

Prayer List

Gene
Veda
Wallace
Sheila
Ophelia

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

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Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

Who put a bed in her home for the prophet Elisha?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

The Hivites - Joshua 9:23

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Abraham: Man of Practical Faith

Ira Lynn

Faith is the basis upon which we are justified by God. Galatians 2:15 says: "Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ...." Faith is also the basis upon which we live rightly before God. "The just shall live by faith" (Hebrews 10:38). Faith and trust in God resolves down to a very practical life or walk with God.

Let me draw your attention to a favorite passage of mine, Romans four. In this passage Abraham's practical faith is portrayed for us. To see a practical demonstration of faith at work, let us observe some things carefully.

In verse 17 we see that Abraham's faith is in a person—GOD! Romans 4:17, "... in the sight of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist." Faith is only as valid as its object. A simple but profound statement at this point. You can put full faith in something that will not

support you and you will have a disaster on your hands. You can put tentative faith in something that is very supportive and be very safe. When we ask, “What is the most important things about faith?” the answer is not how much faith we’ve got but who is our faith in? In whom did Abraham place his confidence and trust? In God! It is easy to put our faith in preachers, elders, churches, but only God is WORTHY of our faith.

The second thing we need to bear in mind as we look at the practical faith of Abraham is that if our faith is going to be realistic then we’re going to have to KNOW the God in whom we have put our faith. It’s the intelligent thing to do, to know as much as we can about the God of our faith. Is our faith an informed faith? Abraham’s was. He observed two things about God. First, God brings life out of deadness. Abraham believed that his God was so powerful that in Him was life and He could speak a life-giving word into deadness and deadness would surrender to God given life. That is what Abraham believed. And if we’re going to put our faith in something, let’s put it in a God like that. Paul brings this point home in verse 24 when he says, “... as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead...” Death surrendered to God-given life! Second, Abraham observed that God’s word was creative, “... He calls into being that which does not exist.” This God is so powerful as to bring into existence things that do not exist! God, in some way, in the beginning (Hebrews 11:3), by His inherent creative power, brought into existence things that did not exist. The God who did that was the object of Abraham’s faith.

Another thing to consider in regard to practical faith is that faith knows the problems it must deal with. There are those who believe that to have faith in God they must stick their heads in the sand to evade problems and pretend they do not exist. Nonsense! Faith does not mean that we commit intellectual suicide nor that we evade problems by saying, “The Lord will provide.” Faith never evades problems, never pretends they will disappear. A practical faith is conversant with life’s situations. Our man Abraham again shows us the way. God had told him he would have a son. A problem? Yes. Both he and his wife are beyond childbearing years (and she was barren as well). Romans 4:19, “... his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb...” But Abraham REMEMBERS what he knows about his God. He believed God who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. Romans 4:10–21 — “yet with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform.” Through his faith he discovers that his problem and his God are a perfect fit. This is faith! This is belief! This is trust! This is practical!

Do you allow your problems to overwhelm you or do you have a faith that relates your problems to the God who can fit them to a solution? (Christianity Magazine September–October 1998 Volume 15 Number 9/10)