



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

FAITHFUL YET FLAWED FAITH THAT STEPS OUT HEBREWS 11:8-16

MAIN POINT

Biblical faith is confidence grounded in the person and work of Jesus Christ that produces action, anticipation, and perseverance—even when the promises are not yet seen.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

When have you had to step into something without knowing the full outcome?

What makes it difficult to step out in faith rather than stay where you're comfortable?

Would you describe yourself as cautious or courageous when it comes to spiritual decisions? Why?

Abraham and Sarah were faithful—but flawed. They doubted, struggled, and even tried to take control at times. Yet they are remembered in Hebrews 11 not for their flaws, but for their faith. Biblical faith is not perfection. It is trusting obedience that moves when God calls.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ HEBREWS 11:8-16.

What did Abraham do when God called him?

What made his obedience remarkable?

Why is “not knowing where he was going” such a key detail?

How does obedience reveal whether faith is real?

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ HEBREWS 11:11–12 .

How did Sarah demonstrate faith despite her past doubts?

What does it mean that she “considered Him faithful who had promised”?

Faith is not the absence of struggle—it is choosing to trust God despite it.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ HEBREWS 11:10; 14-16.

What was Abraham ultimately looking forward to?

What does it mean that he was “seeking a homeland”?

Abraham lived in tents because he knew this world was not his foundation. He desired a better country—a heavenly one.

How does eternal anticipation shape present obedience?

What happens when believers lose sight of the “better country”?

Faith that steps out sees beyond temporary comfort to eternal promise.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ HEBREWS 11:13.

What stands out to you about the phrase “These all died in faith”?

How can someone die in faith without receiving the promise?

What does it look like to live as a “stranger and exile” today?

Faith that does not act, anticipate, or persevere is not biblical faith. At best, it is religious routine.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Does your faith prove itself through actions?

Where is God calling you to step out right now?

Does your faith anticipate the promises of God?

Are you living more for what is temporary or eternal?

Does your faith remain steadfast even when you have not yet received the promises?

Where are you tempted to give up?

What is one specific step of obedience you need to take this week?

PRAYER

Pray that your group would be people characterized by real, biblical faith—faith that acts when called, anticipates what God has promised, and perseveres even when the fulfillment seems distant.

Ask God to help you step out, even when you cannot see the whole path.

COMMENTARY

| HEBREWS 11:8-16

Heb. 11:8–9 God called Abraham to leave Haran and go to Canaan (Gen. 12:1–4). obeyed. Faith leads to obedience to God’s promise and calling. inheritance. Also used of Christian salvation (Heb. 9:15). not knowing where he was going. See 11:1. land of promise. See Gen. 15:18–21. On God’s promises, see Heb. 6:12–15. foreign land. See 11:13–16.

Heb. 11:10 Abraham is portrayed as yearning for the heavenly city (developed further in vv. 13–16; 12:22–24; 13:13–14).

Heb. 11:11–12 Sarah. See Gen. 21:1–7. That Sarah laughed, apparently in unbelief (Gen. 18:9–15), is potentially problematic for her role as an example of faith; however: (1) the author is happy to speak of the true faith of Sarah despite her failings, and (2) Sarah apparently later had a change of heart, as her laughter became a genuine expression of joy at the birth of Isaac (Gen. 21:6), whose name means “laughter.” received power to conceive (lit., “power for the foundation of seed”). Although some translations give Abraham as the subject, it is best to take “Sarah” as the subject here (as the ESV does), because (1) both Sarah’s name and “herself” (Gk. autē) are in the nominative case (indicating the subject of the sentence), and because (2) making Abraham the subject requires either an unusual grammatical understanding of the words for “Sarah herself” or

an assumption that an early copyist made an error in transcribing those two words. considered him faithful. See Heb. 10:23. stars . . . sand. An allusion to Gen. 22:17.

Heb. 11:13 died in faith. They were faithful even unto death. not having received. Abraham and Sarah especially exemplify this: called to a Promised Land and promised innumerable offspring, they merely embraced these promises while living nomadically in a land not wholly theirs, where they had just one son together. strangers and exiles on the earth. See especially Gen. 23:4; also Ex. 2:22; Lev. 25:23. This physical reality for the descendants of Abraham was applied spiritually in the Psalms; see Ps. 39:12; 119:19 (also 1 Chron. 29:15; cf. 1 Pet. 1:1; 2:11).

Heb. 11:14-16 The author says that the people he has mentioned in vv. 1-13 were seeking a better (heavenly) country, which would be their true homeland. First, if Abraham (for example) were looking for an earthly "homeland" (Gk. *patris* refers to a place of one's fathers), he could have returned to Haran; but he persisted in following God's leading and focusing on his promise (v. 15). Second, the Psalms' spiritual application of exile terminology to this whole mortal life indicates the expectation of a life to come (Ps. 39:12; 119:19; cf. Heb. 11:13-14). prepared for them a city. See v. 10; 12:22-24; 13:13-14.