**Greater Than All - wk 14 – Faith Road Trip – Pt 2**

**Road trip with family as a kid – clueless but trust – just enjoy the trip.**

**Hebrews written to Jewish followers of Jesus thinking of going back to their old ways. The theme - don’t give up but grow up!**

**Hebrews 11:1 Now faith (Gk Pistos / Trust in God) is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. 2 This is what the ancients were commended for. (Heb 11 – known as the Hall of Faith!) 6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (\*Last week\*)**

**Biblical Faith - is a supernatural trust and assurance in what God says even if you don’t see it or understand it.**

**Faith is not a force, positive thinking, confession or absence of fear.**

**Faith is trusting God thru Jesus. Faith (trust) in God.**

**Faith is living in light of God's words despite our current reality**

**Hebrews 11:2 This is what the ancients were commended for….**

**After a description of faith – we get amazing examples.**

**ABRAHAM**

**Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham…**

**Last wk Able, Enoch and Noah… this wk, the father of 55% of the world’s religions, 3 major religions call him faither. 3rd most important person in Bible. Jesus – Moses - Abraham.**

**Romans 4 Calls Abraham the father of all who believe… / Galatians 3:6 Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."7 Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. (In Christ we are called children of Abraham… why?)**

**Abraham’s journey was a journey to let go and trust God**

**Hebrews 11:8 By faith (trusting in the Lord God) Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.**

**1. By Faith he obeyed and followed the word of God**

**He trusted God enough to leave security and comfort for the unknown**

**He trusted God enough to follow God’s promise even though he could not physically see it.**

**Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, Go from your country (what he knows) and your kindred (what he loves) and your father’s house (what he has security in) to the land that I will show you.**

**To be clear we are not Abraham. His promises are not ours. But we can learn from his faith and about the LORD.**

**Genesis 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (From your family – a savior to the world will come)**

**Abraham - Trusted God enough to follow God’s promise**

**Summer in a sermon entry (about 8) – “Where are we going?” - “Wherever our feet take us.” Her eyes got big and she smiled… she knew where ever daddy was taking here would be fun… trust.**

**He was called not only into a promise – but was called out of comfort and all he held most important. God pointed Abraham moved.**

**By Faith he obeyed and followed the word of God**

**He trusted God to leave security and comfort for the unknown**

**True faith leads to obedience. Word of God is not convenient. It confronts sin and selfishness. But by faith we obey & follow.**

**Hebrews 11:9 By faith (in the Lord God) he made his home (*paroikos*- temporary resident) in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, (as a sojourner, mobile, no house, like a gypsy, resident alien.) as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. (Why?) 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Greater city – the kingdom heaven)**

**He lived for a greater promise – this is what Christians are called to in the NT (1 Peter 2:11) Travelers – aliens – passing through.**

**Born a refugee in UR (Iraq) moved & settled in Haran (Turkey). God told him there’s land promised to his future descendants in Canaan (Israel).**

**God said go… no google maps, pics to prepare, Airbnb/ hotels – just go. Then when he followed years of silence followed - no residence, no land, no children, nothing- but he followed.**

**Abraham trusted God to - Leave his old way of life and his security for an “I'll show you later” AND that’s not all – He was then told to have a baby even though he was very old and wife past childbearing age.**

**(Gen 18) Abe told her and at first, she laughed – laughing in unbelief even offering her maidservant as a surrogate mother (misstep) she eventually learned to laugh in faith - and walk in Joy.**

**(She is commended along with Abe) Hebrews 11:11 And by faith (in God) even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children (KJV – “by faith she received strength to conceive”) because she considered (judged) him faithful (The Lord God) who had made the promise.**

**She was 90 yrs old when Isaac born – Abe was 100 yrs old.**

**2. By Faith they were enabled for God’s promise**

**They trusted God to enable what they were unable to do**

**God gave the strength for her to birth life, she received it by faith.**

**Heb 11:11 “because she considered him faithful who had made the promise.”**

**She had considered and judged that God was faithful and reliable. This kind of faith God enabled.**

**(At first) Genesis 18:12 Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?” 13 Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ 14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? (no) I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”**

**What we think is impossible God says it’s not too hard for me. If it is something I said to do. Walking in the world of God.**

**Good news - what God promises he enables. God calls us to righteousness (I can’t) promises the kingdom then gives us Jesus and HS – to empower and enable us.**

**Hebrews 11:12 And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, (Abraham and Sarah) came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.**

**Their faith gave birth to billions of people – the family of Jesus. More than they could have ever imagined.**

**13 All these people (those in Heb 11) were still living by faith when they died. (Died trusting and obeying – so many give up in a few wks or yrs, faith endures. faith perseveres) They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. (They saw the promise far off and welcomed it = embraced. They saw in the distance but did not get to see it come to pass or arrive at it) 14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. (Looking for something greater!!)**

**3. By Faith they saw beyond their own lifetime**

**They trusted God to use them in ways they would never see**

**He was motivated by a future he would never see.**

**The vision was for those who were not even with him yet!**

**Sowing time and treasures into the kingdom – trusting by faith that what you are doing will produce fruit you may never see in this life. (Your children, grandchildren, family, friends family, the world etc.)**

**Heb 11:15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. (They could have gone back at any time - They were not looking for an earthly city) 16 Instead, they were longing for a better country - a heavenly one. (Better promise, the kingdom of heaven- not Israel) Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.**

**Not only do we want to live unashamed of God – but have faith in such a way that God is unashamed to be our God.**

**They understood the promises for this life are simply a glimpse of something greater to come.**

**Abe had Faith to follow God to a new land / Faith to trust God in his old age for a child - Now a third example of his faith…**

**Hebrews 11:17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, 18 even though God had said to him, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” (Isaac was the promise but was willing to trust God)**

**Let’s take a look at that moment - one of the most bizarre and controversial events in the bible. Strange but true.**

**Genesis 22:1 Sometime later God tested Abraham. (Testing is a certainty! Testing is about trusting. While it's no fun it's nothing to fear.) He said to him, “Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. 2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."**

**What? Two Big Problems: 1) How could God ask for such a thing? 2) How could Abraham do such a thing?**

**Gen 22: 6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. (Walk around the room with a young person) As the two of them went on together, 7 Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" 8 Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.**

**How could he? 3 day walk, gave him plenty of time to go back**

**Pounding to his brain - “This can’t be right!” God said that thru Isaac the promise would come. Pounding to his emotions – This is my cherished son, God no!**

**Abe stood to lose not only a son, but his promised future?**

**If there was ever a time for Isaac to pick a fight w/ his dad it would be now – but he didn’t. Isaac willingly carrying that wood and laying down his life before his Father – is a glimpse of Jesus.**

**Abraham clip - How was he able to do this? He reached…??**

**Abe built the altar - ties up his son - lays him down - tears rolling down Genesis 22:10 Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. 12 "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." (A revealing knowledge of God’s perfect knowledge) 13 Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. (God is always right on time – always provides) He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."**

**Isaac – had Jacob – who has 12 sons – his son Judah gave us the family of Jesus the Messiah – the savior of the world!**

**You see God did not want Isaac – God wanted Abraham**

**God wants you – to trust him! To let go – and have faith!**

**How could God ask such a horrible thing? That’s because God had no intention of killing Isaac (He had a sacrifice prepared there) and knew full well that Abe was willing – but had a preordained a sacrifice.**

**Hebrews 11:17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son… 19 Abraham reasoned (concluded - reckoned) that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death. (Isaac was as good as dead – and God raised him back)**

**4. By Faith he was willing to let go of his promise**

**He trusted God enough to let go of his most important relationship**

**He trusted God no matter what. Not just what he could see, not just what was convenient or felt good, but even if it doesn’t always make sense. This is faith that pleased God.**

**Trusted God enough to follow God’s promise**

**Trusted God enough to try to have a child of promise**

**Trusted God enough to let go of the promise**

**When Abraham was confronted with a promise and a command from God which seemed to contradict each other, he did what we all should do: He obeyed the command and let God take care of the promise.**

**He trusted God would either bring him back to life or bring him something better.**

**Abe moved towards the unknown – accepted the mystery of change – didn’t let his limitations hold him back - embraced a future that would bring salvation to others – and never allowed the promise to be an idol.**

**God was giving us through Abe a glimpse of the savior, Jesus!**

**God led Abraham to Mt. Moriah, (Zion) very place Jesus would pour out his life-blood for the sins of the world 2000 yrs later - On that same mt. God provided a substitute for you too, Jesus**

**Jesus spoke of what Abe saw - John 8:56 Jesus said: Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it and was glad.**

**God wants to meet you on the mountain. Just as Abraham was called to follow – Jesus is call you to follow – Mark 8:34 - Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.**

**Will you let go of comfort, will you give up control, will you follow God’s word, will you walk with Him, will you trust?**

**That mountain, that altar – what do you cherish the most? Take it the mountain – lay it on the altar…**

**Abraham’s tests are our test: Many say, “God is important to me.” But truth is God doesn’t want to be “important”; he wants to be most important. (More than job, school, boyfriend, spouse, even children).**

**The Test:**

* **Can you trust God enough to embrace what you can’t see?**
* **Can you trust God enough to give up control of what you cherish?**
* **Can you trust God enough to release control of that situation?**
* **Can you trust God enough to let go of what you value the most?**

**I don’t know if I can. Judge and consider the Lord and know that he is reliable. (As was said to Sarah) Genesis 18:14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? (And God’s people say - no)**

**We have a God who specializes in doing things that seem impossible.**