

Facing Death By Faith

Introduction and Review

- From Abraham & his family we learned last week that by faith we must obey God's call to leave the familiar w/o knowing all the details & make genuine sacrifices when required (v. 8-10).
- We learned that by faith we must trust God for miraculous power to do His will when we are physically limited (v. 11-12, 17-19).
- We also learned that we can die in faith without losing hope when the call of God does not meet our personal expectations (v. 13) – timing, results, etc.
- We learned that we should contemplate & meditate on heaven in order to obey Gods' calling in faith with no regrets (v. 14-16).
- Today we'll learn more about this kind of faith that pleases God from Isaac, Jacob & Joseph – **believers at the end of life.**

I. Facing Death While Blessing Others (v. 20-21)

A. Blessing in spite of sin (v. 20)

*Isaac & his family had many sinful problems - fear & compromise in danger, partiality of parents, irreverence & deception of children. **Yet the family still lived by faith & trusted God.** Isaac believed that God would keep His promise through his sons even though one was sexually immoral & irreligious (Esau – Heb. 12:16) & the other son was a deceiver (Jacob) = Gen. 27:26-41. *By faith we believe that God is faithful even when we are weak & even fail in our sin (Ps. 100:5).**

B. Blessing in spite of suffering (v. 21)

*Jacob & his family suffered a great deal – his fear of Esau, exile with Laban, famine, Joseph's betrayal & suffering in Egypt. While he was alive, Joseph took care of the family in Egypt. But there was still much suffering in the future for Jacob's family while in Egypt. Even though he was near death in Egypt (not the Promised Land), Jacob still believed that God would keep His promise through his grandsons (Gen. 48:1-16). *By faith we believe that God is faithful even**

when our present & future circumstances are filled with suffering & difficulty (Rom. 8:28).

II. Facing Death While Planning For The Future (v. 22)

A. Making plans for other people

*Even though Joseph proved to be a man of faith many times during his life, the writer of Hebrews highlights the end of his life as evidence of his faith in "things not seen". At the end of his life Joseph was fully confident that God would deliver Israel from Egypt even though he would never see it (Gen. 50:24). *By faith Joseph was making plans for his people after his death. By faith we know that when we have done our best to take care of people in life, we can trust God to take care of them after our death.**

B. Making plans for yourself

*After Joseph ensured his family that God would take care of them, he then made plans for his own burial. Joseph wanted to live, die & be buried as a man of faith. His burial plans also proved that he had faith in "things not seen" (Gen. 50:25). *By faith the believer can make his own funeral plans in the will of God.**

ILL: In military movies, a man about to go into battle will leave a prized possession or special instructions for his family to take care of them if he dies. Many wise people prepare a will or testament with instructions to take care of family members after death. In either case they are dependent upon the faithfulness of other people to carry out their wishes after death.

APPL: But the believer is dependent upon the faithfulness of God after death, not people. Faith & grace are necessary for the believer even as he dies. Regardless of the trials, tests & failures of life, the believer should be able to die in faith fully trusting God with the future. Believers can trust God to bless our children, grandchildren & many generations in spite of our sins, their sins & all other circumstances because He is faithful & trustworthy.

CONCLUSION

So then my brothers & sisters what have you learned from Isaac, Jacob & Joseph today? Have you done any planning for your death? Can your children, grandchildren & other relative easily see that you live by faith regardless of your weaknesses & failures? By faith have you made provisions for your family to be taken care of after your death? Like Joseph, have you made any plans for your own funeral & burial so that you can live, die & be buried as a man or woman of faith? I certainly hope your answer is YES I have given some thought & made some plans for my own death by faith.

Remember that you do not have to be old to die, it happens to young people too. If you have not given any thought to plans for your own death, I would exhort today to remember that God not only wants us to LIVE by faith but He also wants us to DIE by faith looking forward to “things not yet seen”. This is exactly what we see in Jesus as He prepares for death – making plans for the care of His disciples at Gethsemane, for his mother on the cross, plans for your care & my care on the cross, & then making plans for His own death & burial. We must follow Jesus in life & death! **Facing death by faith!**

If you are not a Christian, then I’m asking you the same question. Have you done any planning for your death? You absolutely do not want to die as an unbeliever = eternal misery & pain. So you must trust Jesus to save you from the penalty of your sins. Your sins have separated you from God and Jesus has come to make peace between you and God. But you must believe...

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