

FAITHFUL – *Examples and Encouragement!!*

Sunday, 8/18 – 9:00 † Monday, 8/19 – 7 PM

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost / Eleventh Sunday after Trinity – 2019

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Today we continue a short series in Hebrews – *as we focus on part of [chapter 11](#) and begin [chapter 12](#)*. What is the difference between **✦**having faith and **✦**being faithful?

- ✓ **Faith** believes what is invisible/seems impossible; *saving faith believes in Jesus as our Savior from sin and hell!*
- ✓ **Faithful** is the action taken by those who have faith; *those who live by their faith are being faithful!*

1. **Examples of being Faithful:**

- a. **¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested** [by God], **offered up Isaac**, and **[Abraham] who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son,** ¹⁸ of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” ¹⁹ **He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.** // For the whole story, see [Genesis 22](#); this is the short version: God had promised to give Abraham countless descendants through his son Isaac. Then, *to test Abraham’s faith*, God told him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Then, *without hesitation*, Abraham followed everything God had said, and then, *at the very last moment*, God stopped him! *Abraham was faithful!*

- b. ²⁰ **By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.** ²¹ **By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff.** // Remember from last week, Abraham believed all of God's promises – *regarding the land, descendants, and Messiah*, but he died without receiving. The same was true for Isaac and Jacob – Abraham's son and grandson, *but they believed and were faithful--expressing confidence in God's promises!*
- c. ²² **By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.** // Since Joseph believed in the coming Messiah, *he was faithful in speaking about the eventual entrance into the Promised Land!*
- d. ²³ **By faith Moses,**
- i. **...when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.** // By the order of Pharaoh, the king, *all male babies were supposed to be killed*; but the parents of Moses were faithful – *so they feared God more than Pharaoh and hid their son!*
 - ii. ²⁴ **...when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,** ²⁵ **choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.** ²⁶ **He considered the reproach of Christ** [*the insults connected with trusting in Christ*] **greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.** // Moses should have died as an infant; instead, *he was raised as a grandson of Pharaoh* – which included every pleasure. However, when

the time was right, *he gave up those pleasures to identify with His people and the coming Messiah!*

- iii. **27 ...left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.** // Even though the king was very powerful, *Moses was faithful to the Almighty God!*
- iv. **28 ...kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.** // That refers to the tenth plague, *the death of all of the firstborn males in Egypt*. The only way of escape was through the blood of an unblemished lamb; Moses **‡**told the others and **‡**acted with faithfulness. As the Destroyer passed over them, *so He will pass over us through Jesus!*
- e. **29 By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.** // God had led the Israelites into what appeared to be a trap; however, God **‡**opened the sea, **‡**saved His people, and **‡**destroyed Pharaoh's army! The people showed they were faithful as they – *with a great wall of water on each side* – passed through the Red Sea on dry ground!
- f. **30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.** // The Israelites had just entered the Promised Land, *and God wanted to make it clear that He would fight for them*. Therefore, they were told to march around the city once each day for six days, *then seven times on the seventh day*. What foolishness, *yet they were faithful*; after the seventh time on the seventh day, *God caused the strong walls – about 5 feet thick and 12-17 feet high – to fall, and then the city was easily conquered!*

- g. ³¹ **By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.** // Rahab, *having heard of the mighty acts of God*, was led to repent and believe; then – *to show herself faithful* – she risked her life, hid the spies, and was spared when the walls fell!

2. **Encouragement to be Faithful:**

- a. From other believers: ¹ **Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses** [*those with firsthand experience, with noteworthy performance – like the ones we read about in chapter 11*], **let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,** ² **looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.** // Even though – *from a human perspective* – the outcomes seemed hopeless for Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Rahab, and others, *they kept believing and received their eternal reward!* Therefore, we are called to *daily* ♣ lay aside every sin and ♣ remained focused on our Lord Jesus Christ!
- b. From Jesus: ³ **Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.** // As Jesus endured much for us, *let us be faithful--enduring much as His followers!*

This Week's Challenge: As we think about the great examples of faithfulness, *let us be encouraged and let us live by faith!!*

Let Us Pray: Encouraged by the saints, *enable us to be faithful!*

CONNECT WITH US → Website: www.BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
Podcast: Benefit from the Bible | Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230