

How Can I Have Faith Like Abraham (Slide 1)

Part 1

The Reading Genesis 22:1-14

Hebrews 11:8-10 (Slide 2)

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 went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling 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.

Our faith is of the utmost importance in regards to our discipleship and our salvation. The Hebrew writer records a great deal about faith. In fact, he leaves no doubt as to how important faith is for the Christian.

Hebrews 11:6 (Slide 3)

6 And 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 seek Him.

We are asked to have faith in events that haven't taken place and in events that have transpired, but we haven't witnessed with our own eyes.

Hebrews 11:1 (Slide 4)

Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

What do we hope for? An eternal home with God. Just as Abraham did. Something we have not seen but are assured exists.

We are convinced, but of what? Jesus died for us and through obedient faith we are free from sin because of His cleansing blood that He shed on our behalf.

We did not witness his death, nor his burial, nor his resurrection, but we believe, because we believe the testimony of the eyewitnesses. Therefore, we rely on those witnesses and what they have written about what they have seen.

Acts 4:19-20 (Slide 5)

19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; 20 for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Luke 1:1-4 (Slide 6)

1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, 2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, (Slide 7) 3 it seemed

fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; 4 so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

The basis of our faith is in what has been written in His Holy Book, the Holy Bible. It is substantiated by what we can observe in the created, natural world and in human nature. It is our belief in His Word that produces our faith response, namely baptism.

1 Peter 3:21 (Slide 8)

Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

From what Peter says, we naturally understand that prior to baptism, we were not saved. We were lost in our sin. After baptism, we are saved and are encouraged to live faithfully. Therein, is often our dilemma. Maintaining our Faith. Subsequently, trying to have Faith like Abraham.

(Slide 9)

It brings us back to the statement in Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

We are now where Abraham once was. He left all and obeyed God and became a sojourner here on earth. He believed God when he said, "I will make you a father of many nations."

Genesis 17:1-5 (Slide 10)

Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him,

1 "I am God Almighty;

Walk before Me, and be blameless.

2 "I will establish My covenant between Me and you,
And I will multiply you exceedingly."

(Slide 11)

3 Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying,

4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you,
And you will be the father of a multitude of nations.

5 "No longer shall your name be called Abram,
But your name shall be Abraham;

For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."

(Slide 12)

He was 90 years old when God said this to him and changed his name to reflect this covenant and what it meant, "Father of

Many Nations.” And what we don’t often mention about this story is that Sarah's (Sarai) name was also changed to reflect her new status as “Mother of many Nations.”

Abraham didn’t blatantly say outloud or within himself, “This cannot be! I’m too old and besides that my wife is old and barren. This is impossible!”

No, he wondered out loud about it but he never questioned God.

Genesis 17:17 (Slide 13)

17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, *“Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”*

I believe this to be a statement of wonder but also of amazement. “It is, so be it.” Equivalent to when we say Amen.

Thus begins the unwavering Faith of Abraham. A child would be born to Abraham and Sarah. Two old people. Abraham 100 years young and Sarah 90 years young in the eyes of God.

We had further proof of Abraham’s faith in God when he nearly offered Issac as a sacrifice. In fact, that was his intent. To kill the son who would inherit the promise. But the Angel of the Lord spoke to him and stopped the sacrifice.

Abraham's faith in God was ongoing and was strengthened day by day. Oh, to have the Faith that Abraham had. Yet, that's the level of the faith we are called to have.

Romans 4:13 (Slide 14)

For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Faith wasn't something that Abraham had accomplished and then that was the end of it. It was ongoing and God made him who he became because of his faith.

Romans 4:18-21 (Slide 15)

18 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "So shall your descendants be." 19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; (Slide 16) 20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.

We need to understand that as we analyze our faith, it is something that either gets stronger or weaker. Abraham's faith continued to get stronger.

There are times when our faith is strong and times when we have weaker faith. In fact, Satan works hard at trying to get us to abandon our faith altogether. The very eyewitnesses of what we believe, and what we have anchored our hope in, the inspired word, encourages us to hold fast to our faith.

Romans 11:22 (Slide 17)

Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

Colossians 1:22-23 Paul talking about Jesus: (Slide 18)

22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— 23 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

If we hold fast to our faith. In this lesson we have defined the level of faith we must have to be pleasing to God by looking at it from the life of Abraham. In the coming lessons we'll work to understand how we can have faith equal to that of Abraham. We will do so by looking at the following: (Slide 19)

1. Our faith must keep moving.
2. We must keep fighting the "Good Fight."
3. We must do it together as a team.
4. We must make sure we continue to replenish our supplies for the fight.
5. We must remain in touch with the one who leads.

Maintaining our faith in a world where most have no faith at all, is very challenging. But we can be sure that our world and its distance from God is just like the world in which Abraham lived and his faith flourished.

Invitation