What does it look like to have faith, to endure in faith?

- Faith is:

  -- confidence is that which isn't seen
  -- how we are commended by God (as righteous, as pleasing)
  -- a belief that God exists and rewards according to His word
  -- (always) actionable
  -- a determined focus beyond the here-and-now
  -- the appropriate response to the word of God
  -- endurance in the hard struggles of life

- Abraham:

  -- (v. 8) by faith, he **obeyed by going out**

  God told him to leave his homeland, but He didn't tell him all that would happen.

  I don't have all of the details, and yet…

  -- (v. 9) by faith, he **lived as a stranger**

  God told him he would receive promised land, but he lived for the rest of his life as if he were a foreigner there.

  I'm not experiencing all I've been promised, and yet…

  -- (v. 11) by faith, he **received the ability to have a son**

  God told him he would have a son, but he and Sarah were well-passed childbearing age.

  I don't see how it's even possible for it to happen, and yet…

  -- (vv. 17-19) by faith, he **offered up his only son**

  God told him to sacrifice his son, but his son was the son through whom the promise would continue.

  I'm not sure why God would take that which He so obviously gave me, and yet…

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses…let us run with **endurance** the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus…" (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Are you looking for the right examples?
Are you actually following them in the right sort of way?
Are you becoming the right sort of example yourself?

Sunday, August 11, 2024
Danny Capon, *Pastor*

ORIGINS—The Book of Genesis
The Beginning and Meaning of Everything That Matters
No. 69 | Conclusion, pt. 2

Selected Scriptures

Review

CREATION

Genesis 1:1-2:3 | The Seven Days of Creation
Genesis 2:4-25 | Man and Woman in the Garden

CORRUPTION

Genesis 3:1-24 | The Fall of Man
Genesis 4:1-5:32 | The Progress of Sin
Genesis 6:1-8:22 | The Judgment of God
Genesis 9:1-11:32 | The Necessity of Covenant

COVENANT

Genesis 12:1-25:18 | Abraham
Genesis 25:19-37:1 | Isaac
Genesis 37:2-50:26 | Jacob

CREATION (1:1-2:25) **> CORRUPTION** (3:1-11:32) **> COVENANT** (12:1-50:26)

Conclusion, pt. 2 **Selected Scriptures**

What do we do with Abraham?

Asking the question…

- God's word, the Bible, is *about* people, *for* people
- These people are *real,* existing in place(s) and time, within God's plan
- The *meaning* of the passages where these people are mentioned isn't necessarily the people themselves
- We are, however, quite fond of the *characters* (the people) in these passages, and are apt to continually ask, 'What can we learn from, e.g. Abraham?'

A few interrelated matters…

- The Bible and Teaching

  What is the Bible doing and how does it do it?

- The Bible and Moralism

  morality and moralism

  e.g. (1) not a moralistic hermeneutic (i.e. the *meaning* of the story is because of so-and-so, you should or shouldn't do such-and-such); (2) not an unevangelical sanctification (i.e. the personal *application* of the story is detached from a person's relationship to Christ), etc.

- The Bible and Interpretation

  what God's word *means* and what God's word *does*

- The Bible and Characters

  How can we make use of the Old Testament, today? How can we make use of Old Testament characters, today?

How the Bible makes use of characters…

- Passages that **encourage** reflection about characters' lives and experiences:

  ESV **Romans 15:4** For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

  ESV **1 Corinthians 10:6** Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did.

  ESV **Hebrews 6:11** And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

  ESV **1 Peter 1:12** It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

- Passages that **warn** about following after certain characters:

  ESV **Luke 17:31** On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back. 32 Remember Lot's wife.

  ESV **2 Corinthians 11:2** I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. 3 But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

  ESV **Hebrews 12:15** See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; 16 that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.

  ESV **1 John 3:12** We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.

- Passages that **commend** certain other characters for imitating:

  ESV **Galatians 4:28** Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.

  ESV **1 Timothy 2:13** For Adam was formed first, then Eve; 14 and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. 15 Yet she will be saved through childbearing- if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

  ESV **James 5:10** As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

  ESV **1 Peter 3:5** For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their husbands, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

- Passages that **reference** Abraham, especially:

  "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (Exodus 3:6)

  "Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him." (Isaiah 51:2)

  What *God* said (or did) to (or for) Abraham…
  What *Abraham* said (or did) in relation to (or because of) God…

  A Guide for Carefully Making Use of Biblical Characters:

  -- Strive, first, to understand the *meaning* of the passage.
  -- If the Bible makes use of a character *morally*, follow its lead.
  -- Develop over time a biblically consistent and comprehensive *morality*—the Bible is *for* morality, and its approach to morality progresses as God's plan and purposes unfold.
  -- Utilize wisdom in *making use* of biblical characters—apply wisdom in understanding the characters, and apply the characters in developing wisdom. (Note: Our wise use of biblical characters will likely only be as good as the information we have, and our faithfulness to its proper understanding.)

How we can make use of Abraham…

- A few conclusions from the **life** of Abraham in Genesis:

  -- His background didn't deter him from hearing and responding to God's word when it came to him.
  -- He took God at His word, practically and regularly throughout his life.
  -- He wasn't perfect and had to learn lessons along the way.
  -- He took responsibility and was appropriately loyal to family commitments.
  -- He demonstrated an understanding of respect and decorum.
  -- He committed himself ultimately to the Lord and willingly sacrificed for Him.
  -- He sought to prepare his son for life, including following his own death.

- A few conclusions from the **faith** of Abraham in Hebrews:

  "But recall the former days when…you **endured** a hard struggle with sufferings…" (Hebrews 10:32)

  The Hebrews Christians (c. AD 65)

  "Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of **endurance**…" (Hebrews 10:35-36)

  We are not of those who **shrink back** and are destroyed, but of those who **have faith** and preserve our souls (v. 39)

  Abraham (c. 1900 BC)