



The Book of Hebrews Faith and Obedience

Radical or Comfortable Faith?

Abraham is both the Old Testament and New Testament models of faith. His type of 'faith' and practice of 'faith' reveals at least five characteristics of faith for all believers.

1. Faithful in Obedience Heb 11:8

(a) **I hear you knocking:** The Greek word used here for 'obedience' is reflective of the Hebrew oral tradition: The spoken word of God. In this case, while God was still speaking, Abraham was getting up to obey immediately thus demonstrating his faith.

(b) **Mustering up the mustard seed:** Using the above concept [see 1. (a)] as a benchmark of 'faith' how's my/your faith? A careful examination of 'mustard seed' faith reveals that 'obedience' is a key component to faith. See Luke 17:1-10. **By faith I will...**

2. Faithful in Calling Heb 11:8

(a) **A Godly GPS:** A modern GPS can tell you where you are and how to get where you're going if you know your destination. God, on the other hand can get you where He calls you to go even if you don't know where that is or what that is.

(b) **Faithful to the call:** The key here is being faithful to the God of your calling and letting Him work out the specifics. **By faith I will...**

3. Faithful in Waiting Heb 11:9-10

(a) **Are we there yet?** Abraham got to where God called him but someone else was already there—so he lived there as a stranger—in a tent. **By faith** he waited a lifetime.

(b) **If I don't see it, can it be real?** Abraham was never to see the fulfillment of the promise in his lifetime on earth. He did see the fulfillment 'through' his son Isaac and would see it in the New City Jerusalem. (See Psa 87:1-5; 46:4-5; Isa 28:16; 54:11; Rev 21:14-19)

(c) **Are you faithful in waiting?** **By faith I will...**

4. Faithful in Family Heb 11:11-12

(a) **Sarah's faith:** In Gen 18:12 Sarah laughed in unbelief when she heard the Angel's announcement that she would bear a child. Despite her failings, Sarah 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."

(b) **Family of faith:** Both Abraham and Sarah had many failings when it came to faith. Verse :12 could be read, "...From one man and woman—both as good as dead in faith and body—yet were faithful in obedience to God's promise and birthed an innumerable amount of people."

(c) **Your family faith:** Unless you have no relatives left in life—you have a responsibility to live '**by faith**' for your family. What you do in this generation will impact the next. (See Exodus 20:5-6) **By faith I will...**

5. Faithful in Testing Heb 11:17-19

(a) **Command versus Promise:** God had **promised** Abraham a son who would be used to bring about a great nation. But now God **commands** Abraham to **kill the promise**. Many times in life it appears that what God has promised us is in conflict with what He commands us to do or not do.

(b) **Abraham is obedient:** In this case Abraham is 'obedient' to the command and leaves the promise up to God. This is a great principle for us. Again—faith is being obedient to the will/voice of God and trusting Him for the outcome—even if the outcome happens after we are home with Him. Here Abraham had so much faith in the promise that he believed God would raise Isaac from the dead if he (Isaac) died.

Hebrews 11:8-12 (NKJV)

8 By faith Abraham **obeyed** when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 By [through KJV] faith Sarah herself **also** received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

Hebrews 11:17-19 (NKJV)

17 By faith Abraham, when he **was tested**, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called,"

19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.