

Peoples Church: Small Group Questions
January 15, 2017
Speaker: Pastor Dale Oquist
Activate - Faith Is – Part 2

LOOKING BACK: Hebrews 11:1

Faith is the assurance of things we don't see. It's an experience where we have a foretaste of that which we hope for.

The crocus flower is the first flower that blooms in Wisconsin in springtime. When it blooms, people see it as evidence that summer is on its way. People walk around wearing shorts and flip-flops because it's 45 degrees and the crocus flower has bloomed. That's faith.

This is not a blind faith.

When Sarah was told she would bear a child in her old age, she laughed. But she considered God's faithfulness and believed that it would come to pass. She did the mental math. When Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac, he reasoned that God could raise Isaac back from the dead because of God's faithfulness.

1. How is Isaac, the son of Abraham and Sarah, a representation of the crocus flower in winter?
2. Is there something in your life, like the crocus flower, that gives you hope in the midst of bleak circumstances? What is it that fuels your faith?

Faith is, by our actions, taking God at his word.

DIGGING DEEPER: Five thoughts on faith

- It is believing what we do not see.
- It is obeying when you don't understand. (Heb. 11:8)
- It is giving when you don't have it. (Heb. 11:4)
- It is giving thanks before you've received it. (Heb. 11:30)
- It is trusting when you don't get it. (Heb. 11:39-40)

3. If people see what you have faith in by the way you live, what would they think you had faith in?

TAKING IT HOME: Joseph's bones

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." And Joseph made the Israelites swear an oath and said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place." (Genesis 50:24-25)

Maybe our faith will not come to fruition during our lifetime, just as Joseph knew he would not live to see the Israelites' deliverance. But God's faithfulness is validation for everything we believe and hope for.

4. What is the stumbling block to your faith? What keeps you from believing God at his word?