

THE BEGINNING OF THE LIFE OF FAITH

GENESIS 12:1-9

Introduction:

Without question, other than Jesus our Lord, Abraham is the greatest example of faith found in Holy Scripture. The writers of the New Testament consistently look back to him and call him the "the Father of the faithful." We are encouraged to follow his path of faith.

But where did his faith begin? How did it begin? Evidently it began in the Ur of the Chaldees where Abraham was born and grew up to be a young adult. Ur is not much to see today. Some years ago a tourist scribbled on a ledger at a local hotel, "I do not blame Abraham for leaving, even Job would have left this place." It is just a little dried up desert town today, but in the day of Abram it was a thriving commercial and cultural center. Being located on the Persian Gulf, it was exposed to the influences of the ancient world.

It was a place dominated by pagan idolatry. Nanna, the moon god, was the most popular object of worship in that region. Interestingly Terah, Abraham's father, means "moony" which probably associates him with the worship of Nanna.

But the sovereign God of creation made a visit to Ur. He revealed Himself in some way to Abram and called him to leave Ur and go to a land which God would show him. We do not know for such how God communicated this message to the young man, but the message was clear. Abram did what the Lord commanded-- He started on the journey to the land that the Lord would show him. At that moment he became a person of faith. This can be marked as the place that faith began in the heart of Abram.

How can we begin a life of faith? Let's learn from this beginning for Abram.

I.WE BEGIN BY HEARING THE WORD OF GOD.

1. The word comes as a call.

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: (V.1)

For Abram, it meant leaving his country and his home. It meant following God to the land He would be shown.

For us it is a called to repent and to believe, to turn from sin and turn to the Savior.

2. The word comes with a promise.

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

The promise was personal to Abraham, but it reached into the future.

The Gospel that we hear is full of promises:

It promises eternal life,

It promises forgiveness,

It promises the gift of the Holy Spirit,

It promise a new relationship with God.

It promises peace and acceptance before Holy God.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

II. WE BEGIN THE LIFE OF FAITH BY HEEDING THE WORD OF GOD.

The word must be acted upon. Abram did more than hear--he gave heed to what he heard.

1. We heed through our obedience to the word.

Obedience is the other side of faith.

2. We heed through our dependence upon Him

We trust Him to keep His word, and act on it.

3. We heed through our confession.

One way Abram made his faith public was building an altar and bowing in worship.

"We confess with our mouths the Lord Jesus and believe with our hearts that God has raised Him from the dead.

Have you acted on what you have heard? Have you obeyed the voice of God that you heard in your inner being? Faith always begins when we hear and heed the word, and then continue walk in trust.