

VISIBLE FAITH

Hebrews 11:8-12

Introduction: *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* Or the acrostic Forsaking All I Trust Him (FAITH). All of us have our own little private definition of "faith." We have said, "wow, that took a lot of faith" or "I'm going to take a step of faith." God's Word has a lot to say about faith and God has presented those ways in such a way that "faith can actually be seen." Faith may start out invisible but when it is finished, it is visible.

I. THERE IS FIRST OF ALL THE FAITH OF SELF-SURRENDER

1. When Abraham is first mentioned, he was called Abram and he knew nothing of Almighty God but worshipped a pagan worship of the moon.
2. God made Himself known to Abram and God told him He had somewhere he needed to be going.
- God told Abram to leave everything and everybody except his immediate family and go to a strange place yet to be revealed to him later on, just get up and go.
3. Abram, who never knew Almighty God, obeyed immediately, without hesitation, no questions, willingly, laying aside his familiar way of life, giving up his own ideas and plans, started out in the direction God told him to go.
4. Whenever God called us, first to salvation, our response was slow, delayed, had to think about it, and sometimes a "no."
5. Whenever God calls us, it is to obey His Word, His Way which is a life of faithfulness with no questions asked. Our response is not like Abram's very often.
6. God has called Christians out of this world and its ways to a life dedicated to being like God's Son, Jesus and ultimately to a heavenly city.
7. Abram's faith became visible when he obeyed God and left everything and started out. Do you have that kind of faith? The kind of faith that is visible because of your obedience?

II. THE FAITH OF PATIENCE BECOME VISIBLE

1. Abram, now Abraham, wandered in a strange land which became the land God would give to Abraham's descendants, yet all the while Abraham continued to live in a tent with no permanent place to call his own.
2. Although Abraham found many places he would be happy to settle down, he never complained but kept moving around as God commanded. His nephew, Lot, however grew tired and settled down, but Abraham never stopped and settled down.

3. Abraham saw further than just his own comfort. He saw through the centuries of his descendants of Israel, Judah, David, Solomon, even the Holy City.
 - What God told him gave him reason to be patient and to hold on to his faith in God's Word.
 - Abraham's faith became visible through the centuries to others.
4. God promised Abraham a son even though Abraham was of old age, yet Abraham believed God and waited.
5. God has promised us many things and they have yet to be fulfilled, such as an eternity with Him in a heavenly place He has made just for us. Our faith causes us to wait with patience.
6. As we go through life we have our ups and downs and often wonder if God has forgotten us or we cry out, "why me Oh Lord, why me?"
 - It seems that many of our prayers are unanswered and thus many drop out of being faithful.
7. Whatever God says should be enough for us. Faith should be created for it is God who has made the promise. Why are we so impatient and lose our faith?
 - Perhaps there has not been a total surrender to God.
 - Maybe we don't know enough of God's Word.
 - We might not fellowship enough with others and draw strength from them.
 - Then we just might not look far enough ahead.
8. If you want to learn how to wait, to endure, to have patience, then there must be a total surrender to the Lord and a serious study of God's Word.

III. FAITH CAN BECOME VISIBLE IN ONE'S INFLUENCE UPON OTHERS

1. Abraham's wife, Sarah didn't have faith in God's promise of a son, so she took steps of her own to get Abraham a son by way of her handmaiden. She tried to help God.
 - Angels appeared and repeated God's promise again, but Sarah laughed.
 - God made the promise of a son to Abraham, yet Sarah came to believe because of the faith of Abraham.
2. Generations through hundreds of years believed God's promises because of Abraham's faith.
3. Influence can be good and bad. What about the influence of your faith? Has it been good or bad?

CONCLUSION:

1. The first step to God is FAITH. The second step to God is FAITH. The third step to God is FAITH and so on. There must be total surrender.
2. Faith brings all that one needs to be able to wait on God.
3. If faith is really visible, can your faith be seen?