

EVERYONE HAS FAITH!

THE SIMPLE FACT,,, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, IS;
THAT,,, WE CAN'T GET THROUGH A SINGLE DAY OF
OUR LIVES,,, WITHOUT LIVING BY FAITH.

FOR EXAMPLE:

WHEN YOU TURN ON THE IGNITION SWITCH OF YOUR
CAR,,, YOU HAVE FAITH,,, THAT YOUR CAR WILL
START.

WHEN YOU GO TO YOUR LOCAL GROCERY STORE,,,
YOU HAVE FAITH,,, THAT THERE'LL BE FOOD THERE
FOR YOU TO BUY,,, AND,,,

WHEN YOU COME TO MASS ON SUNDAY,,, YOU HAVE
FAITH,,, THAT THERE'LL BE A PRIEST AVAILABLE TO
CELEBRATE MASS.

A PASTOR ONCE PUT IT THIS WAY:

*“FAITH IS THE HEART OF LIFE. YOU GO TO A DOCTOR,,,
WHOSE NAME YOU CAN'T PRONOUNCE. HE GIVES YOU
A PRESCRIPTION,,, YOU CAN'T READ. YOU TAKE IT TO A
PHARMACIST YOU'VE NEVER SEEN AND HE GIVES YOU
MEDICINE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND,,, AND YET,,, YOU
TAKE IT!”*

NOW,,, THAT'S LIVING BY FAITH!

EVEN PEOPLE WHO CLAIM TO HAVE NO FAITH,,,
STILL LIVE BY FAITH! EVERY HUMAN,,, PUTS FAITH
IN SOMETHING. IT MAY BE IN SOME NOTION OF
HUMAN POTENTIAL,,, THE SUPREMACY OF SCIENCE,,,
POLITICAL POWER,,, OR,,, THE ONENESS OF NATURE,,,
BUT EVERYONE,,, LIVES BY FAITH.

THE SAME IS TRUE,,, WITH SPIRITUAL FAITH!

FOR EXAMPLE:

- (*) BUDDHISTS HAVE FAITH; IN BUDDAH!**
- (*) MUSLIMS HAVE FAITH; IN ALLAH!**
- (*) HINDUS HAVE FAITH; IN THOUSANDS OF GODS!**

AND MOST SPIRITUAL PEOPLE,,, PUT THEIR FAITH IN
THEIR ABILITY,,, *TO BE GOOD ENOUGH,,, TO SATISFY
THEIR GOD*,,, TO REACH THEIR “*NIRVANA*”,,, OR,,, TO
BUILD UP “*GOOD KARMA*”.

SOMETIMES,, FAITH MAY BE MISPLACED,, BECAUSE FAITH,, **IS ONLY AS VALUABLE,, AS THE OBJECT OF THAT FAITH,, AND,, THE AMOUNT OF FAITH,, YOU HAVE,, IN THAT OBJECT.**

(* SO,, HOW'S YOUR FAITH?

(* HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT,, *THAT YOU MAY LACK FAITH?*

(* HAVE YOU EVER TRIED *TO INCREASE YOUR FAITH,, BUT,, NO MATTER WHAT YOU DID,, IT DIDN'T SEEM TO WORK?*

(* HAVE YOU EVER HAD SOMEONE TELL YOU,, *"THAT YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH FAITH"?*

HOW'D YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT? PERHAPS LIKE,, *MAYBE YOU REALLY DIDN'T HAVE MUCH FAITH?*

IF THAT'S YOU,, THEN HEBREWS CHAPTER 11,, IS THE ENCOURAGEMENT YOU NEED,, BECAUSE:

IT'S THE GREATEST CHAPTER ABOUT FAITH,, IN ALL OF SCRIPTURE!

TODAYS 2ND READING,, GIVES US A DEFINITION OF FAITH,, WHAT FAITH DOES,, AND HOW FAITH WORKS!

TRUE BIBLICAL FAITH,, ISN'T BLIND HOPEFULNESS! IT'S NOT A MAN-MADE,, PUMPED UP,, SPIRITUAL HIGH,, NOR,, IS IT SUPPOSED TO GIVE US A WARM,, FUZZY,, *"HOPE SO"* FEELING!

FAITH,, IS **SIMPLE,, CONFIDENT,, OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD!** IT'S **LISTENING TO WHAT GOD HAS PROMISED IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES,, IN SPITE OF CIRCUMSTANCES OR CONSEQUENCES.** IT'S NOT AN ADHERENCE,, TO A LIST OF DOCTRINES. FAITH,, IS A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST.

NOW I USED THE WORD **"SIMPLE"**,, BECAUSE IN FACT **FAITH IS SIMPLE!** IT WORKS LIKE THIS!

1) GOD SPEAKS TO US,,

2) WE HEAR HIS WORD,, AND,,

3) WE SIMPLY "ACT UPON IT,, AS TRUTH"!

BUT THIS SIMPLICITY,,, BASED ON THOSE THREE FACTORS,,, *WILL WORK,,, ONLY,,, IF WE OPEN OUR EARS TO HEAR HIS WORD,,, AND OUR HEARTS,,, TO RECEIVE HIS WORD,,, INTO OUR HEARTS,,, BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THEY ARE TRUTH. THAT MAKES IT AN ACT OF FAITH!*

THE UNBELIEVING WORLD,,, DOESN'T REALIZE THIS,,, SO THEY MISS THE WHOLE POINT,,, BECAUSE YOU SEE,,, JESUS CHRIST,,, IS NOT THE OBJECT OF THEIR FAITH, “THINGS ARE!”.

FAITH,,, IS OUR TOTAL RESPONSE TO WHAT GOD HAS REVEALED TO US,,, IN CHRIST JESUS,,, AND THROUGH THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

IN TODAY'S READING,,, WE FIND THE WORD “FAITH**” & FAITH,,, IS: *THE REALIZATION,,, OF WHAT IS HOPED FOR,,, AND THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN*”.**

FAITH; IS LIKE THE FOUNDATION OF A HOUSE,,, IT GIVES SUPPORT,,, CONFIDENCE AND ASSURANCE,,, THAT WE'LL BE ABLE TO STAND UPRIGHT IN SPIRIT,,, AND IN STRENGTH,,, IN TIMES OF TRIAL AND TRIBULATION,,, BECAUSE OF WHAT GOD SAYS TO US.

FAITH IS THE CONFIDENCE,,, OF ALL THINGS HOPED FOR,,, AS WE LIVE IN GOD'S PRESENCE,,, NOW AND IN THE KINGDOM TO COME! AND WHEN WE ACT ON OUR FAITH IN GOD'S WORD,,, GOD GIVES US CONFIDENCE THAT WHAT HE HAS PROMISED,,, WE WILL EXPERIENCE.

AS PART OF OUR FAITH,,, BELIEVER'S NEED TO HAVE A HEART FULL OF FAITH AND CONVICTION,,, THAT GOD WILL NOT ONLY KEEP HIS WORD,,, AS WE TRUST IN HIM,,, BUT,,, WE'LL ALSO SEE HIS PERFECT PLAN,,, UNFOLD WITHIN OUR LIVES.

ABRAHAM'S FAITH,,, IN THE PROMISE OF GOD,,, WAS PUT TO THE TEST IN TODAY'S READING IN HEBREWS. HE OBEYED GOD,,, WHEN HE WAS TOLD TO LEAVE HIS HOME,,, AND TO GO TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY,,, A PLACE,,, HE DIDN'T KNOW. THEN,,, HE WOULD

RECEIVE HIS INHERITANCE.

GOD WATCHED OVER ABRAHAM AND SARAH. THEY STAYED STRONG IN THEIR FAITH,,, AND ALTHOUGH WERE VERY OLD AND BARREN,,, GOD BLESSED THEM. AND KEPT HIS PROMISED WORD. ABRAHAMS FAMILY,,, INCREASED IN NUMBERS.

THE HOLY SPIRIT,,, MAKES IT CLEAR IN HEBREWS,,, THAT FAITH IS REALISTIC FOR OUR LIVES,,, BECAUSE (* FAITH: ENABLES US TO UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD IS DOING IN OUR LIVES,,, AND,,,

(* FAITH: ENABLES US TO DO WHAT OTHERS CAN'T DO,,, BECAUSE GOD IS WITH US!

ITS BEEN SAID THAT: *FAITH ENABLES THE BELIEVING SOUL,,, TO TREAT THE FUTURE,,, AS THE PRESENT,,, AND THE INVISIBLE,,, AS THE SEEN!*

AND SCRIPTURE TELLS US; FAITH,,, *IS THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS,,, NOT SEEN!*

AS FURTHER PROOF,,, I'D LIKE TO OFFER ST. BARNABAS,,, AS EVIDENCE,,, OF HAVING FAITH IN GOD AND HIS WORK!

IT WAS JUST A FEW SHORT MONTHS AGO,,, THAT WE SAW THIS CHURCH INTO BEING,,, THROUGH THE EYES OF FAITH,,, AND LOOK AT IT TODAY!

ABRAHAM,,, WITH CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S PROMISE,,, MOVED TO A PLACE THAT GOD PROMISED TO SHOW HIM. HE WAS LED TO A LAND OF PROMISE,,, WITH EYES OF FAITH,,, AND A HEART,,, FULL OF CONVICTION AND CONFIDENCE AND HE RESIDED THERE AS A PILGRIM.

BECAUSE OF ABRAHAMS FAITH,,, HE WAS LOOKING ACROSS THE AGES,,, FOR AN ETERNAL CITY,,, BUILT BY GOD!

AS BELIEVERS IN JESUS,,, HAVING RECEIVED HIS GRACE,,, MERCY,,, LOVE AND FORGIVENESS,,, INTO OUR HEARTS BY FAITH,,, AND AS PEOPLE WHO ENJOY HIS LOVING PRESENCE,,, WE NEED TO REMEMBER THAT WE'RE STRANGERS,,,

PILGRIMS,, IN THIS TEMPORAL WORLD.
LIKE ABRAHAM,, WE NEED TO BE FULL OF HOPE AND
CONFIDENCE,, THAT WHEN JESUS RETURNS,, WE'LL
LIVE IN,, THE ETERNAL CITY,, FOREVER;

***“WE SHALL SEE HIM,, FACE TO FACE,, AND WE SHALL
BE LIKE HIM!”***

SCRIPTURE SAYS,, ***NONE OF THE PROPHETS,, SAW
THE COMPLETE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISES,,
BUT FROM AFAR,, THEY SAW WHAT GOD WAS DOING.***

IT WASN'T HOW THE ANCIENTS LIVED,, THAT WAS
IMPORTANT,, BUT IT WAS WHAT THEY WERE
LOOKING FORWARD TO AND IT SHOULD BE THE
SAME WITH US.

GOD IS ALWAYS TRUE,, TO HIS WORD!

(*) GOD PROMISED,, THAT ABRAHAM AND SARAH,,
WOULD HAVE A SON. THEY WAITED,, OVER 25
YEARS,, FOR THAT PROMISE TO BE FULFILLED.
BECAUSE OF THEIR FAITH,, ISAAC,, WAS BORN!

(*) GOD PROMISED,, THAT ABRAHAM'S
DESCENDENTS WOULD BE,, AS THE SAND OF THE
SEASHORE,, AND THE STARS OF THE HEAVENS,, AND
THEY ARE!

WAITING ON GOD,, WILL SHOW US,, HIS WILL AND
HIS PLAN,, FOR US,, IN OUR LIVES.

REAL FAITH,, IS US BEING ABLE TO WAIT FOR GOD
AND FOR HIS PURPOSE FOR US,, ***IN HIS TIME!***

AFTER ABRAHAM AND SARAH HAD THEIR ONLY SON,,
GOD TESTED THEM! WHEN ISAAC WAS IN HIS MID-
TEENS,, GOD ASKED ABRAHAM AND SARAH TO
SACRAFICE ISAAC,, ON THE ALTAR.

WHY WOULD GOD GIVE THEM A SON,, ONLY TO ASK
FOR HIS DEATH,, AND THEN,, TO EXPECT ISAAC TO
GO ALONG WITH IT?

THE ENTIRE FUTURE OF ABRAHAMS DESCENDANTS
RESTED IN ISAAC.

ALL OF WHAT WOULD LATER BECOME THE NATION OF ISRAEL,,, THE COMING MESSIAH,,, (INCLUDING ALL THOSE,,, WHO BELIEVE IN THE MESSIAH) AND ABRAHAM HIMSELF,,, OUR SPIRITUAL FATHER IN FAITH,,, WAS ALL INVESTED IN ISAAC.

NEVERTHELESS,,, ABRAHAM BELIEVED IN GOD'S PROMISE. SO,,, HE TIED ISAAC UP,,, PLACED HIM ON THE ALTAR,,, AND IN DEEP FAITH,,, PREPARED TO THRUST,,, THE DEATH BLOW,,, INTO ISAAC.

ABRAHAM BELIEVED STRONGLY IN GOD AND THAT GOD WOULD RAISE ISAAC,,, FROM THE DEAD.

SCRIPTURE TELLS US,,, THAT GOD CALLED ABRAHAM SAYING:

“ABRAHAM,,, ABRAHAM,,, DON'T LAY A HAND ON THE BOY. I KNOW THAT YOU FEAR GOD,,, BECAUSE YOU HAVE NOT WITHHELD YOUR ONLY SON FROM ME!”

IN SOME BUSHES,,, A RAM WAS TANGLED UP,,, AND IN PLACE OF HIS SON,,, ABRAHAM MADE A SACRIFICE TO GOD,,, NAMING THAT LOCATION;

“THE LORD WILL PROVIDE”.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, AS WE GROW SPIRITUALLY IN OUR WALK WITH THE LORD,,, THE TESTS OF OUR FAITH,,, WILL BECOME MORE DIFFICULT.

YET,,, THE REWARDS ARE GREATER AND MORE WONDERFUL,,, THAN THE THINGS THAT THIS WORLD HAS TO OFFER.

THROUGH FAITH,,, WE EXPERIENCE THE PRESENCE OF GOD WITH US. WITHOUT FAITH,,, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD,,, BECAUSE ANYONE WHO COMES TO HIM,,, MUST BELIEVE THAT HE EXISTS,,, AND THAT HE REWARDS THOSE WHO EARNESTLY SEEK HIM.

WHEN WE SEEK HIM,,, WE'LL FIND HIM,,, & THROUGH FAITH,,, GOD BEARS WITNES,,, WITH OUR SPIRITS,,, THAT WE; *ARE HIS CHILDREN* AND *WE ARE BORN INTO HIS KINGDOM.*

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

+++ AMEN+++

(1,523) WDS,,, 6 PGS