The Faith of Abraham

Hebrews 11:8-19

Introduction

In all of Scripture, Abraham is the supreme example of what it means to live by faith.

- He lived 2000 years before Christ.
- He came from Ur of the Chaldeans.
- The city of Ur was cultured, sophisticated and powerful.
- The city of Ur had everything that Abraham would want in terms of earthly comfort, but it was a city in the darkness of paganism.

“Then the God of glory appeared to Abraham and said, ‘Leave your country and your people and go to the land I will show you.’” Acts 7:2-3

And Abraham obeyed.

What can we learn from Abraham’s faith?

I. Faith and obedience go hand in hand. Hebrews 11:8-10

Obedience is the outward proof of an inward faith.

Faith is not only believing, it is responding to the call of God on our life.

For Abraham, God’s call meant leaving his home, his country and his people to go to a land he did not know.

There was a glorious abandonment in Abraham’s faith.

It is the same thing that Jesus asks of us.

“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” Luke 9:23

Nothing happens until we take that first step of obedience.

II. Faith trusts God’s Word. Hebrews 11:11-12, 17-19

The details of Abraham’s story are significant.

- Abraham and Sarah are well past the normal age of having children. Abraham is nearly 100 and Sarah is 90.
- Sarah is barren. They have struggled with infertility.
- It would take a miracle for Abraham and Sarah to have a child and that is exactly what God wanted.
God was about to bring a new humanity into being and it would not be by natural birth. It would be by faith. Abraham would be the father of all who believe. Romans 4:11

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.” John 1:12-13

Then, many years later, God would ask Abraham to do the unthinkable – to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice.

It was a test.

Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead if that’s what it takes.

Abraham believed that God was faithful and that his word could be trusted.

“Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.” Romans 4:20-21

Sometimes things happen in life and we don’t know why. God asks us to trust him.

III. Faith looks to the future. Hebrews 11:13-16

Abraham had hope.

Abraham was looking forward, beyond this life, “to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.”

It is the city John saw in Revelation 21-22

In verse 13, we read that all these heroes of the faith lived this way.

- They lived by faith.
- They lived as aliens and strangers in this world.
- They longed for a better country – a heavenly one.

The result was that, “God is not ashamed to be called their God and he has prepared a city for them.”

Conclusion

That is how we are to live our life too.

We live by faith, trusting in the promises of God, so that the world will know that he is real.

What would that look like for you?