

Res · o · lute

(adj.) Admirably purposeful, determined, and unwavering

DEVELOPING "EVEN IF" FAITH

Lesson 3: Group Session

In today's lesson, we're going to talk about two other heroes of faith mentioned in the faith chapter in Hebrews 11: Abraham and David.

Abraham

Promise #1: (Age 75)

"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:2-3, NIV)

Test of Faith #1:

Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live. Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you." (Genesis 12:10-13, NIV)

Promise #2:

But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

Then the word of the Lord came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir." He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:2-6, NIV)

Test of Faith #2:

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her."

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife.
(Genesis 16:1-3, NIV)

Where Did Abraham Go Wrong?

1. He listened to the _____ voices.

Test #1:

The enemy takes what is true or has been true in our lives and twists it into a lie to steal, kill, and destroy our future.

Test #2:

When we're waiting on God, we have to be careful not to listen to a _____ idea if it's not a _____ idea.

2. He took God's responsibilities upon _____.

Test #1:

Test #2:

It is never our responsibility to accomplish God's promises.

Our _____ is obedience, patience, and staying in relationship with God. It is God's responsibility to protect, provide, and perform the promise!

3. He didn't go to God, and therefore his _____ was not fixed on God.

Test #1:

We can't focus on the "what if's" if we're going to have "even if" faith.

Test #2:

Focusing on God is the only thing that can keep us _____-full instead of _____-full while we wait.

Again, just like Elijah last week, Abraham's lack of focus on God broke the rest of the cycle.

David

The Promise: (age 15 approximately)

Then the Lord said [to Samuel], "Rise and anoint him; this is the one [who would be the next king of Israel]."

So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David.
(1 Samuel 16:12b-13a, NIV)

Test of Faith #1:

He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave. The men said, "This is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'" Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe. (1 Samuel 24:3-4, NIV)

Test of Faith #2:

So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him.

Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I won't strike him twice."

But David said to Abishai, "Don't destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord's anointed and be guiltless? As surely as the Lord lives," he said, "the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord's anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let's go." (1 Samuel 26:7-11, NIV)

Where Did David Go Right?

1. He _____ listen to the wrong voices.

The men said, "This is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.' (1 Samuel 24:4a, NIV)

Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I won't strike him twice." (1 Samuel 26:8, NIV)

Just because someone's advice or opinion sounds good, doesn't mean it is God. If the advice or opinions of others contradict our convictions, they are not from God for us.

2. He knew it was _____ responsibility to fulfill his promises.

As surely as the Lord lives," he said, "the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. (1 Samuel 26:10, NIV)

We have to be patient enough to let God accomplish his plan his way.

3. He was in constant communication with God, so his _____ was fixed on God.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7, NIV)



David lived out this verse. There are 73 Psalms written by David. David wrote the following Psalms during the time period in which he was running for his life from Saul: Psalm 7, 34, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, and 142. In these Psalms we see a visual depiction of the faith cycle.

God is Faithful to His Promises

Abraham

Promise #3: (age 99)

No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations....

God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."...

Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac....

But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year." (Genesis 17:5, 15-16, 19a, 21NIV)

God always fulfills his promises _____.

And when the third test came, Abraham passed with "even if" faith (Genesis 22).

David

King Saul eventually died in battle, and David, once again, waited on God:

In the course of time, David inquired of the Lord. "Shall I go up to one of the towns of Judah?" he asked.

The Lord said, "Go up."

David asked, "Where shall I go?"

"To Hebron," the Lord answered....

Then the men of Judah came to Hebron, and there they anointed David king over the tribe of Judah. (2 Samuel 2:1, 4a, NIV)

Why Does God Test Our Faith?

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (James 1:2-4, NIV)

Because he has a _____ for our lives!

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10, NIV)

Oh Lord, make us who you need us to be in order to do what you created us to do.