

Finish Faithfully

Genesis 25:1-18; Hebrews 11:8-19

I. The Finish Line Of The Faithful Life (Genesis 25:1-18)

- A. A Faithful Life Looks _____ Even After A Tragic Loss (1-4)**
- B. A Faithful Life _____ For The Family Materially And Spiritually (5-6; Rom 4:1-5)**
- C. A Faithful Life Is _____ Through God (7-18)**

II. The Trophy Presentation For The Faithful Life (Hebrews 11:8-19)

- A. For Going Without _____ (8)**
- B. For Wanting To Live In _____ Realm, Not The World (9-10)**
- C. For Being _____ When We Seem Used Up (11-12)**
- D. For Trusting God To Fulfill His Full Promise _____ Our Lifetime (13-16)**
- E. For The Willingness To _____ What God Could Replace (17-19)**

Conclusion:

1. Faith in God's Salvation: Abraham's tomb was full, Jesus' is still empty.
2. Faith in God's Provision: Abraham's life was fulfilled, God is the Filler.

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I. The Finish Line Of The Faithful Life (Genesis 25:1-18)

A. A Faithful Life Looks Forward Even After A Tragic Loss (1-4)

1Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. **2**She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. **3**Jokshan fathered Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. **4**The sons of Midian were Ephah, Ephher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

- After Sarah died, Abraham took another wife
- Remember that Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born
- 137 when Sarah died (23:1)
- He would live another 38 years before his death at 175
- Life didn't stop for him after Sarah's death
- He had 6 children through Keturah
- Including the father of the Midianites (v. 2)

- Have you lost a loved one?
- Don't feel that life is over, as devastating as it is
- Abraham lived another 38 quality years after Sarah's death
- I'm not saying to remarry or not to remarry – that's a different road for each person
- But don't shut down for 38 years
- Keep walking faithfully with God

- Widows and widowers can have extra time to serve the Lord
- You have gone through the valleys of life and have seen what's really important in life – you can teach others about that
- Find something meaningful to do – you may live another 38 years

B. A Faithful Life Provides For The Family Materially And Spiritually (5-6)

5Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. **6**But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and while he was still living he sent them away from his son Isaac, eastward to the east country.

- Abraham took care of his family materially and spiritually
- "gave all he had to Isaac" – the child of promise through whom the Messiah would come
- "gave gifts" to his other children
- He not only provided for them materially but he left a spiritual legacy

- Q: What will we be remembered for leaving behind?
 - At college – there are a lot of buildings named after donors
 - But we also have witnessed a lot of renaming of buildings – one day we will be forgotten by the world
 - What will God remember us for?

- Romans 4 tells us His spiritually legacy of his salvation

Romans 4:1-5 1What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? 2For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." 4Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,

- What good is it if you leave our children millions of dollars but not impress upon the importance of the Gospel?
- Do our children know how important it is for us to be with them in heaven?
- Do we care more about the legacy of wealth and education, or faith in God?

C. **A Faithful Life Is Fulfilled Through God (7-18)**

7These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, 175 years. 8Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and **full of years**, and was gathered to his people. 9Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, 10the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried, with Sarah his wife. 11After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son. And Isaac settled at Beer-lahai-roi. 12These are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, bore to Abraham. 13These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 14Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. 16These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. 17(These are the years of the life of Ishmael: 137 years. He breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.) 18They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria. He settled over against all his kinsmen.

- V. 8 "full of years" = more than quantity, but also quality of life
- Wiersbe quotes an author who translates this "satisfied with life" (*Be Obedient*, p. 133)
- A life faithful to God is fully satisfied

Genesis 15:15 As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.

- Part of that satisfaction God gives us in life and death is being at peace with God
- He will provide for us in this life time and for eternity
- We are

II. **The Trophy Presentation For The Faithful Life (Hebrews 11:8-19)**

A. **For Going Without Knowing (8)**

8By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

- It's never easy to leave behind what we're familiar with

- But Abraham had to leave the culture of paganism
- Ie/ Leaving for college, when you don't know what God has in store for you, is a step of faith
- Ie/ When I left for UCSD, I left behind my family, my church, my friends
- Ie/ Getting married – what's life have in store? What's God's plan for us?
- Ie/ Starting a new job
- Ie/ Trying a new ministry

B. For Wanting To Live In God's Realm, Not The World (9-10)

9By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.**10**For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

- "Designer" = *technites* – craftsman, artist, architect
- "Builder" = *demiorgos* – occurs only here in NT – contractor, builder, one who is involved in public affairs
- This city isn't the earthly Jerusalem, but the heavenly city of God
- Abraham was promised the Land of Canaan but never owned property there, neither did he become a citizen there.
- The only property he owned was the burial tomb in Machpelah near Hebron for Sarah and him to be buried in (Gen 23)
- Though this was the land of promise, he never put his roots in the city – he put his roots in God
- "Tents" were temporary and portable – not permanent
- Abraham was more nomadic than an urbanite
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- This "city" "whose designer and builder is God" is the one with a God-centered operating system
- Lot was drawn to the city life of Sodom and Gomorrah
- Abraham looked for something different
- Abraham also looked towards heaven – that will be the place of perfection and reward
- We may not be the movers and shakers of this world, but the real greatness will come in heaven
- Ie/ Those who go to a Christian school having gone to a public school will notice the difference when school is designed and built by God
- Ie/ I hope ministry on Sunday is contrasted with secular work because our operating system is designed and built by God
- Ie/ There is a sharp difference between a government built on God and one that has abandoned God
- Q: Do our children see the difference in our family as a Christian family?
- Ie/ I hear sometimes that if the world would see our family, they wouldn't know we're Christians – that's just sad to me

C. For Being Used When We Seem Used Up (11-12)

11By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. **12**Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

- Sarah was 90
- Abraham was as good as dead at 100 (sounds like the least flattering thing said about good ol' Abe)
- But God worked a miracle to provide a Savior through them
- Don't discount what God can do through you in old age
- Maybe you won't have a baby, but you can make an impact

- Ie/ Make a difference in the life of our church's children, teens and young adults
- Many of them don't have grandparents living or they are overseas – come into their lives to pray for them or impart some gentle wisdom as grandparents can do through love

D. For Trusting God To Fulfill His Full Promise After Our Lifetime (13-16)

13These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. **14**For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. **15**If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. **16**But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

- Abraham didn't receive all the promises of the covenant in his lifetime
- In fact, we're still awaiting total fulfillment
- They were content being sojourners on this earth while waiting for the promise of heaven
- They desired heaven
- It's tough on earth
- We struggle with disappointment, suffering and loss – but we desire a better country – a heavenly one

- God is preparing for us His City
- John 14 – Christ preparing for us a place
- If this great universe is prepared in 6 days, imagine what Christ is making for us the last 2000 years!

E. For The Willingness To Sacrifice What God Could Resurrect (17-19)

17By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he 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.

- Abraham's test of faith was in the resurrection of God
- He was willing to sacrifice his child of promise because he was confident God would raise Isaac from the dead and receive him back
- Ie/ Job – lost it all, God replaced double

Conclusion:

1. Faith in God's Salvation: Abraham's tomb was full, Jesus' is still empty.
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