



ADELAIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

FORWARD IN FAITH QT SERIES

June 2023

HEBREWS 11:1

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. - NIV



THANK YOU!

Firstly, we'd like to thank the members of the Adelaide Church Of Christ who gave up their time to write the following Quiet Times. Thank you for your time, energy, support and insight into the scriptures!

INTRODUCTION

Hebrews 11:1-2

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

Hebrews chapter 11 begins defining two things: what faith actually is and the people who have had it before us.

Faith is ultimately about Trust. It's a confident trust in what is unseen. It's trusting God in all circumstances. Whether in good times, hard times, in suffering, in temptation. It's holding fast to his Word no matter what. Your life is ultimately dependent on, do you trust God?

As we spend the next month studying Hebrews 11, your faith will be encouraged and deepened through the "ancients" who trusted God before us. And as the month goes on, we hope it also creates greater unity among The Church as we discuss our quiet times and what we learnt together!



JUNE 1

"CREATION & CREATOR"

INTRODUCTION

Hebrews 11:3 "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."

Before talking about what people of faith have done, the Hebrew writer focuses on "we", you and I included. That creation is not just a random coincidence, but the command of God.

READ

Romans 1:20

Psalm 19:1-6

QUESTIONS

- What does creation teach us about God?
- What does "eternal power and divine nature" mean in Romans 1:20? Research those terms.
- What amazes you about God's creation the most? What does it teach you about God's power and nature?

READ

Psalm 33:6-9

Psalm 139:13-14

QUESTIONS

- What was it specifically that created the entire universe?
- How powerful is the word of the Lord then, if from nothing his word can create everything!? How should we treat God knowing his word is so powerful?
- If God's word can create all this, what can his word do in your life today?
- Knowing that God has created you, how can you revere and praise God in your life today?

CONCLUSION

Life can be so busy and we can be so distracted by this world that we miss God right in front of us. It's important for us to spend time reflecting on the Creation. As Christians, we look at his creation and are reminded of who our God is, what he is like and how powerful his word is.

PRACTICALS

Take 10 minutes today to stop and enjoy/contemplate the creation and your creator.
Optional - Listen to "So will I"

JUNE 2

"FAITH IN THE MOMENTS"

INTRODUCTION

Abel's name means breath or vapour. Much like the breath on a cold day, the story of Abel is short. Yet his flash of a life is exalted. Praised for his faithfulness. Abel's story is not most of our story, where we have to make decisions everyday on what is faithful. Through understanding God's view on Abel's life and offering we can see what it means to be faithful.

READ

Hebrews 11:1-2, 4, 6

Genesis 4:1-12

Both brothers sought God's favour and later in the book of Leviticus both agricultural and livestock are acceptable as offerings.

QUESTIONS

- What is the difference between Cain and Abel's offerings? What does it have to do with faith?
- Why is it impossible to please God without faith?

In our walk as Christians we give time, money, attention to please God, yet we may do it in vain.

- Are your offerings like Cain's or Abel's?
- What stops you from giving your best to God? How does faith guide you?
- In your life what can you offer to God?
- How can you make an offering like Abel's?

CONCLUSION

The quality or nature of the offerings may seem like what God looks for to give favour to Abel over Cain. We see in the book of Hebrews that it was Abel's faith that moved him to give a more earnest sacrifice. God corrects Cain when he is angry about not being favoured, encouraging him that his offering would have been accepted if he had 'done well'. Had he believed that God would reward him and that was enough, maybe his offering would be accepted as well. What is the point of the sacrifices and offering in your life? Is it out of obligation, ritual or appearances? Is it out of faith? In everything we do it's not the quality or nature of what we are doing but the earnestness in faith that pleases God

JUNE 3



"THEN HE WAS NO MORE"

INTRODUCTION

Genesis 5 is a genealogy of Hope. The line of Seth was leading to a man of faith named Noah. Although it is shrouded by the common phrase "and he died", we come to a man who did not experience death, Enoch.

READ

Hebrews 11:5-6

Genesis 5:21-24

QUESTIONS

- What does the phrase "walked with God" mean? Think about when you walk with someone today.
- How Long did he walk faithfully with God? Consider how amazing of a life that is!
- How can you walk with God today?
- In Hebrews 11:5-6, what was God actually pleased by in Enoch?
- What was Enoch's reward for Seeking God/Having Faith?

Enoch had faith; he believed in God with all his heart. Enoch walked with God; he obeyed and had an intimate relationship with God. Enoch also believed God rewarded faith.

We also have to continually ask ourselves, do I believe in God and his word? Am I obeying him? Am I close to him? Do I believe God rewards my faith?

- Why do you think Enoch was taken away? (Consider Genesis 6:9 - Noah walked faithfully and was not taken away).

READ

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- When Jesus returns, whether you are dead or alive, what will happen to you?

CONCLUSION

There are many rewards for seeking God, but one guarantee is that after our death there is hope that "we will always be with the Lord"(1 Thessalonians 4:17), just like Enoch experienced. One day you will be no more. In Christ, God will take you away to be His in an incredible relationship with him!

PRACTICALS

Go on an actual walk with God and talk to him about things you need to "walk" with Him on.

JUNE 4

"REVERENT FEAR"

READ

Hebrews 11:7

Genesis 6:1-9:17

INTRODUCTION

During Noah's time, everyone around him had become morally bankrupt. The world had exploded with evil and everyone was aiming to live to fulfill their own desires and needs. The corruption and ungodly lifestyles that people had gotten themselves into was so destructive that God became grieved and considered wiping out humanity.

We are introduced to Noah in Genesis 6 and learn quickly that he was a "righteous man, blameless in his generation" (Gen 6:9a). Noah was atypical compared to society because he "walked with God" (Gen 6:9b) and showed reverent fear for Him through his actions of building an ark to save his family. Noah wasn't caught up in what people thought about him and allowed his faith to prompt him with what to do. There were no hesitations from Noah and his reverent fear led him to love God supremely, trust God completely, obey him wholeheartedly and to use his abilities.

QUESTIONS

- How might Noah have felt about the task God was asking him to do? What was Noah's response?
- In what ways can you show reverence for Christ today?
- What things in your life are you fearing at the moment and struggling to bring to God?

CONCLUSION

We are so blessed with a God that desires a deep relationship with us. God is clear with what he wants from us, just like he was clear with Noah with what he wanted from him. Unlike Noah, we have the scriptures to fall back on daily and remind us of His promises. Don't allow your external fears to get in the way of having a reverent heart for God.

PRACTICALS

Write down some external fears you are facing at this moment. Ask God to help guide you with these fears and grow more in your adoration for God.



JUNE 5

"HEAVENLY REWARDS"

READ

Hebrews 11:7

INTRODUCTION

How much do we really gain from living in this world? Sure, we can always get that next promotion or seek after popularity in our school environment or gain wealth by working those extra hours. However, at the end of the day, we are only living in our momentary lives.

Paul talks about how we should be building our foundation on Christ and if what is built on that foundation lasts, the builder will receive a reward (1 Cor 3:11-14). By building the ark, Noah displays that he was building on God's foundation. As a result, he became heir of righteousness. It was by Noah's faith that he received righteousness. God promises that he rewards those who earnestly seek him (Heb 11:6). What is getting in the way of your life at this moment to earnestly seek God?

There are so many things that God promises to reward us with throughout the scriptures. As you look over some of these promises, reflect and meditate on today's questions.

God's Rewards that He promises:

- Inheritance (Colossians 3:23-24)
- The Crown of Life (James 1:12)
- Eternal Life (Romans 6:23)
- Salvation (Ephesians 2:8)
- The Crown of Glory (1 Peter 5:4)

QUESTIONS

- What made Noah stand out for him to receive the reward of righteousness?
- Are there any of God's rewards that he promises that you struggle to embrace and why?
- What are you currently building your foundation on?

CONCLUSION

God has already done all of the hard work for us through Christ's sacrifice. Our faith to move forward and persevere may seem like a big task but we have God's grace to guide us. There is no more work that we need to do in order to receive God's rewards (Eph 2:8-9).

PRACTICALS

What promises of God will you hold on to today?



JUNE 6

"GO FAITHFULLY"

READ

Hebrews 11:8-10

Genesis 12:1-9

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes we feel stuck and we don't understand the ups and downs of life. It can be easy to leave God out of the picture and we start to wonder why we feel lonely and unsure of where we are heading. The truth is God has an amazing plan to prosper each and every one of us, just like we see in the story of Abraham. I'm sure he started to question his path as lived in those dusty tents and waited many years to finally father a child. Even so, we can be assured God will deliver us by reading his story.

QUESTIONS

- Where is God trying to lead you?
- Who is the chief architect in your life, is it you or God?

CONCLUSION

We need to let go of the reigns in our lives and allow God to build our lives and lead us into his proper purpose. Like Abraham we have a rich inheritance in the Gods Kingdom, so why do we stress and cry over worldly treasures? We need to make sure our hearts are all in for God and not for our own selfish desires.



JUNE 7

"A CITY PREPARED"

READ

Hebrews 11:12-16

Genesis 25:7-11

INTRODUCTION

We know that from Abraham an entire nation was born, God didn't fulfill his promise.. he showed just how majestic he is in keeping his promises! I think when Abraham gets to heaven he will be a little surprised to see all of his generations!

QUESTIONS

- Do you believe God will come through on his promises for you?
- Are you preparing your own city or are you content with a heavenly one?

We can so easily get distracted by this world and try to build up and store for our own city here. Abraham came to realise there was more life than this, that God had something far greater.. even heavenly!

- How can you adopt this way of thinking today?

CONCLUSION

We need to let go of the reigns in our lives and allow God to build our lives and lead us into his proper purpose. Like Abraham we have a rich inheritance in the Gods Kingdom, so why do we stress and cry over worldly treasures? We need to make sure our hearts are all in for God and not for our own selfish desires.

PRACTICALS

Write down 3 ways you can live with a more eternal outlook and worry less about the worldly things that can so often distract us.

JUNE 8

"A WOMAN LIKE US"

READ

Hebrews 11:11-12, Genesis 18:1-15

INTRODUCTION

Sarah had been unable to have children for many years. She decided to give her handmaid, Hagar, to her husband in order to obtain children by her. This was not how God intended to give Abraham and Sarah an heir, but was a mistake from which they learned to more fully trust in God. Years passed. Ishmael grew and had a relationship with his father. And still Sarah remained childless. Finally, when she was 90 years old, God again promised her a son. At first, she laughed! God told Abraham: "'I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son.' (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him)"

Notice Gen. 18:12-13: So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure? "Then the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?'

In spite of the initial laugh, Sarah came to truly believe God could and would do what He said.

QUESTIONS

- What were the consequences of Abram and Sarah's lack of faith in their lives?
- Would God still have blessed Sarah if she didn't have faith?
- Can you remember a time when you took matters into your own hands rather than trusting God?
- Which of God's promises do you find hardest to believe?
- What can we learn from Abraham and Sarah's example?
- Faith produces great results in our lives! What could and would God do through you if you only trusted Him for it?
- Gen. 21:1 - God always keeps His promises, even when they look impossible. Which promises of God look impossible to you?

CONCLUSION

Sarah was a beautiful woman who initially lived her life lacking faith in God's promises and ability to do what He said He would do. Her impatience resulted in poor decisions that revealed she could be jealous and harsh. However, as her faith grew, she became a great woman of faith that God used to fulfill His plan. Sarah's story shows us that it does not matter who we are, where we come from, our age, nor any other personal strengths or weaknesses, God can produce changes in us through our faith that can result in miraculous influence in our personal and extended relationships for generations to come.



JUNE 9

"EMBRACING THE PROMISES"

READ

Hebrews 11:17-19

Genesis 22:1-19

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

vs 17... Abraham trusted Gods word and fully embraced His promises that had been spoken. We can't always trust what comes out of one another's mouths, but over and over again God proves to be trustworthy in his word even despite the circumstances. Read Hebrews 10:36.

- How are you doing embracing Gods promises for you?
- Do you know what they are? If not, how can you find out? Persevere in this.

vs 19... He didn't get confused, he didn't try and change things, he didn't complain, he faithfully reasoned that God was above all and knows all and sees all, more than we can ever fathom. We are not always going to understand Gods plan, or where we are going, or the "why", but it's how we respond that matters. Abraham understood the capabilities of Gods almighty power. Do you?

- What will it take for you to not only understand this but to live it? (Ephesians 4:6)

vs 17... Through his greatest trial of all, Abraham displays an unreserved faith in being asked to do something, that would normally feel so inherently wrong, to his only son with Sarah through whom so much had been promised. Our instinct as parents is to protect, but sometimes this isn't always in the way we might think, or feel is right. The test is to trust God faithfully even when the way may seem instinctively wrong, as we know the heart that often leads the mind can be deceitful above all things (Jeremiah 17:9). Genesis 22:7 -This must have been heartbreaking to Abraham knowing that his son was the sacrifice. Yet he kept going, he persevered in faith.

- How/what would you do in this test? What is something in your life that God might be asking you to sacrifice or give up, or a situation to faithfully trust and obey him in?

CONCLUSION

How incredible that through Abraham trial, we get to see the same picture of God and his only son Jesus. Who was sacrificed for a greater purpose and lost only for a time before being brought back from death. We see Abraham's love for God, that he would faithfully obey, even by sacrificing his own son with his own hands. And most importantly, we see Gods intense love for us, his people, the generations promised to Abraham.



JUNE 10

"FAITHING THE FACTS"

READ

Hebrews 11:17-19

Genesis 22:1-19

Luke 17:5-6

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

Let's dig a little deeper from yesterday: Abraham's example of faith in this scripture, is an interaction in his relationship with God.

- How would you describe your interaction with God? Is it daily, is it weekly? Is it deep, or is it a quick text message prayer? Is he so deeply rooted and engraved in your heart that it is a continual uninterrupted flow of connection? What is your relationship with God like? How would you describe it? Is it obvious from the outside or is it hidden away?
- Do you have a story of faith? Write it down today, start with "By faith (your name)....."

We all have a story of faith, big or small. It is important for us to remind ourselves of the interactions of faith we have with God in our lives. Faith is powerful! Even a little bit of faith. But it's not us who makes it powerful, its God. Faith is a choice, a decision. It is tested daily. Faith is confidence and assurance in Christ, especially when these feel threatened.

Abraham's trial was long. It was not a fork in the road where he made an on-the-spot decision. It was a journey of faith, he had to travel with Isaac to the region of Moriah and then up a mountain (Genesis 22:2). He was prepared for the journey: he took help, he took wood, he took fire and a knife, he took his son. To be prepared takes time and consideration and so does obedience sometimes.

Do you think Abraham doubted at all along the way? Remember it says, "Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead"; in Hebrews 11:19. He held onto his faithful reasoning and decision to obey even when faced with an excruciatingly long journey to keep that faith. Abraham didn't have a perfect record, he also made many unfaithful decisions. But this gives us hope, that even in the imperfect we have hope for faith, even as small as a mustard seed that can grow into something bigger and stronger. Abraham was rewarded for his faith, we will be too.

- Are you withholding anything from God today? If so, what is it and why? What might you need to surrender?

CONCLUSION

Read James 1:12 - Remember your stories of faith today.



JUNE 11

"PASSING ON THE PROMISES"

INTRODUCTION

Despite being a figure of great importance to Abrahamic faiths, Isaac is a man about whom we know surprisingly little.

READ

Hebrews 11:20

Genesis 26:1-6

Genesis 25:23-25

Genesis 27:2

Genesis 27:27-29, 39-40

Genesis 28:1-5

QUESTIONS

- What do we know about Isaac? What kind of man was he?
- How old was he at the time he gave the blessings to Jacob & Esau?
- Is there any significance to Jacob being named first in Hebrews 11:20? If so, what?
- Is it relevant that Isaac's eyes are described as being dim (c.f. Deuteronomy 34:7)?
- How is Isaac being faithful in giving blessings to his sons?
- Why do you think this is the act of faith chosen for Isaac rather than other events in his life?
- What are God's promises that you need to trust and hold firm to? (Be specific).
- How does your failure to trust in the promises hold you back in your relationship with God?

CONCLUSION

God had blessed Isaac in the same way as He had Abraham, yet, though he had lived a blessed life (rich and prosperous, Genesis 26:12-13), the promises of God to his father and to him had not yet been fulfilled. At the end of his days, however, it appears that his faith may be wavering a little because he tries to give the blessing to his firstborn and favourite despite what God had prophesied when Esau & Jacob were born. (Rebekah too is trying to manipulate the situation so that her favourite will get the blessing.) All the same, in the end, Isaac surrenders to God's plan and he showed "confidence in what [he hoped] for and assurance about what [he did] not see" by passing on those promises to his sons, especially Jacob.



JUNE 12

"LEANING ON THE PROMISES"

INTRODUCTION

Jacob is old and dying. He has lived a life characterised in the early part by deceit. There is a great deal of symmetry between verse 21 and the previous verse (and, indeed, verse 22); this is surely by design. What are we to make of this?

READ

Hebrews 11:21

Genesis 47:29-31

Genesis 48:8-22

QUESTIONS

- What are the similarities between this situation and that of his father Isaac?
- Why does the author of Hebrews quote Genesis 47:31? What does this show about Jacob?
- What is important about Jacob elevating Joseph's sons to being deemed his own? • How many portions does this mean Joseph receives? What does that imply?
- What has Jacob learned (and not learned) from his own experience of receiving blessing from his father?
- How do you try to manipulate God and his promises to your own "benefit?" Do you really benefit when you do that?

CONCLUSION

Jacob, like his father, was old and dying when he blesses his grandsons. He has learned many things — it took him a long time! — especially to trust in God, hence "leaning on his staff", and not his own strength. He has also learned that God does not hold to mankind's order of things by blessing the younger of Joseph's sons ahead of the older. He likewise elevates Joseph to the position of firstborn. (Although, maybe he hasn't learned everything because it appears he may still be trying to manipulate things by choosing Joseph, his favourite, instead of Judah.). But above all, he, like his father, passed on the promises of God that are still yet to be fulfilled. He trusted God and he had full "confidence in what [he hoped] for and assurance about what [he did] not see"; that his family would indeed one day inherit the land of Canaan (which we know was finally fulfilled).

PRACTICALS

It's easy to drink the world's Kool-aid and not even know it. Where in your life might you be following the world's expectations and not God's? Pray for God to show you; have a conversation with other disciples about how you might be doing this.



JUNE 13

"FAITHFUL FATHER"

INTRODUCTION

God works in His own way - not ours - and He works to His timetable - not ours - and He is always faithful in fulfilling His promises.

READ

Hebrews 11:22

Isaiah 55:8-11

Genesis 45:4-8

Genesis 37, 39; Genesis 41-42:5; Genesis 45:4-46:7

QUESTIONS

- How much do the circumstances of Joseph's life in Genesis 39 match the following verses: Genesis 39:2-3, 21, 23? Why?
- Why can't you judge whether "God is with you" or that you have God's favour by your present circumstances?
- Have you ever doubted God's faithfulness to you, only to see in retrospect how God was working all things together for good ? (Read Genesis 45:4-8 again) Write down an example.
- When it seems as if God is not fulfilling His promises to you, what do you do?

JUNE 14

"BURIAL BONES"

INTRODUCTION

It was about 450 years after Joseph's death, that his bones were laid to rest in the promised land. A very long time and many significant events later, the Israelites' oath to Joseph was finally fulfilled.

READ

Hebrews 11:22

Genesis 48:21-22

Genesis 50:22-25

Exodus 13:19

Joshua 24:32

QUESTIONS

- What promises of God did Joseph hold on to?
- Why did he not forget God's promises in favour of the prosperous life he was given in Egypt?
- How did Joseph know, from the events of his life, that God's plan would always prevail? (Think of what you learnt from yesterday's QT...)
- Joseph was still faithful to the promises of God even though they would not be fulfilled in his lifetime. What are some promises that God expects you to be faithful to, even though they may not be fulfilled in your lifetime?
- What sorts of things make you forget the promises of God?



JUNE 15

"FAITH OR FEAR"

INTRODUCTION

In the providence of God, Amram's younger son (Moses) became one of the greatest leaders in the history of Israel. We never know how God may use us and our descendants. We simply need to faithfully discharge the duties God has given us and we may be surprised by the results - if not in this life, certainly in the life to come.

READ

Hebrews 11:23

Psalm 56:11

Exodus 1:6-2:10

QUESTIONS

- Who did Pharoah fear?
- Who did the Midwives fear?
- Who did Moses' parents fear?
- What were Moses' parents risking by not throwing him in the Nile River when he was born? What would the consequences have been?
- What did this one act of faith lead to:
 - a. For Moses, the baby?
 - b. For Moses, the man?
 - c. For the nation of Israel?
- Recall a time when you did not give in to fear but instead acted faithfully in the face of adversity?
- If you cannot recall a time, are you being tested in a way that tempts you to give way to your fear?

[Bonus scripture: Read Psalm 27:1]



JUNE 16

"MATURE FAITH"

READ

Hebrews 11:24-26

Exodus 2:11-17, Exodus 3:1-15, Exodus 12:21-28

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

Moses wasn't wise from the start, he had experienced life and matured as a result. This choice came not from childish exuberance but from mature deliberation. He wasn't making this choice out of ignorance but from lessons lived and learned.

- What will it take for you to mature and make wiser decisions? To move onto solids instead of milk (Hebrews 5:13-14).
- Is it just a number of years, or something deeper? What might be preventing you from maturing?

Read: James 1:5, Proverbs 8:10-11, James 3:17

- Looking at Hebrews 11:24, what labels do you want to steer clear of? What do you want to be known for instead?

Moses could have chosen the easy way, the way where he would have been rich and famous and admired and had whatever he wanted. Is that what you are striving for each day? To have status and money and an easy life, storing up treasures for yourself (Luke 12:13-21). Moses chose his path, "to be mistreated along with the people of God" and he chose it with conviction: he refused the other way. We all have a fork in our road, often we have many, where we need to choose our path.

Read: Jeremiah 6:16, Matthew 7:13-14

- Moses made his choice "by faith", not by how easy or most fun or most self-preserving. How do you make decisions each day? What can help you make them faithfully?

Hebrews 11:26... This was more important than the treasures of Egypt. Persecution and disgrace were of "greater value." Why? Not being stuck in the here and now, in the instant gratification which is so addictive and innate in our modern society with drive through, take away, express online delivery of whatever you want and whenever you want ("fleeting pleasures"). Instead, Moses looked forward, to help him see what was of greater value now. Moses looked forward to his reward in Christ.

Read: 2 Peter 3:14, Philippians 3:13-14, 2 Timothy 4:8

- Are you looking forward to your reward? What will help you remember to look forward when you are tempted by the here and now?



JUNE 17

"PERSEVERANCE & PASSOVER"

READ

Hebrews 11:27-28

Exodus 2:11-17, Exodus 3:1-15, Exodus 12:21-28

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

- Looking at Hebrews 11:27, Fight or flight: Which one is your default mode when confronted with a challenge or persecution? Faith or fear?
- What do you fear in the world?
- Do you see God or look to God when you are confronted with fear?

Read: Isaiah 59:1-2, Isaiah 59:10

Moses' faith prevailed instead of fear. We have an invincible courage in God that is enabled by faith. Commentary says, "By faith we may see this invisible God. We may be fully assured of his existence, of his providence, and of his gracious and powerful presence with us. Such a sight of God will enable believers to endure to the end whatever they may meet with in the way." Read: Psalm 27:1

Hebrews 11:27... It's not cliché because it's hard. We use the word "persevere" a lot and so sometimes it may lose its meaning a little, but when something is difficult to achieve, we need reminders of why we need it. The word persevere is used 10 times in the NIV and the word perseverance is used 11 times in the NIV, all are in the New Testament. And Moses' reason for persevering was because "he saw him who is invisible", our eyes are not the only part of our being that sees.

Read: 1 Timothy 1:17, Romans 1:20, 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

- What helps you to see God clearly?

Hebrews 11:28... Like Abraham, Moses faithfully followed God's instructions. Although the Passover was a bit of a mystery, he told the Israelites what God had instructed and they, including Moses, did it faithfully and so they were spared (Exodus 12:21-28). It is easy to become complacent in following God's instructions and keeping our commitment to God. Moses didn't lose sight regarding the Passover, even when he was leading the people to the promised land he continued to keep the Passover as a lasting ordinance (Exodus 12:14). Even when they were free the Israelites always remembered what God had done by celebrating the Passover festival.

- When we come through challenging times, do we remember to give thanks to God and give him the glory?

Read: Exodus 12:25-27, Numbers 9:4-5, Matthew 26:2, Luke 22:19-20, 1 Peter 1:18-19

Let's always remember (not just when we take communion) and celebrate that we have been marked with the blood of the lamb of God (Christ), set apart and spared.



JUNE 18

"OBEDIENT FAITH"

INTRODUCTION

After 430 years of endless labour that was filled with tears, God finally fulfilled his promise of bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. Shouts of joy and songs of praise could be heard as they moved towards the promised land. Just as the Israelites think that the reign of terror from Pharaoh is over, they look up and see 600 chariots charging toward them. With no place to hide in the desolate land, the Israelites begin their strident grumbles against Moses. In the face of Pharaoh's mighty army, how will the Israelites escape and be credited faithful?

READ

Hebrews 11:29

Exodus 14:9-13, 21-22, 27-31

Extra verses: James 2:14-26, John 14:15, Luke 11:28, Matthew 5:19, 1 Corinthians 4:20

QUESTIONS

- Did the Israelites appear to be more faithful or faithless?
- How were the Israelites credited as faithful after grumbling towards God?
- Which is better in God's eyes: faithful speech or action? Why is that?
- What mindset did the Israelites have in order to cross the red sea by faith? (v13)
- Do you have a tendency to talk by faith, instead of walking by faith?
- What are the ways you are faithful in your speech only?
- What scriptures remind us the importance of faith and action? (check extra verses)
- How does God want you to be faithful in your actions?
- How can you build your faith upon your actions today?
- What are some small acts of faith you can do?
- Read and meditate on the blessings on people who walked by faith in the bible

CONCLUSION

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." The Israelites did not demonstrate a low level of confidence in God in words. However, the author of Hebrews credited their faith as they have shown assurance to God in their actions: simply walking through the Red Sea. The Israelites obeyed, therefore, they walked by faith. While doubt is inevitable and complaints are reasonable at times, faithful actions are what please God. Faithful speech is no doubt commendable, however, let's not lose sight that acting in faith is more important and significant.

JUNE 19

"POSSIBILITIES OF FAITH"

READ

Hebrews 11:30, Joshua 6

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

Most of you may already know the story, the Israelites marched around this massive wall for seven days. And on the seventh day they marched around it seven times. And it came crashing down. Historians believe that the wall was over 13 feet tall and 6 feet wide. It was surrounding one of the largest cities in 7000 B.C. It was the first walled city in history. This seems like an unbelievable occurrence. But it happened. That's the God we worship, a God who makes the impossible possible. We're gonna focus on the qualities the Israelite army had to have to go through with this.

Faith and trust of the Israelites - It didn't seem like a wall that big would come crashing down with just some people walking around it and making noises. Us as disciples would have our doubts about it, knowing the might and strength of God. It took a lot of faith in the commands of God for the Israelites to go through with that. A lot of the times when God asks us to do something or live a certain way, we tend to question it and maybe even ridicule it. We think we know better or we know what is best for us. But how can we, mere human beings, possibly know better than the creator of the universe?

- Do you have the kind of faith that the Israelites had in this situation?
- Are you willing to take a risk for the word of God?
- Do you trust his promises for your life?

Proverbs 3:5-6

Obedience of the Israelites - There must've been a lot of Israelites who didn't entirely believe in the possibility of this happening. They must've had their own doubts about it. And that is a very human reaction. Maybe they didn't fully understand what God was asking them to do. They still obeyed nonetheless. That's the kind of obedience that God expects from us. We may not fully understand the things that he wants us to do or things that he plans for us. And that's okay. Our small human brain doesn't have to fully comprehend the plans of our perfect God. All we have to do is obey him. He has told us in many scriptures that all we have to do is obey him.

- What is stopping you from having that complete obedience to God? Are you asking him for strength to help you follow his commands?

Life may seem out of control a lot of times. And that's okay. God is calling us to have faith in him and his word. The kind of faith that can cause a massive wall to come crashing down. And he calls us to obey him even when we don't understand him fully.

JUNE 20

"COURAGEOUS FAITH"

READ

Hebrews 11:31, Joshua 2

INTRODUCTION

After wandering 40 years Israel was poised to take the land of Canaan. The first city in its sight was Jericho. Rahab was a prostitute living in the walls of Jericho. Rahab made a bold claim and request to the two spies who infiltrated Jericho. We know the LORD has given you this land, she said, and Jericho is utterly helpless and hopeless. But Rahab had one hope. One Who is Hope. "The Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below" she confessed and surrendered herself to God's mercy. She asked the spies to spare her life and her family's lives when Israel attacked Jericho, just as she had spared the two spies. "Save us from death!" she pleaded. The spies promised to protect Rahab and gave her a scarlet cord to hang from her window. Rahab kept the scarlet cord in the window of her house, where on the seventh day, the army advanced once more and marched seven times around Jericho's thick walls. Every bit of the city, its buildings, and its inhabitants were destroyed — except Rahab and her family.

QUESTIONS

- What prompted Rahab to hide the spies?
- In what way were the Canaanites disobedient to God?
- Who was at risk of her decision?
- What kind of trouble are you willing to face for your faith?
- Why was Rahab willing to risk everything?
- Do you act when you are prompted by your faith?
- Can we have faith without deeds?
- Is your life defined by God's grace or your sin?

CONCLUSION

Rahab had faith and acted on it. For her courageous faith, this woman with a bad reputation was enrolled among the faithful in the book of Hebrews—the only woman, besides Sarah, named there. James used Rahab as an example of how a character can be transformed by a living faith that yields works (James 2:25). And eventually, she was no longer known as the harlot who hid the spies but as the wife of Salmon, the mother of Boaz, and the ancestor of Jesus (Matthew 1:5–16).



JUNE 21

"WEAKNESS TO STRENGTH"

INTRODUCTION

In life, we tend to hide our weaknesses and show our strengths. What really matters though is what does God think about your weaknesses? Today we'll look at Gideon (Hebrews 11:32) and learn what Hebrews 11:34 says, that his "weakness was turned to strength". And we'll answer the question, What does it mean for us today for our weakness to be turned to strength?

READ

Judges 6:1-23, 36-40

Judges 7:1-8, 19-24

QUESTIONS

- When Gideon was first called, how did he view himself? How did he feel towards God?
- What reassurances does God give Gideon?
- Do you feel you are too weak to work for God? What do you view as your weaknesses?
- Gideon is called to "go in the strength you have", how can you do that today?
- How large was the army Gideon was to destroy?
- God says to Gideon in 7:2, "you have too many men". Why did God want him to make his army smaller?
- Why does God use our weakness to bring victories?

2 Corinthians 12:7b-10

CONCLUSION

Faith trusts that God can use our weaknesses for his glory. Gideon was the weakest of the weak. He was asked to thin out his army. And God threw off the oppression of the Midianites through him! Rather than being discouraged about your weaknesses, begin to think how can God use this for his glory!

PRACTICALS

List out some spiritual victories in your life that you feel too weak for. Pray about them!



JUNE 22

"FAITH-FILLED COMPANIONS"

INTRODUCTION

Being convinced that God's plan ultimately prevails - against all odds - is seldom a challenge. God does not need our belief to be victorious: He only requires us to act in line with His calling. With His power, our actions result in victory.

READ

Hebrews 11:32-38

Judges 4

Judges 5

QUESTIONS

- How does this story start? What did it take for the Israelites to cry out to the Lord for help? (Read also the ESV: Judges 5:6-7)
- Why did God call on Barak?
- Why would Barak, a commander, only go if Deborah went with him?
 - a. Barak was very familiar with the formidable and "unconquerable" armies of Jabin. Do you also "run the numbers" first (living by sight) or do you take God at his word (living by faith)?
 - b. If you consider that one chariot was worth up to 80 fighting men, what was Barak up against?
- How was Barak faithful to God's calling? What was the outcome?
- God ultimately had the victory (of course!), but some of Israel's tribes did not participate. For us today, what are the consequences of holding back and having 'much searching of heart' instead of answering God's call (Judges 5:13-18)?
- What is the value of aligning ourselves with faith-filled companions?

JUNE 23

"THE ANTI-HERO"

INTRODUCTION

Samson is undoubtedly the most notorious character in the book of Judges. He seems, despite supposedly being a Nazarite, to be singularly the most unfit person to "lead" the people of God, although he doesn't really lead anyone; he's the only one of Israel's judges who doesn't raise an army. And yet, of all the characters in Judges, he has the most said about him; by some margin.

READ

Hebrews 11:32-38

Judges 13-16

QUESTIONS

- Is Samson's story more about faith or more about revenge?
- Where does Samson appear to place his faith? Is it in God, his strength, or even his hair?
- Is there anything to be understood from the author of Hebrews' list order for Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah?
- How does your life reflect the attitudes of Samson? Are you quick to be upset at the actions of others? Do you secretly take delight when someone who's hurt you has something bad happen to them? What instead does Jesus call us to think and do?

CONCLUSION

Samson is a man who breaks all the rules, who lives a dissolute life and shows little regard for God in anything he does. His life is characterised by revenge and he wholeheartedly follows the myth of redemptive violence — the idea that violence can fix the evil in the world — and yet He overcomes the Philistines — perhaps Israel's greatest enemy in the days prior to King Solomon — many times. He's almost an anti-hero. Samson was supposed to be a Nazarite, set apart to God. He led a lonely life, apart for all the wrong reasons. Yet still he ultimately understands and shows great faith in God. He had "confidence in what [he hoped] for and assurance about what [he did] not see" to the point of surrendering his own life to defeat the enemies of God. Does that remind you of anyone?

JUNE 24

"OATHS & SACRIFICES"

INTRODUCTION

Jephthah is one of the most notorious characters in the book of Judges, perhaps second only to Samson. He is famous for the wrong reasons: he ends up sacrificing his daughter because of an oath he has made.

READ

Hebrews 11:32-38

Judges 11:1-12:7

QUESTIONS

- How is Jephthah faithful?
- What can you tell about Jephthah's relationship with God from the narrative in Judges 11?
- What can we tell about Jephthah's faith from Judges 11:23-24?
- What can we learn about Jephthah's faith from his daughter?
- What does the episode with the Ephraimites tell us about Jephthah's character?
- How might you be worshipping God according to what the world dictates? Is your religion pure?
- What are the proper sacrifices that God wants you to make? (Consider Romans 12:1-2)

Extra Credit:

- Did Jephthah do the right thing by sacrificing his daughter?

CONCLUSION

Jephthah is a man of ignominious birth, a person of petty jealousies, and one whose relationship with God is skewed; he worships Yahweh more like a god of the pagans.

But he trusts implicitly that God had given the land to his people, indeed, that the land was God's and that God would give him victory as a result. He had "confidence in what [he hoped] for and assurance about what [he did] not see."



JUNE 25

"DAVID AND HIS REPENTANCE"

READ

Hebrews 11:32–38

2 Samuel 11 & 12

INTRODUCTION

As we read in 2 Samuel, David fell into sin when he decided to take Bathsheba as his wife and have her husband killed. How did this man who broke at least six of the Ten Commandments (#1 putting his desires before God, #6 murder, #7 adultery, #8 stole, #9 lied, and #10 coveted) come to be known for his faith in the Lord? Repentance. But he did not repent straight away. Chapter 11 ends with Uriah dying, David making Bathsheba his wife and the birth of their child. That means more than nine months have passed since David committed these sins, and there was no repentance. David simply covered it up and moved on. So, what does God do towards David's unrepentant heart? It would be justified for him to destroy all David had or to wash his hands off David and not associate with him anymore. But if this was God's response to our sin we would all be lost forever. None of us would ever come back to God because the natural sequel to sin is not repentance, but to cover it up, hiding, and running from God! God sends His prophet Nathan to confront David with a parable in the following chapter. In verse 13 David finally confesses. Confessing was the start of David's repentance but not the cause of it. The Word of the Lord brought by Nathan broke through in David's life when nothing else could. The power of God's word greatly changed David's life.

QUESTIONS

- Specifically, what were the sins David committed in chapter 11?
- What were the consequences of David's sin?
- What are the sins in your life that you are hiding away from? Be specific.
- How are these sins stopping you from being faithful?
- Like Nathan the prophet, how has God been initiating with you recently?
- How can you repent from these sins?
- What are some ways for you to now move forward in faith, leaving behind being plagued by sin?

CONCLUSION

David's journey with faith, sin and repentance shows how perfection is not required to be considered "faithful" by God. Weak faith is still better than unbelief. We have faith in our God because He forgives us for our ugliest sins, reaches out to us when we hide away from him, sends His Word to us when we most need it and shows us how to repent and have faith.



JUNE 26

"DAVID'S FAITHFULNESS"

READ

Hebrews 11:32–38

1 Samuel 17

INTRODUCTION

Israel is shaking in their boots and is terrified of the Philistine army. The Philistine army has put forward their strongest champion – Goliath from Gath - and the Israelites are too afraid to fight him. Goliath is seen taunting the armies of Israel to send their best men forward to fight him. Furthermore, Goliath goes on to mock and insult the Israelites – the Lord's nation. In comes David, a young man who tends to sheep and is not fit to be a soldier. What is David's response when he hears of the giant Goliath? V.32 David who is probably a teen goes and encourages the King! He says, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." David puts himself up to fight the giant Goliath. But why? David felt outraged at the way that the heathen Goliath had been defying God and insulting His chosen people, Israel. David's heart was so intensely loyal to God that he could not bear to hear such things. He was therefore willing to face Goliath and stop him. David's faith led him to go into this fight knowing that he will win. He will win because God is fighting with him. David said to Goliath, v.45 "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head."

QUESTIONS

- Why were the Israelites so afraid of Goliath?
- How was David able to fight and beat Goliath?
- Why did God choose David to fight for Him?
- What are the "Goliaths" in your life, that you are afraid to fight?
- Have you been underestimating how God can use you to fight for him? If yes, how can God use you?
- What has stopped you from believing and having faith in the all-powerful God is fighting from your corner and you will win?

CONCLUSION

David's loyalty to God made him willing to take this great risk for the sake of God's Name. David showed great courage that day. That is true of all people who are faithful to God. Faithfulness will inevitably lead us into situations of danger, where we have to put at risk our reputation, finances, status, or even our own lives. The courage we show at such times is a key indicator of our faithfulness.

JUNE 27

"LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS"

READ

Hebrews 11:32–38

1 Samuel 2:12-3:21

INTRODUCTION

Up to this point in this Hebrews 11, we have seen 18 examples of faith. The next unit runs from verse 32 to verse 38.

The first paragraph covers three periods: The Judges, early Monarchy (Samuel, David), and the Prophets. The six men named in this verse were all leaders. Verses 32 and 33 refer to those who attained great things for God. In a time of spiritual darkness for Israel, a time when the voice of prophets were rare, Samuel is born of Hannah; previously a barren woman and slave to Samuel's father. When Samuel was a young boy, Hannah took him to become an apprentice under the priest, Eli. God eventually reveals himself to Samuel, and Samuel responds to the voice of God with an eagerness to listen and obey.

QUESTIONS

- Why did God choose to speak to Israel through Samuel?
- What are the differences between Eli and Samuel?
- How did Samuel respond when he realised it was the Lord who was speaking to him?
- In dark times in your life, do you respond to God like Samuel?
- How do you know when God is speaking to you in your life?
- What distracts you from listening to the voice of God?
- How does your faith impact your willingness to obey the voice of God?

CONCLUSION

In Israel's dark times it was easy to believe that God had forgotten them. God showed his steadfastness and mercy through a barren woman called Hannah. Because of her faith, God used her son to reveal Himself to the nation of Israel after he recognised God's voice and had a willingness to obey it.

PRACTICALS

Throughout today, pray about how you can recognise God's instruction in your life and increase your willingness to obey.



JUNE 28

"DANGERS OF EARTHLY DESIRE"

READ

Hebrews 11:32–38

1 Samuel 8

INTRODUCTION

In the last quiet time we saw God give a light to the Israelites through Samuel and his obedience to the voice of God. Throughout Samuel's life he was a prophet, delivering the words of God to His nation. When Samuel is getting old, he appoints his sons Joel and Abijah to lead Israel. They were the opposite of their father; perverted and accepting bribes. The nation of Israel pushed back on Samuel and instead asked for a king to rule over them like all the other nations had.

QUESTIONS

- What was the Israelites motives for wanting a king? (Verse 5)
- Why did God allow them to have a king, despite his warnings?
- Do you regularly examine your motives when you ask God for things? How often are they rooted in desire for wealth, security, power, status etc?
- Can you remember a time when you went down your own path, despite God's warnings against it?
- How can we regularly make sure our life and decisions are aligned to God's plans?

CONCLUSION

1 Samuel 8 is a cautionary tale, highlighting the dangers of allowing earthly desires to overshadow our trust in God's sovereign rule. It prompts us to examine the motives behind our desires and reminds us to seek God's will above all else.

PRACTICALS

Throughout today, pray for God to reveal your motives and to find true surrender in His plan for your life.



JUNE 29

"FAITH IN DANGER"

READ

Daniel 6:1-28

INTRODUCTION

Daniel is one of the prophets in the Old Testament. When he was young he was kidnapped from the kingdom of Judah and his Jewish culture, into the kingdom of Babylon, where he was fed a foreign food, given a foreign name, and taught to worship foreign gods. However, he has always been faithful to God, and God has been faithful to him as well that He has given him a ministering role over all of Babylon, in a country where everyone else worships a different god than his. What does Daniel's faith looks like? By faith, what has Daniel seen in God's promise?

QUESTIONS

- If you were Daniel, how would you respond to the king's decree?
- If the Australian government issued a capital punishment to all those who worship God, starting tomorrow, how would you feel? What would you do?
- Is Darius worried about Daniel? Who seems more worried about Daniel's life? Darius or Daniel? Did Darius have faith in God?
- Did God promise to save Daniel from being eaten by lions?
- Who is the king who saved Daniel at the end?
- Why did Daniel suffer no harm? (Hint: v23)
- What exactly did Daniel trust in God about? What promise did Daniel hold onto?
- What are some promises from God that you remember?
- Is the promise that Daniel trusted in applicable to you? What does it apply to for you?
- How can you remind yourself of this promise daily, so that you may trust as Daniel does?
- Why is it hard to wrestle with trusting this promise in hard times? What is your usual way to wrestle? Is it effective? What are some other ways to go about it?

CONCLUSION

The book of Hebrews said that faith like Daniel is what the ancients were commended for (Hebrew 11:2). What do you need to pray about to have a faith like Daniel's? - To know the promises of God? - To see how they apply in your life? - To believe what God has promised? - To kill the old self who runs away from God's promises?

JUNE 30

"EVEN IF HE DOES NOT"

INTRODUCTION

We talk a lot about how God answers our prayers and works in our lives in amazing ways. But what happens to our faith when we think he's not working? What kind of person are you when God doesn't answer your prayers in the way you think he should or even says "no"? Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are faced with this exact situation in the following text as the whole province of Babylon is ordered to worship an idol in the form of King Nebuchadnezzar. If these men also don't obey, there are dire consequences for them.

READ

Daniel 3:1-30

QUESTIONS

- What kind of character does it seem like King Nebuchadnezzar has?
- What kind of character does it seem like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego have?
- How do Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego describe/see God's character?
- Why would these men refuse to bow to King Neb even if they got thrown into the furnace and even if God didn't save them?
- What was the outcome of these three men disobeying King Nebuchadnezzar? What is something they experienced because they disobeyed the King?
- What does this show us about who God is?
- Which character are you most like in this story: King Nebuchadnezzar or Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? How?
- What is something in your life right now that God might not "save" you from?
- How can you have faith like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego towards this situation?

CONCLUSION

At the end of the day, God sometimes chooses to work in ways that seem counter intuitive to us but they will end in bringing glory and honor to Him (Ps. 46:10, Rom. 8:28). We can be confident as Christians that whatever furnaces we face, Jesus, the Son of Man, is right there alongside us. We can be confident that God will use our present sufferings always for our good as well. (Rom. 8:18-25)

PRACTICALS

Memorise a scripture to hold on to as you face your current furnace
Optional - Listen to "Even If" by Mercyme.