



Sunday, February 6, 2022  
Pastor Don Denyes

## **Intro to Hebrews 11:8-16**

It's a remarkable and high honor to be considered a "friend of God." Yet that is exactly what Abraham is called multiple times in the Bible (Is. 41:8; James 2:23). It can be easy for us to conceive of God as king or to think of Him as judge. It is more difficult for us to think of Him as "friend." Partly, this is difficult because we can trivialize who He is, and what it means to rightly relate to Him. We can begin to think of Him as nothing more than an earthly friend. However, this can also happen because we have a difficult time understanding His love for us, that the God who is our creator and our judge also desires to know us intimately and have a personal relationship with us.

Once we understand the immensity of God's love for us, we begin to understand the intimate friendship He desires to have. All the language in Scripture about learning to "walk with God," resembles to a great extent that "friendship" with Him. When our whole lives are lived before Him, trusting that His promises are true and will be fulfilled ultimately in Christ, we find Him, by faith, to be our dearest friend. As the great John Owen once said, "Christ is our best friend, and ere long will be our only friend."

### **Context**

In Hebrews 11, the author is making the argument that the faith of the "great ones" of old is the same faith we must possess today. The way they related to God resembles the way we must relate to God. We trust promises that are not yet fulfilled. We long for a country that is not yet our own. We hope for a future that is free from all the trials and tribulations that are features of this life. For Abraham, this not only meant trusting that God would provide a child that seemed impossible for him to have, but also trusting that while he might live as a sojourner in the land for his whole life, that his descendants one day might possess it.

**Read and Reflect** *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Gen. 12:1-3; Heb. 11:8-16

“God’s Friend”

John Stott

“Faith is a reasoning trust, a trust which reckons thoughtfully and confidently upon the trustworthiness of God.”

Lessons from the Cloud

- Faith believes a promise—go to a place
  
- Faith will be tested—live like a stranger

## **Discuss**

- 1) What is the relationship between faith and reason?
- 2) Why was Abraham's faith reasonable?
- 3) What is the relationship between faith and obedience?
- 4) How should we think about our own faith when we fail to obey?
- 5) Pastor Don, quoting a French philosopher, said, "Faith is optimistic." What does that mean? Do you agree or disagree?