



Courageous Faith

Date: December 8-9, 2018

Series Question: What do you really believe?

Hebrews 11:6

- 6 But **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.

Statement: Because of the way some people live, the way they think, and the choices they make, some things are impossible for them. This series will explore what is possible for you and what is not possible for you. According to Hebrews 11:6, all of this is tied to your faith. You will discover that faith is not just believing. Faith is believing, **to be true**, what God has told you.

I. Four Men Who Had Courageous Faith Hebrews 11:4–13 (NKJV)

1. **Abel** believed and offered God what he asked for (Cain offered God what he wanted to offer him)

- 4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

Question: Do you believe God enough to do what he asked you to do?

2. **Enoch** believed and was committed to pleasing God

- 5 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that **he pleased God**.

Question: Do you believe God enough to make pleasing him your top priority?

Summary:

- 6 But 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.

3. **Noah** believed when he was warned by God that a flood was coming (He saved his household)

- 7 By faith **Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear**, prepared an ark for the **saving of his household**, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Question: Do you believe God enough to heed his warnings?

4. **Abraham** believed, moved and kept trying to have a son (Imagine 25 years of trying)

- 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.

Question: Do you believe God enough to move and wait to be fruitful?

II. Why Four Men Had Faith Without Receiving The Main Things They Were Believing For

Summary: Believing is not always tied to receiving everything you desire in your lifetime

They all believed but died without fully receiving the promise

- Hebrews 11:13–16 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.

Question: Why would they believe without receiving the promise?

Answer: They had a history they could look back on and find a reason to believe

1. **Abel** saw God honor his sacrifice (Genesis 4:4-5)
4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. (NKJV)
2. **Enoch** saw God's favor (Genesis 5:21–24)
21 Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. 22 After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. 23 So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. 24 And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.
3. **Noah** was saved from the flood (Genesis 6:9-12)
9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.
4. **Abraham** 99.3 years old when his wife became pregnant (Genesis 21:1-2, **Wow!**)
21 And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore to him—Isaac.

Note: A Few Loose End Facts

1. God promised Abraham a year earlier that he was **one year** away from his promise
Genesis 18:14 (The Message Bible): Is anything too hard for God? I'll be back about this time next year and Sarah will have a baby."
2. Abraham had a thirteen-year old son from Hagar when God made this one year declaration
Genesis 17:23–25 (The Message): 24 **Abraham was ninety-nine years old** when he was circumcised. 25 His son **Ishmael was thirteen years old** when he was circumcised.

Closing Question: What can you look back on in your life and find a reason to believe?

Next Time: Courageous Faith, Part 2

December 22-23, 2018: Courageous Faith in a Confusing Season

Read Ahead: Luke 1:1-80; cp. Matthew 1:18-25