

## Sermon Title: The Father of the Faithful

## Genesis 12

Last week we talked about how “man” tried to make a name for himself, and leave his mark on history by robbing God of His glory & replacing God w/self.

We may think we don’t do this, but we do it all the time! Any time we think we are in charge of our own lives, or we make decisions autonomously, we are guilty of doing the same thing! **Faith puts God first!**

Noah showed us that kind of faith when he obeyed God & built the boat! Abel showed us that kind of faith when he offered God the first & best of his flocks as an offering to the Lord! **True faith is a faith that acts!**

Today, we are looking at the life of one who is considered the “father of the faithful” – Abraham! His faith, that we just read about, is highlighted in the book of Hebrews in what is now called the “Hall of Fame of Faith” **Hebrews 11:8-9**

Abraham is one of our heroes in the faith! But... like the rest of us, he too was a work in progress! Faith was formed, stretched, molded, & renewed in him. **Faith was a work of God in him!** Just like it is with the rest of us!

The writer of Hebrews gives us a working definition – **Heb. 11:1 - “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not yet seen.”**

The assurance needed for Abram to have a conviction that responded in faith, had to originate outside of himself! **He became a hero in the faith because God was, & continued to be, faithful to him!**

Abram learned to trust God, even when his convictions were wavering, even when he could not see, because God was/is faithful in keeping His promises!

God said to Abram...

### 1) Vs. 1 - **“Go... I will show you a land...”**

Abraham obeyed and left his home, but he got sidetracked on the way. Stephen tells us in **Acts 7:1-4** that after leaving Ur, Abram stopped along the way and lived for a period of time in Haren! Vs. 4 says **God “removed” him from there (Haren) in order to take him to the land God wanted Him to see.**

### 2) Vs. 2 – **“I will make of you a great nation...”**

Abram’s belief/obedience was only partial here because when God told him to leave, He also said to leave his family **“your kindred & your father’s house”**

behind, but Abram brought his father, his nephew Lot, & others with him!

**Abram’s belief/faith was incomplete!** Do we ever trust God only part way, and for the rest of the way make provisions for ourselves? So did Abram!

### 3) Vs. 2 – **“I will bless you”**

When Abram left the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, he responded in faith and went to the land of promise... until a famine came in the land! **When the famine broke out Abram left!** He went to Egypt where he knew there would be food!

Was this part of God’s provisions? Maybe... But what transpired in Egypt with Sarai, his wife, seems to imply that this was a deviation from God’s plan

**Do we ever think God needs our help to bring about His plans & purpose?**

We see Abram do it here by leaving to go to Egypt, & by calling his wife his sister out of fear for his own life! We will see it again in future occurrences.

Remember our working definition of faith - it’s about assurance & conviction

### 4) Vs. 2 – **“I will make your name great”**

Abram, it’s not about you & what you do that gives your name significance, but about who God is & how He makes one’s name great! It’s God’s work!

**Abram’s actions in Egypt could have cost him his life, and yet God instead expanded Abram’s wealth, his possessions, his name! Genesis 12:15-16, 20.** Even though Abram showed lack of faith, God was still **faithful** to Abram!

### 5) Vs. 7 – **“To your offspring I will give this land”**

Abraham had no offspring at this point, he did not even own a fraction of the land, but in this moment he believed God & left Egypt to return to Canaan **Genesis 13:1-4** – **Now we are seeing faith in action!** For now...

Abram had to learn to be faithful, but his faithfulness to God was only the result of God’s continued faithfulness to him, in keeping His promises!

**The true “Father of the Faithful” is not Abraham, but God Himself!**

Genesis 12 is the antithesis of Genesis 11! Abram is on a path towards faithfulness, but it is not a result of His own doing, **but a result of God’s blessing!** God chose to bless Abram, & His offspring, so that his offspring would be a blessing to the whole world – **first through Israel, then in Christ!**

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