

“By Faith, Part 2”:
Noah & the Patriarchs
Sermon Notes

□ **In our age of apostasy, we stand in need of heroes - faithful, fruitful, Christ-exalting heroes** (vv.6:11-12; 13:7-8; 12:1-2)

**Like...*

1. Noah (v.7; Ezekiel 14:14, 20 → Hebrews 2:14-18)
2. Abraham (vv. 8-10, 17-19 → John 8:53-59)
3. Sarah (vv.11-12; Genesis 18:12 → 1 Peter 2:13-3:6)
4. Issac, Jacob, and Joseph (vv.20-22; Genesis 22:12→ John 3:16; Genesis 28:12→John 1:51; Genesis 37-50)

*Heroes who make us homesick for heaven... (vv.10, 13-16)

Next Week: Hebrews 11:23-31 - “By Faith, Part 3”:
Moses & the People of God

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of September 29th - October 5th

Getting Started

1. Who is your favorite person in Holy Scripture (the three Persons of the Trinity excluded!) Why? What makes this person so important or memorable in your eyes? If you have a favorite account or passage written by or about them, please share it with the group.

Digging Deeper

2. To use the language of Tim Keller, how is Jesus the “true and better” incarnation of the person you cited above (what truths or themes from their lives positively or negatively point us toward the Savior)? If it’s not obvious on first consideration, invite the other members of the group to help you think through it (if you need a little inspiration, take a look at this 2 minute link from Tim Keller: <https://www.epm.org/blog/2011/May/30/jesus-true-and-better>).

Open Your Bible to Hebrews 11:8-22...

3. The life of Abraham provides a fascinating character study. On the one hand, he's a man of extraordinary trust in the LORD whose faith we ought to seek to imitate (vv.9-10, 17-19; 13:7). On the other hand, he's also a man who stumbled repeatedly in his walk with the LORD (Genesis 12:10-20; 16:1-2; 17:15-21; 20:1-18). Read through these portions of Scripture, comparing and contrasting these two sides of Abraham. What do you learn?

4. Hebrews 11:11-12 highlights the faith of Abraham's wife, Sarah. As with the references to Abraham above, the author does not choose to highlight some of her glaring faults (see Genesis 16:1-6; 18:9-15). In fact, when we turn to 1 Peter 3:1-6, Peter offers Sarah as a model of an excellent wife (Proverbs 31:10). In what ways is Sarah to be regarded as a distinguished mentor across the millennia for women who profess faith in Christ today? At the same time, what are we to make of her misconduct?

5. The writer to the Hebrews reminds us that: "By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob *and Esau*" (Hebrews 11:20, my emphasis). Take a look at the relevant portion of the account that this verse summarizes (Genesis 27:26-46). How do Isaac's blessings for each of his sons differ? What does it mean that he invoked future blessings on them "By faith..."? How do we apply a text like this to our lives in a practical way?

6. Jacob is another one of the patriarchs whose faith tended to blow hot and cold at differing points over the course of his life (Genesis 25:19-35:29; 37:3-4, 10; 42-49). As you reflect on the life of Jacob, what moments are most inspiring to you? Which ones are most disappointing? How do you see yourself in the eyes of Jacob (i.e. for better or worse, what sort of family resemblance do you bear?) Why do you suppose the writer chose this particular instance in Jacob's journey to hold up as an example of faith (v.21; Genesis 48:8-22)?

7. In a very real sense, Joseph's life may parallel the life of Christ as well as anyone in Holy Scripture. Scan through Genesis 37-50. How many undeniable similarities do you see between Joseph and Jesus? Once more, the author chooses an interesting occasion to highlight the faith of Joseph (v.22). What's the significance of this, and why is it a stellar example of the faith to which we are called as followers of Christ (v.1)?

8. Look back once more over what the author tells us about the lives of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph - giving special attention to the verses we skipped over (vv.13-16). In what practical ways ought we to look to these people as heroes (see Hebrews 13:7 - "remember", "consider", "imitate" their faith)? At the same time, in what ways ought we to look through them to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith (12:1-2)?