

- I want to discuss the topic of faith with us this morning. I want to talk about the journey of faith. The journey of faith is like buttering toast.
- IE. Have you ever tried to spread hard butter on bread? I always found that frustrating growing up. I still find that frustrating. You cut off a square, you place it on your bread/toast, you destroy your bread attempting to spread it. Or you deny yourself the pleasure of eating your toast with butter on every corner. The other side of that picture is that you have soft butter, you gently and artfully spread your butter on every portion of your bread and you delightfully enjoy every morsel with butter. Application: If you do not understand the journey of faith you will most often end up trying to handle faith like a hard patty of butter. You will have it. It will taste good. But it just should not be this hard.
- *"What joy for those whose strength comes from the Lord, who have set their minds on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem."* (Psalm 84:5, NLT)
- There are three things we will look at this morning in light of the topic Faith is a Journey: 1. God has a planned destination for your life. 2. Faith is the vehicle to get you there. 3. The Journey is the road. I.e. So, God has a planned destination for you. You have vehicle to get there. And you have a road there as well.
- Before I begin let me give us some misconceptions of faith that are like hard butter.
 - To live in faith means my life is problem free. None of the Hebrews 11 champions believed that.
 - I am not seeing anything happening I must not have faith. Number the days of our faith heroes from the time promises are given until those promises are fulfilled. I.e. How many believe there is a heaven? How many have been there? Do you doubt it exists because it is delayed?
 - I must instantly have it when I need it. I.e. I must not be much of a christian if I find myself lacking faith.
 - Having faith in your faith. To have faith in your faith is to have no object of your faith. Some people say, "You gotta have faith." In what? Faith in your faith? Jesus said, Mk 11:22 *Have faith in God...*

I. God Has A Planned Destination

- A. "God has a plan for my life." This is a phrase that I have heard all of my life. It was first given its greatest strength/visibility under Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ, and his Four Spiritual Laws tract. God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. I believe that.
 1. God has a plan for our lives. You know it makes a difference who plans your life! We can trust God. Go for it! But also know...
 - a) You can resist God's plan. I.e. Saul why do you kick against the goads? *"And Saul said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. It is dangerous and it will turn out badly for you to keep kicking against the goad [to offer vain and perilous resistance]."* (Acts 9:5, AMP)
 - b) You can refuse God's plan. I.E. Judas
 2. God has a plan for our lives. In other words, we have been given a destiny. A destiny is something to which a person or thing is destined.

3. A destiny has a destination. Merriam Webster defines destination as: *"a place to which one is journeying or to which something is sent."* Journeying...Sent (apostolic).
- B. Each of the heroes of the faith found in Hebrews 11 had a grand destination planned by God. That grand destination was not heaven. We do not hear stories of heaven after people die, in Heb 11. We hear stories of the earthly destinations arrived at by followers of God. Most of those stories are stories of faith where a believer in God follows God and finds himself at a destination point in which lives of others are impacted in powerful ways by God.
 1. Able loved God and brought his best.
 2. Noah loved God and preached to his generation while building an Ark in response to God's leading in his life.
 3. Enoch walked with God and was not. Walked with God. He was journeying with God.
 4. Abraham left his home to follow God's leading. He became the father of many nations.
 5. Moses gave up his life in Egypt to identify with his people and later became the deliverer of Israel.
 6. David, a shepherd boy who loved God. Later became the greatest King of Israel.
- C. God has a plan for your life.
 1. ***The greatest plan that God has for your life is an ongoing up to date relationship with you! This is first and foremost. He loves you and wants to be close to you.
 2. Out of this love relationship with Him, He wants to reach as many people as possible through you.
 - a) This could be personally through you. IE. A Billy Graham
 - b) This could be through your children. IE. A Billy Graham's mother.
 - c) This could be through that one person your life touches. Ie. You lead a Saul of Tarsus to Jesus.
 3. All of it is to happen out of relationship with Him.

II. Faith Is The Vehicle

- A. Faith is how we get to God, connect with God and walk with God. Romans 10:17 is all about the vehicle that gets us to the destination of a right relationship with God.
 1. *"... As a result, all who believe in him are made right with God."* (Romans 10:4, NLT)
 2. *"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved."* (Romans 10:9-10, NLT)
 3. *"So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ."* (Romans 10:17, NLT)
 4. The principle of faith remains the same. The same faith you use to get into a right relationship with God is the same faith you use to get healed.
- B. *"By faith"* found at least 20 times in Hebrews 11 is the vehicle that is used to get to the destination by each of the faith heroes.
 1. Faith provides the access to God that empowered the heroes to overcome obstacles, stay committed, and arrive at the intended plan of God.

2. The ultimate destination of your faith is a right relationship with God, a personal up to date relationship with God, and an enjoyable relationship with God.
 - a) What are people looking for in life? Love, acceptance, significance - ultimate destination.
 - b) All of these are found in Christ. Not a one time visit with Him but an ongoing relationship with Him.
3. Jesus points out people's vehicles 9-10 times in the Gospels... "Your faith has made you well"
 - a) The reality of the Christian life is measured by the impact on the impossible.
 - b) You do not need faith if in your own strength you can overcome. The impossibilities lead us to incredible discoveries. And faith is the vehicle that leads us to that discovery.

III. The Journey Is The Road Each ones road is different but the ultimate final destination is the same...eternity with God.

- A. What does it mean to journey? Journey is about what we discover and most importantly what we discover about ourselves in the process. Let me break this down for you.
 1. A journey is travel or passage from one place to another. It is everything that happens in between point A and B.
 - a) Many times the word journey speaks of time. It is not generally used to speak of a short span of time. All of our heroes of Hebrew 11 had to deal with issue of time.
 - b) Journey often implies that there is a story involved as one travels. What makes for a great novel or a great movie is not the events but what happens inside the characters as they travel. The events make it interesting. The transformation of the characters makes it real, makes it relatable and draws us in. The events make it interesting the transformation makes it real and relatable. Let me ask you: In light of the events of life, what is the transformation that is taking place inside of you.
 - c) One of the many beauties of Hebrews chapter 11 is the the journey of the lives of those listed in the chapter because we can see the transformation of their lives in the story.
 2. A journey is not so much about the final destination but about how we got there and what happened in us as we traveled. This is true of all the heroes of the faith in Heb 11.
 - a) "...by faith Moses, when he had grown to maturity and become great, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter," (Hebrews 11:24, AMP)
 - b) "*It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt, not fearing the king's anger. He kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible.*" (Hebrews 11:27, NLT)
- B. Pilgrimage speaks of journey. "*What joy for those whose strength comes from the Lord, who have set their minds on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.*" (Psalm 84:5, NLT) Heb 11:13-16
 1. Pilgrimage - Heb. *maslul* - "The theme of casting up a highway is utilized by the prophets. The figure, derived from building a road higher than the adjacent terrain, is natural." In other places is speaks of a ladder, to go higher. Patterson, R. D. (1999). [1506 ללל](#). R. L. Harris, G. L.

Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., pp. 626-627). Chicago: Moody Press. A pilgrimage is designed to take us higher. IE. Faith of Abraham. I see a ladder and at the top is the faith of Abraham. The prophetic word is to take us into higher places with God.

2. Pilgrimage add purpose to the journey. If pilgrimage adds purpose to the journey and discovery is part of the journey the implication is that there are things hidden from us along the way that God intends us to discover. *"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter."* (Prov 25:2)
3. I found this 2013 Blog by Bill Johnson: "God hides things for us not from us. ...Living with mystery is the privilege of our walk with Christ. Its importance cannot be overrated. If I understand all that is going on in my Christian life, I have an inferior Christian life. The walk of faith is to live according to the revelation we have received, in the midst of the mysteries we can't explain. That's why Christianity is called "the faith." Heb 11:13-16

Conclusion:

- God has a plan/a destination for your life. The vehicle to get there is faith. The road you take will have all kinds of events on it. But the key is what you discover about yourself and God that will give it meaning.
- Let's set our heart to be his pleasure by living by faith. This is the simple answer to the journey of faith yet I believe it is most profound. Enoch walked with God, Gen 5:24. That was his pleasure. His faith is what pleased God and gave God pleasure.
 - What is impressive about that story? He walked with God. Ie. He did not build an ark, he did not go to sacrifice his son. He did not deliver Israel. He did not build the temple.
 - He walked with God. Are you walking with God? or drifting through life.
- If you are thinking, "You have no clue what I am going through." Listen to these words of Jacob: *"Jacob replied, "I have traveled this earth for 130 hard years. But my life has been short compared to the lives of my ancestors.""* (Genesis 47:9, NLT) Yet Heb 11:21 He blessed his sons and worshipped at the end of his days.