

## Abraham: Faith Waiting

This will be our seventh and final lesson of our study on “Faith”. Our focus in this lesson will be on two characters: Abraham and Sarah. We have seen in our previous lessons how faith modeled in so many ways today we see faith...waiting.

*“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see”.<sup>2</sup> “This is what the ancients were commended for”. (Hebrews 11:1-2)*

Faith is a deep seeded trust, even at the point when you feel you are at the end.

“Ancients”; are people that the readers could look back to, that became the giants of faith...although this wasn't their purpose. The writer was pointing to them as an example of perseverance.

These examples (hero's) of faith weren't motivated to be known or famous in the future. Ironically faith has an eternal character about it that will carry far beyond our life span...we don't have to try to make this happen it just will.

There is a common theme in the Abraham and Sarah story. They spent a lot of time waiting, during these seasons of waiting they asked the “*how*” questions. They asked “*how*” because of their advanced age and they found themselves in humbled circumstances with no apparent hope of a lineage.

*“The question is not if we will wait, but how will we wait”*

As we read our passages we meet them facing the impossible, even so they “waited well” in trust.

### 1. Waiting purifies our motives and kills off our flesh.

*<sup>8</sup> “By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.<sup>9</sup> By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city with*

promised land like a stranger in a foreign country, he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. <sup>11</sup> And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. <sup>12</sup> And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore". (Hebrews 11:8-12)

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, <sup>18</sup> even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." <sup>19</sup> Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death. (Hebrews 11:17-19)

These verses allow us look back on God's faithfulness in their lives. They also show us that they could have waited in *despair*, but chose to wait in *hope*.

*"Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness". (Genesis 15:6)*

## **2. Waiting deepens our trust and dependency in Jesus.**

The reality is that it is difficult to wait and trust through difficult times and (apparent) unfulfilled promises. But, when it is all said and done, as we come through these times, we realize it will deepen our trust and faith in God. We also learn a crucial truth that we need to have total dependence in Jesus.

*"Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath". (Hebrews 6:17)*

## **3. Waiting anchors our lives in Jesus.**

*"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock". (Matthew 7:24-25)*

Abraham and Sarah faced several storms during their journey. They chose to "press in" toward God even more, as opposed to the storm pushing them away or under the waves.

The fact is that storms will come, where are you anchored? What foundation have you built you're life on? We need to be certain of these things as the storms crash and we are waiting.

## **Discussion Questions**

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- 1) Re-read Hebrews 11:1-2 and discuss what is faith and what should we learn from the “ancient’s”?
- 2) Alex suggested in his teaching that a common theme with Abraham and Sarah was waiting. Discuss a time where you have or are waiting on the Lord or one of his promises. Also please discuss this quote: *“The question is not if we will wait, but how will we wait”*
- 3) What does this first point in the teaching say to you: *“Waiting purifies our motives and kills off our flesh”*?
- 4) Does this statement ring true for you: *“Waiting deepens our trust and dependency in Jesus”* and why is this so important in our lives?
- 5) Lastly as we read above, Matthew 7:24-25, there are some very important things said and warnings given...what are those? So how does this third point fit into the discussion: *“Waiting anchors our lives in Jesus”*?