

January 24, 2021

Reviving our Faith

"...do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised...we are not those who shrink back and are destroyed, but those who believe and are saved."

(Hebrews 10:35-39)

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

(Hebrews 11:1)



At one time or another all of us who believe made our personal choice to place our confidence in the God of the Bible. Our choice to believe changed and continues to change our lives each day or our belief is not faith. That really is, after all, what faith is; a choice to believe that changes our lives.

So, how does our choice to believe in God change our lives? As we consider the 'roll call' of the faithful in Hebrews 11, I think, one common trait stands out. These 'heros' of faith were all called by God and each of them in turn, chose to obey God's call. There is a direct correlation in the lives of these faithful believers between their faith and their obedience.

So, ***"By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family."*** Noah's faith led him to persevere for a whole century to finish what God called him to do even though he did not completely understand what God's plan was. It was his obedience that led God to label him righteous.

In the same way, ***"By faith Abraham, when called to go...obeyed and went..."*** The one common characteristic of each of the heros of faith mentioned in Scripture is their faith-driven willingness to do whatever God called them to do even if they did not always understand it or even see the end result of that call. The faith of these true believers led them to be obedient to whatever God asked of them

In the same way, our faith must lead us to be obedient to whatever God asks of us. Sometimes that can be really easy, but more often than not, God's call demands more than we might want to do or to be. So, when our Lord calls us to love others as he has loved us or to treat others the way we would like to be treated we might not want to obey, but our faith will cause us to choose to obey if it is real faith.

We might not be called to build an ark, or travel to an unknown land, or to face hungry lions, but our faith will absolutely call us to do and to be more than we might want to do or to be. It is in those situations that we exemplify the reality of our own life-changing faith.

God calls the faithful to live lives of peace and contentment without anxiety. Are we faithful? God calls the faithful to humbly serve counting others as more important than we think we are. Are we faithful? God calls the faithful to be the light of the world, the salt of the earth, and merciful peacemakers. Are we faithful?

God still calls the faithful to live heroic lives, just as he called those described in the Hebrew letter. Your call and mine might not look or sound like the calls that Noah or Abraham or Moses received, but that does not make them any less heroic. The key to life-changing, heroic faith is always a willingness to obey God's call, no matter what that call might be.

The Hebrew author tells us, "*...without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*" We can, I think, understand this passage to teach us that without obedience is it likewise impossible to please him. Living faith will always be demonstrated in our obedience to the call of God. We claim to be the among the faithful, but does our obedience to the will of our God and Father demonstrate our faith before the world? By faith...

