

Abraham Part 1 - Hebrews 11:8-16

Men of Faith Series

Tonight we are continuing our Men of Faith Series with a Focus on the life of Abraham - 2 parts - much is said

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. - Pray

INTRO: There are only two ways to live! One way, most common is to live by sight- base everything on what we can see!

A)The other way, far less common, is to live by faith,

B)to base your life ultimately and primarily on what cannot see!

C)The way for the Christian is the way of faith!

6But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

"We Walk by faith and not by sight"

D) What is interesting is we exercise faith all the time

For example, you go to a doctor whose *name you cannot pronounce* and whose *degrees you have never verified*.

A)You are exercising faith in the institution that hired him. Vetted

B)Then the Doctor gives you a prescription you cannot read.

1)You take it to a pharmacist you have never seen before.

C)He gives you a chemical compound you do not understand.

1)Then you go home and take the pill according to the instructions on the bottle. All in trusting, sincere faith!

Costa Rica - Sting Ray - here take this! - Morphine - Not faith but stupidity

You exercised faith tonight in coming here - Car would get you here.

A)You didn't pray - or even think about - you got in turned the ignition believing it was up for the task.

B)Even right now you are exercising faith in the Architect, contractor builders of this building

C)Chair Manufacturer - Chairs you are sitting in tonight

When It comes to Christ Our Faith is not some whimsical feeling /But Our faith has facts /knowledge

A)Romans 10:17 *Faith comes through hearing the Word ;*

B)Our faith is birthed and nurtured by studying the Word

C)The more study more our faith is increased & Built up (Commend you)

Two men are on a cruise ship looking over the edge / one looks out only sees miles ,miles of water/ but the other sees fishing boat

1) Difference? (One has a telescope)

D)Well The Bible is the telescope through which faith looks!- Increases our vision & perspective

Tonight as we consider the faith of Abraham I want us to consider four characteristics that marked his faith.

A)#1 He lived by a Promise: 8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Back in Genesis 12:1-2 God appears to Abram and said ¹Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great;

B)Interesting the name Abram means exalted father

Bb)He is 75 years old at this point and his wife Sarah is 65 -

1)They have no kids - Sarah was Barren - And yet God promises Abram I will make of you a great nation

C)We read in Genesis 15:5 God tells Abraham to go outside one night and try to number the stars

1)That is what your descendants are going to be like.

D)I love what God is doing there: God is calling on Abe to use his Imagination

1)Imagination is essential to living by faith.

Imagine having that many kids and descendants
Abram - God ended up changing his name to Abraham

A)Father of many nations!

B)By Faith God invites us to grab a hold of his promises and imagine what he might want to do in our lives

1)Through our lives

C)So Abraham is living in this posh place - called UR - like the LaJolla of Beverly Hills of the middle east -

It was a busy Metropolis of 250K people

A)All the modern medical advances were in UR - much trade -

B)it was one of the most sophisticated cities of its day

Bb)God comes to Abraham and says - I want you to leave all of this and go to a land that I will give you

1)Make of you a great nation - 8 By faith Abraham obeyed

C)Note the last phrase V.8 went out, not knowing where he was going.

Back in 1991 my family pack up all our belongings U-Haul - and journeyed 1,000 miles north to Oregon to plant a Church

A)Yes it was a step of faith - but we knew where we were going !

B)But Imagine Taking a Huge Step of faith like that - and you have no idea where you are going -

1)Just North

C)Biggest Miracles - how did he get his wife on board for that! -

1)Women are nesters men - settle down - deep roots

D)Take a step of faith and head out - not knowing where WE are going - I don't think so . -

1)You go figure it out and send a plane once you have it all situated

Abraham had no game plan! Just a promise and a direction!

A)God called him - he believed the promise - believed God was faithful to deliver and he went!

B)There is a Saying "*I believe it when I see it*" /

C)But The Life of faith, life of believer - the formula is sometimes - Believe it (*step out*) then you'll see it!"

D)Joshua and the Jordan River - Get your feet wet first!

#1 Abraham lived by a Promise

A)We also are to live by the promises of God - Over 7,000 of them for the believer.

B)Moody if Jehovah is your God make your plans LARGE!

#2 He lived as a pilgrim 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

A) Abraham became a pilgrim and sojourner in a foreign land

B) God said I will lead you to this land – He wasn't going to set up permanent housing until he arrived

1) So He and his descendants - dwelt in tents / for close to 200 years

C) those Tents characterized their attitude toward the world! Not our home - just passing through!!!

D) Camping / not house on wheels - TENTS

1) I enjoy tent camping for about 4,5 days – gets Old - boxes and suitcases

E) Once lived out of suitcases 3 weeks – imagine 30 yrs

Why did they do that ? V.10 They were living with heaven in view! *"Looking for a city with foundations – builder maker was God!"*

A) They were focused on a different destination than the one right in front of them

"It was said of the early church that they remembered that they were people on the way!"

B) To me that is a great description of our lives – Realizing that we are on the way – means that we are not going to get to comfortable in any one location

I remember the first time my family was going on a vacation to Maui for a week.

A) We had saved for years and were so excited to finally be able to do it with the miles we had earned. - Money saved

B) When we got to the airport - AA flight was over booked

C) and So AA was offering a free hotel night and a \$600 voucher per ticket to anyone who would choose to get on the flight the next day.

D) We didn't even consider it - we were so pumped to get to Maui we didn't want to miss one day!

E) Now We were hoping they might have the same offer coming home - but no such luck

1) Not many people wanting to get to LA

I think we should live with a similar mentality -

A) We are so pumped about heaven and being with Jesus in eternity.

B) Not going to get too excited about life down here. - The best is yet to come - the FORK

1) WE ARE PILGRIMS AND SOJOURNERS IN THIS LIFE OF FAITH

A *Vagabond* is someone who doesn't have a home - NOT US

A *pilgrim* is someone who has left his home - A *sojourner* someone who is going home.

A) Guys we are on our way home - Not overly attached to this place! - Living with Eternity in View.

B) Romans 12:2 *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

1) Lit. - don't let the world squeeze you into its mold

C) The mold that this world seeks to conform us to is a mentality that says to live for that which is temporal

1) That which is going to fade away! That which is primarily meant to please self

D) Don't be conformed to this world! See beyond this past the – temporal to the eternal

1) Not seeking to please self - But the Lord!

So the first thing that Abraham did in living as a pilgrim is he lived he tents.

A) He wasn't going to permanently settle down until he reached his destination

B) Another thing that Abraham did on his pilgrimage that we read about in Genesis is this:

1) Every new place he came to - HE BUILT AN ALTAR

C) It was his way of saying - This place belongs to God and not to me

1) I belong to God and not to myself

The Altar was used for worship - want to live for the next life - with heaven in view - be worshiper

Paul said in Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.*

A) A living Sacrifice is our way of putting Jesus on the throne of our lives

B) But in order to build an altar to God and give our lives as a living sacrifice

1) we sometimes need to first tear down the Altars that we have built

C) Altars of pride, fear, - self-sufficiency- our agendas areas of compromise

D) You want to have an ALTERED LIFE ?

1) build altars to God where you can consistently lay your life down on.

So Abraham lived by a Promise - #2 He lived as a pilgrim

A) #3 He lived with patience - V.10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

B) V. 10 By faith he waited- He waited on the promise that God had given him of a son..

C) There was a 25 year gap between – Promise & performance – Never made it to that city

D) The promised child didn't come

Why were they able to have patience? V.11 - Answer - *they judged Him faithful who promised!*

A) Just believed God would come through on Promise!

B) After 25 years when that Child finally came and Sarah was 90 yrs old

1) V.11 says Sarah's faith in the Promise of God actually Gave her the strength bear that Child –

C) Isa. 40 *those who wait Shall renew strength not faint*

1) What promise are you holding on to? Don't grow weary in waiting

The type of faith that waits on God in patience is that which carries on - perseveres! & Fruit is born out of that perseverance!

A) Fruit is born of perseverance

B) How many blessings are not discovered because people quit too soon / people give up

Leonardo! Da Vinci worked on "The Last Supper" for 10 years, often so absorbed he forgot to eat for whole days.

It is said that Thomas Edison the famous inventor made thousands of trials before he got his celebrated electric light to operate.

One day, a workman to whom he had given a task said, "Mr. Edison, it cannot be done."

"How often have you tried?" "About two thousand times." "Edison responded, "Go back and try two thousand times more; you have only found that there are two thousand ways in which it cannot be done."

This is the same man who also said, "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration."

William Carey labored seven years before the first Hindu convert was baptized.

In Burma, Adoniram Judson toiled for seven years before he had one, convert he wrote this letter to his sending church in England

I Beg the churches to have patience. If a ship were here to carry me to any other part of the world, I would not leave my field. Tell the brethren success is as certain as the promise of a faithful God can make it."

Emerson - *"A man is a hero - not because he is braver than anyone else, but because he is brave for 10 minutes longer.*

D) These heroes of faith - lived as pilgrims in this life. eye on heaven!

Heart for God / Patience in His promises!

Abraham and Sarah's faith was marked by patience

A) Pastor Rob you are not telling the whole story.

Hagar any one?

B) Sarah - we need to help God out - you should sleep with my maiden Hagar - get her pregnant -

C) Abe: Just to be clear - you want me to have sex with your young maiden? -

1) ok - if you insist

D) Ismael was born - the Father of the Arab nations

1) All the turmoil going on in the Middle East today - Israel - Iran - Hamas -

E) IS a direct result of that plan. - So don't tell me they were patient

Hebrews 6¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,¹⁴ saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."¹⁵ And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise

A) That is God's perspective on the other side of Calvary the Cross -

B) Their effort of the flesh is not recognized - forgiven and forgotten

1) They patiently endured to obtain the promise

C) From God's perspective - 12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

So Abraham's faith was marked by

A) He lived for a promise - He lived as a pilgrim -

B) He lived with patience - though not at all perfect patience

C) #4 He Lived with a RIGHT PERCEPTION
V.13-16

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth

¹⁴ For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵ And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Note several things about His Perception

A) 1st V13 Faith sees the promises afar off!

B) It sees possibilities because it factors God into the equation

2ndly Not only sees; but is assured of them!

A) Assurance = Confident

B) Abe was 100yrs old Sarah was 90 Romans 4:21 "He was fully persuaded that what promised he was able to perform!"

C) Abraham was not focused on his own limitations - 1) he was looking at the Lord - that kept his expectation High.

3rd They embraced them!

A) Embrace is not talking about a cold formal hand shake

B) Warm hearty welcome - BEAR HUG / Josiah

C) It speaks of taking something & pressing it to your heart !!! /

1) They grabbed a hold of the promises made by a God they couldn't see held on to them for dear life.

As we meditate upon the promises and truths of God in the word our minds are stirred

A) But our hearts need to grab a hold them - and embrace them for dear life

4th They confessed they were strangers & Pilgrims

A) Their confession was evidenced by their lifestyle -

B) Hey why don't you guys settle here - built some houses - make this your home?

C) Nope this is not the place we are people on the way

Power of confession

A) Going on record - makes it more real

B) For those of you guys who are married - think about when you met your wife

Saw her afar off - across campus; church; room at work *WOW!*

A) (My mom w/ my dad / boyfriend - no one go out)

B) Began to talk & you were Assured I think she likes me

1) After Date or 2 or 3; 10 or 20 Embraced! goodnight hug

C) Then came Confession: Those 3 words *PassKetchup / I love you!*

D) As time went on Confession led to action:

1) flowers, dinners ,picnics, poems, love songs, w/ each step love grows deepens

Then came the Big Confession *I want to marry you will you marry me*

A) Then came the big day! Another HUGE CONFESSION

B) Pastor says will take this women to be your wife love serve honor cherishas long as youlive?

1) Confession again : *"I will - Yes definitely*

C) Confession makes it more - Real - Altar call - baptism

5th V15 They didn't look back! 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.

A) Evidence that confession was real / they didn't look back to where they came from!

B) Didn't think about / didn't talk about

C) Faithful servant when he grabs a hold of the plow - doesn't look back

D) It is easy to want to look back when times get tough isn't it!

Look back to the old life

A) Problems in the marriage - look back - FB – what's old girlfriend up to.

B) You know what the problem is of looking back ?

C) We don't remember correctly - selective memory

D) Children of Israel in Egypt - Remember the great food? - SLAVES - AGONY

The Devil is a master of getting us to focus on things with selective memory.

A) Abraham didn't look back - He kept his eye on the prize 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

B) Love that - Abe he is my friend - my kid - not perfect by I love him

C) Abe's faith was marked by

Lived by a promise - Lived as a Pilgrim - Lived with patience - Lived with the Right Perception

D) Eye on the Prize!

As we close tonight - each week - Lord what do you want to do? Discussions Next week Panel?

A) This week - Build an Altar of Worship

This place my home - belongs to you

A) My life belongs to you

B) Lay my life down as a living sacrifice - fully surrendered to you.

C) But like I said sometimes before you can build an altar to God to lay yourself upon

D) We have to tear down the Altars we have built

Pride: Big one-God resists the proud

Self-sufficiency - Leaning on your strength to be who God has called you to be

Fear: Fear of taking a step of faith

Compromise:

Do that tonight - right now