralph along with his family attended the church in Sacramento in 1960, where Ron was the first pastor.
- In 1965, Ralph started going to Ambassador College in Texas where Ron was the Dean of Students there.
- Ralph views Ron as a faithful servant to God for so many years and is very happy to give Ron honor this morning for being such a wonderful example of a devoted Christian.

Redida Edwards:

- Redida really appreciates Ron's Bible studies he used to give, because of the way he always presented God's word with all of his illustrations.
- She was honoring Ron today for making the Bible come alive for her and also for his compassion that he has for the Lord.

Fred Stevens:

- When Fred went to Ambassador College here in Pasadena, Ron was part of the administration of Ambassador College in Texas, so he really didn't know Ron that well.
- But, Ron moved back to Pasadena and was his wife's boss in the Editorial Department.
- Ron learned through her how wonderful Ron was as a boss. Ron became such an inspiration to her.
- Fred also believes that Ron has been a wonderful example of how to move forward and try something new.
- Through all those years of doctrinal changes and challenges, Fred believes Ron kept on "flexing and staying up to date".
- Fred also included the example that Ron stepped up, even though he was retired, to pastor a church here in Semi Valley, when it was needed, even though it wasn't an easy assignment.
- Fred thanked Ron for all his examples of loving and caring for others through all these years.

Sue Braden:

- Sue came into Ambassador College in 1981 and took a Bible class from Ron.
- And during the doctrinal changes, she is so thankful for how Ron worked with congregations who were struggling, including the one her parents were attending.
- Ron, personally, talked with her parents, which Sue is so thankful for and wanted Ron to know that.

Kaye Roberts:

- Ron Kelly is Kaye's brother-in-law, since she is the sister of Ron's recently deceased wife, Norva.
- Ron performed the wedding ceremony of Kaye and her first husband's wedding 52 years ago in Big Sandy, Texas.

- And Ron also performed the memorial service of Kay's husband in Missouri in 2019, as well.
- Kaye, who comes from a large family, is so thankful for Ron supporting all of them over the years.

Nan Kuhlman:

- She read a comment about Ron Kelly from one of our members who are on Zoom today.
- Eve Jebens wanted to thank Ron for the conversation he had with her about Judas, and her mother still thinks of Ron very fondly for his service to her and her husband through the years.

Robin Connelly:

- Robin and Ron share Irish family names – Kelly and Connelly.
- Robin read a quote from their common Irish heritage: "May the sun shine on your path ahead, and may the wind be at you back. May the rain only come at night, and may God take a liking to you and hold you in His hands forever."

Pastor Craig:

- In his days at Ambassador College, he only had one interaction with Ron Kelly and it was in the Church History Class where he accused Pastor Craig of falling asleep, which didn't happen.
- "Ron, you may think you are retiring, but what we find in Matthew 25 is that those who have been declared, 'As well done good and faithful servant' are going to inherit many cities."
- "So, we don't know how many cities you will have Ron, but you better be ready for them."
- "Now, let's give Ron, a wonderful round of applause."

Communion by Ron Morgan:

- Ron made this comment about Ron Kelly: "People were watching you, even though you had no idea. And you were an influence on people, but you had no idea. You were one of the captains up in the ship and over the years you are still here and faithful."
- Now, we will always be in the presence of God, when we do Communion.
- And no matter if Ron is in Colorado and we're still here in Monrovia, we will be together, when we take Communion because Christ is at the lead.

1 Corinthians 11:28, Let a person examine himself then, so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

- Let's focus on the word "examine."
- Notice, it doesn't say judge yourself or condemn yourself.
- When you examine yourself, you assess what's going on in your life and in your relationship with God.
- Before we partake of the elements, we do need to do that.

- Now, when Jesus initiated this ceremony, He was sitting there among the disciples.
- And when we partake of Communion, we should take ourselves back there through our minds, which is a gift from God.

John 6:51 (NIV), I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give you, for the life of the world is my flesh.”

- This means that Jesus’ body, His life, His total being, was our gift.
- So, now, we’re going to partake of the bread and as Jesus said, “In remembrance of me.”
- When Jesus made this comment, was it done in honor to him or as security for us?
- Ron thinks Jesus meant it both ways.
- Before we partake of the bread together, let’s ask God to bless us as a people on this journey that we’re on.

Thank You so much for the plan that You put together in order to secure eternal life for us. And all we have to do is have faith and be faithful. Faithfulness is our destination, which is the key to success – because at the end of the day, eternal life is success.

So, thank You for Your body, which is symbolized in this bread. And we’re going to partake of that, as You instructed us to do.

- Now, were going to ask God to bless the cup.

Almighty, once again, we thank You for Your blood that You shed for us that we might have eternal life. Your plan is magnificent and is right on schedule. We might be going through some difficult times and not sure when they’ll end. But, we do know that our physical lives will end one day and that will be the end of our trial period and learning period until You restore us again in Your presence so that we will continue on into our eternal journey, which is beyond belief.

So, thank You for Your blood as we partake of the cup, which symbolizes the sacrifice that You made. Thank You so much for it.

- It’s a pleasure, a privilege and an honor to participate in Communion.
- It’s one of the few remaining things that we do faithfully.
- And finally, thank you Mr. Kelly, and may God bless you in your new location.
- We know that you’ll be a blessing and an asset to those around you.