

Better
Hebrews 11:11-19

Intro

Transition

Sticky Statement: Even in our doubts God is faithful.

Passage

11 By faith even Sarah herself, when she was unable to have children, received power to conceive offspring, even though she was past the age, since she considered that the one who had promised was faithful. 12 Therefore, from one man—in fact, from one as good as dead—came offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky and as innumerable as the grains of sand along the seashore.

Hebrews 11:11-12

In Genesis 15 God made a promise to Abraham.

God promised that through Abraham He would bless the world.

That one day you would not be able to count their offspring.

In Genesis 16 Sarah comes to Abraham and gives him her slave as a wife.

Sarah and Abraham decide to take things into their own hands.

This doesn't go over well.

Hagar, the new wife, becomes pregnant with Ismael.

Ismael becomes the father of people group we call Arabs today.

But this was not the child of promise.

In Genesis 18 God appears to Abraham and tells him that in year they will have a child.

By this time they were old and well past child bearing years.

Sarah laughed to herself and questioned the possibility of the prediction.

In Genesis 21 we read about the birth of Isaac.

Isaac was the child God had promised.

Sarah was 90 and Abraham was 100.

Despite her doubts God kept His promise.

Despite her occasional questioning she was found faithful.

Look back at the last part of verse 11 with me:

since she considered that the one who had promised was faithful.

Hebrews 11:11e

She wasn't found faithful because she never questioned.

She wasn't found faithful because she never sinned.

She was found faithful because she knew God was faithful.

She knew that God would do all He said He would do!

Even in our doubts God is faithful.

13 These all died in faith, although they had not received the things that were promised. But they saw them from a distance, greeted them, and confessed that they were foreigners and temporary residents on the earth. 14 Now those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. 15 If they were thinking about where they came from, they would have had an opportunity to return. 16 But they now desire a better place—a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 11:13-16

Verse 13 brings us back to all those listed in this chapter as faithful.

They lived and heard the promises God made but never saw the fulfillment of those promises.

They died knowing God was faithful and that the promise would one day be fulfilled.

The author of Hebrews draws a picture of them as pilgrims in a foreign land traveling to the promised city.

These great figures from our Old Testament saw the glow of the promises in the distance but never reached them.

We are fortunate today to be able to look back and see the promises made to Abraham and Sarah fulfilled.

Not only is their offspring as numerous as the "sands" but one of them has blessed the entire world.

Christ blessed the entire world when He died and rose again offering forgiveness to all that call on His name.

Look at verse 15:

15 If they were thinking about where they came from, they would have had an opportunity to return.

Hebrews 11:15

If Abraham and Sarah spent all their time looking back on their life in Haran they might have turned back.

Instead they looked forward.

They looked to God and to the promise He had made about a better way.

Do we need to reflect on our past? Yes

What would be the benefit of reflecting on our past?

We can look back and learn from past decisions to help make better ones moving forward.

Notice I didn't say so we can return to it.

Believers should have their eyes on Christ as all times, looking to the place He is leading us.

I'm going to be honest with you, if I spent this time of year thinking about when we lived in Alabama it would be real hard to stay here.

The weather this time of year is much better there but the spring, summer, and fall here is so much better here.

Not to mention the people are pretty alright also.

We need to reflect on the past so we can see how God brought us to where we are and how much He has grown us in our faith.

We however don't need to spend all our time looking back because we will lose sight of where we are going.

Those listed in this chapter had their eyes set on what was to come, eternity with God.

They were looking forward to leaving this world for their true home, heaven.

They looked forward to seeing the one true God unfiltered.

Lets pick up in verse 17:

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. He received the promises and yet he was offering his one and only son, 18 the one to whom it had been said, Your offspring will be traced through Isaac. 19 He considered God to be able even to raise someone from the dead; therefore, he received him back, figuratively speaking.

Hebrews 11:17-19

In Genesis 21 God told Abraham that Isaac would be the one that He fulfilled His promises through.

Then in Genesis 22 God does something that seems very out of character and also holds so much foreshadowing of things to come.

2 “Take your son,” he said, “your only son Isaac, whom you love, go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.”

Genesis 22:2

WHAT?!?

God who later we find hates human sacrifice requests one.

This makes no sense when you just read that verse.

Abraham without questioning gathers the supplies needed.

Has Isaac carry the wood and they set out for the place God instructed.

They get there, build the alter, Abraham binds Isaac and lays him on the alter.

Isaac younger and stronger than his father does not resist but does as instructed.

Abraham takes the knife and just as he is about to strike his son down, God stops him.

God was revealing to Abraham and Isaac how much faith they had in the power of God.

God provided a lamb for the sacrifice.

Isaac was the child of promise and Abraham was willing to kill him because God had instructed.

The author of Hebrews reveals what Abraham was thinking.

Abraham believed that God would keep His promise to the point of raising Isaac from the dead.

Does this story sound some what familiar?

Where else do we read of a Father sacrificing His one and only son?

Where else do we read that not only did this son die but rose from the dead?

We know that son as Jesus the Christ, Savior, Redeemer, Messiah!

Abraham did not question the plan because He knew God was faithful.

He knew God would do what He said He would do.

Even in our doubts God is faithful.

Application

Throughout our life we will question what God is doing.

We will look at the all the crap we go through and ask “Why, what good could come from this?”

In the moment it can be nearly or actually impossible to see how good can come from life's worst moments.

When we call on Christ as savior He is faithful to redeem.

He not only redeems our soul from eternity in Hell but He also redeems our past.

He takes those terrible moments and uses them to reveal that all are able to be rescued.

There are things in your past that God will use to help someone see Jesus.

Even in our doubts God is faithful.

Challenge

Do you believe that God is faithful?

If so what is He calling you to do?