

Living the Faith

- **Are you spending at least 5 minutes per day reading the Bible? (listening on CD/Online?)**
- **Have you shared your Conversion story/or a God Story?**
- **Are you hearing what the Spirit is saying?**
- **Did you spend some alone time with God this week? (No agenda, no bible, no music, no journal, etc.)**

Abram/Abraham – man of Faith

- In Genesis we are introduced to a man named Abram – his direct story is found from chapters 11-25 (although it continues today and will until the end of time).
- It is through Abram that God promises to fulfill His promise to provide a Savior to the world!
- God makes a Covenant with Abram and then revisits that covenant with him periodically over a 25 year time period – but it hadn't been fulfilled...

Genesis 17:1-7

1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. 2 Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.” 3 Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, 4 “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. 5 No longer will you be called Abram [exalted father]; your name will be Abraham [father of many], for I have made you a father of many nations.

6 I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. 7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

- Abraham & Sarah had tried to fulfill it on their own by Hagar being wife 2 and the birth of Ishmael (the son of an Egyptian servant woman)
- This is the cause of the middle east troubles today!

Genesis 21:5-7

5 Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6 Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.” 7 And she added, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

- God is faithful – although **NEVER IN A HURRY** – to fulfill His promises (25 years)!! (rarely early-never late!)
- We all seem to struggle in 3 areas: Belief, Patience, & doing it for Him!!

- God has given us the account of Abraham to learn these lessons and help us with these areas that we will struggle with!
- With our understanding of the miraculous work of God in and through Abraham and Sarah and the consequences and lasting impact of their ‘fixing it for God’ – we **SHOULD** learn to trust and wait on God!
- The priest’s of Israel taught, believed, & looked to this Covenant as the foundation of everything!

Luke 1:5-20

5 In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. 6 Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. 7 But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old. 8 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, 9 he was chosen by lot, according to the

custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside. 11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. 12 When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. 13 But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. 14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of

his birth, 15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. 16 He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” 18

Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

19 The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. 20 And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”

- “...your prayer has been heard.” (v13)
- “... how can I be sure of this?” (v18)
- He’d been taught & had taught the story of Abraham & Sarah – He knew, lived, and believed this! BUT!!

- Belief for me is different than believing...
- Believing a promise of God directly applies to my life is very different than believing they “have happened” or “May happen for others”
- More than likely Zachariah's prayer had been a prayer for many years (as they were old now).
- It's just easier to believe it's not meant for me just because it's been a while!
- Are we still praying/believing for something we asked God for last week, last month, last year?

Hebrews 11-12:3

1 Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. 2 This is what the ancients were commended for.

3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. 4 By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.

5 By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: “He could not be found, because God had taken him away.” For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. 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. 7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

8 By faith Abraham...

11 And by faith even Sarah...

20 By faith Isaac ...

21 By faith Jacob ...

22 By faith Joseph...

23 By faith Moses ...

29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea...

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell ...

31 By faith the prostitute Rahab...

32 And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. 35 Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain

an even better resurrection. 36 Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated 38 the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground. 39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, 40 since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made

perfect. (chapter 12) 1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Action Steps

- **Am I struggling to believe a promise of God that is for me?**
- **Have I gotten involved in trying to fix it or make it happen for God?**
- **Am I praying with patience?**
- **Faith – Belief – God**