

04-24-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: The Power of Faith, pt-1

Purpose: Provoke people to develop faith in God to be saved, endure difficulty, reach their dreams, and meet their needs.

Truth for Today: Faith enables us to be saved, endure difficulty, reach our dreams, and meet our needs.

Text: Romans 4:3, James 1:2-3, Matthew 9:27-30, Genesis 12:1-8

Topic: Faith, Doubt, Abraham, Dreams

Series Title: Mentor Me

Series Purpose: Provoke people to learn and apply life lessons, good and bad, from Biblical characters.

## The Power of Faith, pt-1

### I. Introduction

- A. Review series: Mentor Me. It's about learning life lessons from Biblical mentors. Def. mentor: a counselor, guide, tutor, or coach. Historical characters in the Bible are the most reliable mentors we can find because they show us what to do and what not to do from God's perspective. (Turkey pic) Turkeys 2, Preacher 1
- B. Today we'll begin a mentoring session with Abraham about the power of faith. Faith in God helps us in 3 ways: (1) Salvation, [Romans 4:3 (NLT) For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, and **God counted him as righteous because of his faith.**"] (2) Enduring hardship, [James 1:2-3 (NLT)...when **troubles** of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. 3 For you know that **when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.**] (3) Realizing dreams, and have our needs met, [Mt. 9:27-30 (NLT)...two blind men followed along behind him (*Jesus*), shouting...have mercy on us!" 28...Jesus asked them, "**Do you believe I can make you see?**" "Yes, Lord...we do." 29 Then he touched their eyes and said, "**Because of your faith, it will happen.**" 30 **Then...they could see!**]
  - 1. Truth for Today: Faith in God saves us, helps us endure hardship, realize dreams, and have our needs met. Abraham, the father of faith, is the best mentor in the Bible about developing our faith.

C. Title: The Power of Faith, pt-1

- ### II. God's promise became Abraham's dream. Faith made the dream a reality
- Genesis 12:1-8 (NLT) The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. 2 **I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.** 3...**All the families on earth will be blessed through you.**" 4 So **Abram departed as the Lord had instructed.**...Abram was **seventy-five** years old when he left Haran. 5...When they arrived in

Canaan...7...the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your descendants.” And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the Lord

A. Summary: Abraham was called at 75 to father a nation, but he and Sarai didn't have kids. He made a mistake and tried to help God with Hagar, but afterwards continued to grow in faith. The dream was finally realized at 100 when Isaac was born. Years later his faith was tested but he kept believing God.

1. Faith lesson #1: Faith anchored in a word from God will come to pass, i.e., if God speaks to us through a dream, a prophecy, a vision or somehow confirms something in our heart it will happen if we do our part, i.e., have faith and do what He says, Picture pin. E.g., Gander relocation. God spoke start raising money

2. Faith lesson #2: The Bible teaches us to have faith for our desires or needs but our faith doesn't guarantee a miracle every time we want God to do something. [Mt. 21:21 (NIV) Jesus replied, “Truly I tell you, **if you have faith and do not doubt**...you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done.] Jesus talked about the power of faith to solve problems, meet needs, and reach dreams. However, for some reason it's not always this simple. I've exercised faith and spoken to mountains many times. Some prayers were answered, and some weren't. Perhaps I didn't have enough faith; perhaps I gave up too quickly or perhaps it wasn't God's will. Faith isn't a lever to force God to act (faith isn't sovereign; God is); it's a drawbridge that invites Him to act. If every prayer prayed in faith was answered, nobody would ever get sick; nobody would die, and we'd have no problems and that's not consistent with the overall Bible message. Perhaps this tension is best displayed by SMA, [Daniel 3:17–18 (NLT) If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, **the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power**, Your Majesty. 18 **But even if he doesn't**, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.”]

a. Faith lesson #3: Faith isn't just a means to get what we want from God. Even though the possibility exists that our faith may not produce the results we want, believe anyway and then accept the results. Without faith we're guaranteed nothing will happen; with faith it might.

B. [Vs. 4 **So Abram departed as the Lord had instructed**] Faith lesson # 4: Faith acts and obeys. Faith is only a part of seeing God make our dreams happen; we must do what He says, e.g., Peter couldn't walk on water until he got out of the boat.

C. [Vs. 7, When they arrived in Canaan...7...**Abram built an altar** there and dedicated it to the Lord.] Faith lesson #5: Abraham's altar signified his embrace

of God's plan. Altars were a place to meet with God. Abraham accepted that he was the disc, following God on the tractor.

### III. Faith lessons from Abraham in Roman's chapter 4

A. Context, the role of faith in salvation, [Romans 4:13-17 (ESV) For the promise to Abraham...did not come through the law but (NLT) on **a right relationship with God that comes by faith...** 16 **So the promise is received by faith...** For **Abraham is the father of all who believe.** 17 That is what the Scriptures mean when **God told him, "I have made you the father of many nations."**] Quote Genesis 17:5. God sees things as though they are before they are. God saw Abraham as a father before he had a child. Faith enabled him to see what God saw before it happened.

1. Faith lesson #6: Faith sees things as happening before they do.

B. [Vs. 17 **This happened because Abraham believed** in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing. Vs. 18 **Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, "That's how many descendants you will have!"**]

1. Faith lesson #7: God can do the impossible. He can supersede natural law and processes. [Luke 1:36–37 (ESV)...your relative **Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son**, and this is the sixth month with her who was called **barren.** 37 **For nothing will be impossible with God.**] Formula: a lifetime of being barren + now, too, old to have kids = a baby. How is this possible? God! What God did for Abraham and Elizabeth, He can do for us.

2. Faith lesson #8: Doubt is the enemy of faith. The greatest obstacles to faith in a promise from God are reason, doubt, and experience. In the Age of Enlightenment (1700's), reason replaced faith and made people doubt God is able. [James 1:5–6 (NCV)...if any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He is generous to everyone and will give you wisdom...6 But when you ask God, **you must believe and not doubt.** Anyone who doubts is like a wave in the sea, blown up and down by the wind.]

C. [Vs. 19 **And Abraham's faith did not weaken**, even though, at about 100 years of age, (NIV) **he faced the fact** (lit., "considered carefully")<sup>1</sup> that his body was as good as dead—since he was about 100 years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead.]

1. Faith lesson #9: Faith doesn't deny reality; faith looks at the facts but believes God anyway. Faith in God trumps facts.

### IV. Conclusion

A. [Vs. 20 **Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.** 21 **He was fully**

**convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises.** 22 And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous.]

1. Ge 17:17 says Abraham laughed at the idea of bearing a son at his age but that doesn't mean he quit believing. He struggled with God doing the impossible just like we do. The idea of having a baby at 100 was ridiculous to Abraham, but he believed it anyway. Instead of "wavering" or hesitating in his confidence in God (*diakrinō*, "to be divided in one's own mind"), Abraham's faith was strengthened through the ordeal. As muscles develop when kept in tension, so was Abraham's faith strengthened by the experience he was going through.<sup>2</sup> [James 1:3 (NIV)...**the testing of your faith produces perseverance.**]

B. Response prayer: (1) You want something to happen but you're not sure it's God's will. You want God to show you His will and you'll accept it. (2) You've been believing God for something a while and it's hard to keep believing.

## V. Response

A. Altar

B. Prayer

C. Souls

## VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 455). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
2. Mounce, R. H. (1995). [Romans](#) (Vol. 27, p. 130). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.