

Liberty Commentary April 14, 2008

In this election cycle as with other election cycles we have heard much about “faith”. A recent headline read, “Clinton, Obama, to vie for the “faith vote”. John McCain said in a recent television ad, “keep that faith.”

People have many different ideas about what faith is and how it relates to their lives. To some, faith is very abstract and plays very little significant in their personal lives and to others it is very personal and real and is the basis for their entire life purpose.

The Bible tells us in Genesis chapter 12 that God called Abraham to leave his homeland in Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan (the promised land) where God would make of him a great nation. God promised Abraham three things, a land, a seed (Isaac) and a blessing (I will bless them that bless thee). Abraham was not a man of great faith when God called him. In fact, Abraham’s father Terah was polytheistic and worshiped pagan gods.

Abraham was different than his father and even though Abraham had weak faith he did worship the one true Jehovah. Abraham’s faith and dependence upon God had to be nurtured and developed just like ours does. God was about to do something in Abraham’s life that would change the entire course of history. God was going to give Abraham and Sarah a son even though Sarah was beyond the age of child bearing. Abraham thought God meant that the promise was going to happen immediately. The fact is, God had some things that he needed to teach Abraham about faith before he was ready to give the promised seed of Isaac.

The first step of faith for Abraham was to leave his home and go to the Promised Land. When Abraham arrives it is nothing like he expected. The land was full of heathen Canaanites. God had to

reassure Abraham that he was in the right place and that he needed to continue trusting Him and walk by faith.

Abraham builds an alter and there he prays and grows his faith and has fellowship with God. As often happens when we try our best to live by faith and walk with God, trials and problems come our way. There came a famine in the land and instead of trusting God by faith to meet his needs he took matters into his own hands and leaves the Promised Land for the comforts of Egypt. In order to get what he wanted he lies. God has to chasten him and bring him back to a place of faith just as he does with us sometimes.

Abraham returned back to the Promised Land where he had previously built an alter to pray and worship God. It was at the alter that Abraham once again found Gods will and direction for his life. We too must get back to the alter, to the place of prayer if we are to be men and women of dynamic, mountain moving faith.

Abraham's life could be summed up as vacillating between faith and failure. Abraham was a man of faith but at times he had lapses in faith just as we do. When we do not trust God as we should and when we take matters into our own hands instead of trusting God by faith, we find ourselves down in Egypt doing things we never thought we would do, things that hurt and damage our testimony and bring disgrace upon our lives and the lives of those around us.

If we are going to be men and women of faith we need to first exercise believing faith by trusting Christ as our Savior. We then need to move from believing faith to serving faith. That takes place by spending time in prayer, Bible study, fellowship and Christian service.

You must pray and seek Gods direction and as He leads you keep your focus upon God and the things that only he can do and get your eyes off those around you who don't understand you. The

Canaanites would never understand Abraham and God's call to his life. Those who do not walk by faith will never understand you. Do not become disillusioned by the criticism and rejection.

Finally, God does bless Abraham and Sarah with a son. Abraham is 100 and Sarah is 90. God had to teach Abraham some things about walking by faith before God was ready to deliver the promise, just as he may need to teach us some things before he is ready to deliver the promise to us.

Abraham went through 25 years of challenges and tests from faith and at times failure, just like we do. But Abraham always came back and finally Abraham learned what it meant to live a life of dynamic faith.

Faith is not about a slogan that is pulled out of the hat by politicians and campaigns that try to appeal to some religious segment of our society in hopes of gleaning votes. Faith in Christ is that which we depend upon for our salvation, that which gives depth and meaning to our lives and that which sustains us through the difficulties of life. Faith is knowing that God has all things in control and He will work all things for our good and His glory, as we trust Him.

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