

ABRAHAM'S FAITH "By Faith"

Introduction-

James 2:21-23

- 21 Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?
22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.
23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and **he was called God's friend.** NIV

Abraham has the testimony of being called God's friend. How does that song go, "I'd lay it all down again to hear you say, 'I'm your friend'"? Being a friend of God is a good thing, right? The Greek word translated "friend" is φίλος. It is the noun form of the verb "phileo" that we are all familiar with.

1 Cor 16:22

If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha. KJV

1 Cor 16:22

If anyone does not love the Lord—a curse be on him. Come, O Lord! NIV

Phileo is the term that Paul uses here in 1 Corinthians. It is clear that we need a friendship with the Lord. He has showed Himself to be our Friend, but how are we to be "friends of God?" Well, friendship with God is the result of our walk of faith; a walk that is from faith, to faith, and by faith.

I. Grace and Faith – Rom 4:16 KJV

Rom 4:16

Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, KJV

1. Of faith . . . according to grace
 - a. of faith = source
"Of faith" once again, the word is ek. The promise proceeds from the center of faith.
 - b. according to grace = pattern
"By grace," the word "by" is kata and in this sentence means "according to." In other words, grace is the pattern by which the promise proceeds "from faith."

WRITE IN: From faith = pattern of grace

2. To the end

“To the end” speaks of purpose. It is the reason why the promise came from a center of faith after the pattern of grace. This is the “to faith” portion of our graphic.

WRITE IN: to faith = purpose of grace

3. The promise might be sure

This is the point of it, the promise being sure. You see, the seal is a guarantee of what is to come. But we need to persevere to receive the promise. In other words, to make it sure.

Heb 10:35-39

35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."

39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. NKJV

II. An Examination of Righteous Faith – Rom 4:17-22

Rom 4:17-22

17 As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.

18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead.

20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,

21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

22 This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." NIV

1. The God he believed in – vs. 17

“the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.”

2. The hope it rested on – vs. 18

In is the Greek word “epi” and in this sentence means “upon.” Abraham’s faith rested upon hope.

Rom 8:22-25

22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

- 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?
25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. NIV

Hope demands a patient walking out of faith.

Heb 11:1-3

- 1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.
2 This is what the ancients were commended for.
3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. NIV

The walk of faith makes it possible for us to eventual see the things we hoped for.

3. Not weakened by circumstance – vs. 19
“Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead”
4. It was strengthened by clinging to the promise of God and giving Him glory – vs. 20
5. He was fully persuaded that God could accomplish what He had promised – vs. 21

III. The Sacrifice of Friendship

1. From faith, to faith, by faith – Heb 11
A. From faith – vs. 8-10 (Salvation)
Heb 11:8-10
8 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.
9 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.
10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. NIV
B. To faith – vs. 11-12 (Seal)
Heb 11:11-12
11 By faith Abraham, even though he was past age-and Sarah herself was barren-was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise.
12 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. NIV
C. By faith – vs. 17-19 (Sacrifice)
Heb 11:17-19
17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,

18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."

19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. NIV

2. Abraham, Isaac, and Jehovah-Jireh – Gen 22

A. Isaac's age

Gen 21 – vs. 8, Isaac weaned (2 or 3); vs. 9-20 Ishmael sent away, grows up and marries; vs. 22-34 "at that time" Abraham plants a tree, stayed a long time.

Gen 22:1 some time later. In other words, Isaac wasn't five years old!

B. Isaac's cooperation

Gen 22:1-10

1 Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied.

2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

3 Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.

4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.

5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."

6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together,

7 Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

8 Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.

9 When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

10 Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. NIV

Isaac knew what was going on (eventually) and joined his father in the sacrifice. I imagine that binding him up was to help him stay still and make it as painless as possible.

C. God's redemption

Gen 22:11-14

11 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied.

12 "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

13 Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.

14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided." NIV

3. Friends of God

A. Completed faith – James 2:20-24

James 2:20-24

20 You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

21 Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?

22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.

23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend.

24 You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. NIV

Faith towards friendship requires action!

B. Communicated mission – Gen 18:16; John 15:13-16

Gen 18:16-17

16 When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way.

17 Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? NIV

John 15:13-16

13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

NIV

Faith towards friendship requires communicating fellowship.

C. Consecrated service – James 4:4; Rom 12:1-3

James 4:4

You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. NIV

Rom 12:1-3

- 1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship.
- 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will.
- 3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. NIV

Faith towards friendship requires sacrifice!

Conclusion-

The walk of faith is a walk of grace. We receive the promises of God from faith and the righteousness of God begins to be revealed to us. That faith will carry us to a place of certification and sealing from which we will consecrate ourselves as living sacrifices to live by faith.