

Lifegroup notes from Sunday 24 July 2022

Reading: Hebrews 11:1-16

Let's talk about our heroes.

Who were your heroes growing up? What was it you admired in them?

Who are your Bible heroes (Jesus, of course, but who else?). What part of their story speaks to you?



For me it was Daley Thompson as a youth, I admired his strength, and then as I learned the scriptures I became more and more impressed by David, not for his failings, but for his heart of worship and his life of faith. It was faith that was at work when he took five smooth stones and only needed one to defeat the Philistine's champion, Goliath. It really was not his practiced skill with a sling, but his absolute assurance that this giant who dared to defy the one true God would be given into his hands.

In the passage we read a great list of heroes, those who trusted in what God said, and responded to His leading, even when the evidence of their eyes and experience would have led a different way. They knew that when God spoke, he could be trusted, that's what faith is, it's a deep assurance of God's will being worked out even when we cannot actually see the evidence. It's not blind faith, but rather it is built on a profound revelation that He is utterly trustworthy. Even when we don't see, even when we cannot yet lay hands on what He has promised.

It is faith that pleases God, and it is faith that causes God to respond.

In the same way a pilot has to learn to fly using only instruments in times when the evidence of their eyes is untrustworthy, so too all God's people need to learn to live by faith, placing utter trust in all that God has spoken and promised.

There's a challenge here in that Abraham and Sarah die without yet seeing the fulfilment of all the promise (that their offspring would become as numerous as the sand) yet they still believed and lived as though all God promised would come to pass. This is why they are commended. This is why God is not ashamed of them. People like those in this list are described as living as strangers and aliens in this land, looking for the country that is to come, whose builder and architect is God.

Some questions

- What encouraged or challenged you in this message?
- Who were your childhood heroes, and who are your Bible heroes? What was it you admired in these people?
- We are all called to live by faith, so why do we think it's only a few select people (often missionaries) that we describe this way?
- What is the difference between living by faith and the spiritual gift of faith Paul speaks about in 1 Corinthians 12?
- How do we develop or grow faith, indeed can we?
- What could inspire us to walk in faith despite the evidence of our eyes and experience?