

What was this “test” (v17) all about? (See also Genesis 22:12)

How might God test us today?

What enabled Abraham to obey (v19)?

How did the story end? Read Genesis 22:9-14



THINK IT THROUGH

The big principle: Real faith trusts that God will still deliver on his promise even in spite of the thing that we consider to be so precious may be lost and those things we feel are most central to God achieving his purposes are threatened. *Can you think of other examples?*

Can you think of circumstances where obedience to God might feel like the end of a dream, and if you do what God is calling you to do it seems impossible that it could turn out well? How does faith respond?

How does this apply to our own death?

How does this incident point us to Jesus?

How does this help us to take radical steps of faith?



PRAY IT THROUGH

LIVING BY FAITH

SMALL GROUPS SHEET
WEEK BEGINNING 10 NOVEMBER 2013

1. ABRHAM – Hebrews 11:8-19

Oakhall
CHURCH WELCOMES YOU



FOR STARTERS

The National Portrait Gallery was founded in 1856 to collect portraits of famous British men and women. Currently the gallery holds over 195,000 portraits from the 16th Century to the present day.

Heb 11 is a portrait gallery of God's heroes, people who exercised FAITH in Him. These were people who were, "sure of what they hoped for and certain of what they did not see" (Heb 11:1). They were so confident because God had promised these things.

In this study we will focus on the faith of Abraham, "...the father of all who believe" (Rom 4:11)

Read Hebrews 11:8-19

A brief recap

On Sunday we began looking at this passage.

- What was Abraham's first radical step of faith (v8-9) and why was it so costly?
- What was the inner conviction that produced this radical obedience (v10, 16, 10:34)?
- How did God view his heart and actions (v16)?

The writer of Hebrews highlights two more radical steps of faith that Abraham took:



INVESTIGATE

BELIEVING THE IMPOSSIBLE... AND WAITING (11:11-12)

By faith Abraham and Sarah are able to have a child.

- What was so surprising about this? (See Genesis 17:15-17 for more details).
- How long had they already waited (Gen 12:4)?
- What would have been the natural conclusion?
- How did Abraham respond and why (Heb 11:11 cf. Rom 4:19-21)?



THINK IT THROUGH

Note: The literal translation of "considered" in v11 is "logic-ed". Faith says, "If God has promised it, we can trust it, even though it looks irrational and ludicrous in the eyes of the world... because God has power to do what he has promised to do!"

Think of some examples of steps of faith we are called to take that appear foolish and illogical to others looking on.

Why is it so important that we trust the **character** of God as well as the **promise** of God? How can we grow in this aspect of faith?

What was the result of trusting God (Heb 11:12)?

Why is it so important to remember that biblical faith is always in a promise from God rather than simply hoping for something we long for?

[Note: Abraham's laughter in Genesis 17:17 is not the laughter of Sarah (Gen 18:10-15) which was full of doubt. Abraham's laughter seems to be more of a nervous laugh, trying to come to terms with what God was promising.]



INVESTIGATE

RISKING EVERYTHING... AND TRUSTING (11:17-19)

The full details of this story are found in Genesis 22. In response to God's command, Abraham laid his son, Isaac, on an altar and was ready to end his life.

[Note: God does not tell Abraham to murder his son but to offer him up as a "sacrifice". In Exodus 22:29 and Numbers 3:8 God says that the life of the firstborn was His because each family had a debt of sin to be paid.]

Why would it have been so hard?

- Verse 17 gives us the obvious answer: _____

- Verse 18 and Gen 17:19 give us the bigger picture: _____