

Walking on Faith

Open with Trailer: 'The Walk' - For me 'This is life'

- If you've bungee jumped before you'll know the thrill that your body goes through as you step off the edge.
- If you've skydived before you'll know the thrill that hits you as you jump out of that plane.
- **Why do people do these things?** Because they are there to be done!
- **Em's and I will sometimes take a walk in De Waal park**, and there are often slackliners there. What are slackliners, well they tie a belt or rope between 2 tree's with a bit of slack in and they walk on it and balance.
- **I'm not the biggest adventure junkie but last year..**

Story: Last year we took some leave down the garden route, as we decided to go zip lining, now this is nowhere at the level of bungee jumping, there is still an element of faith that is required to step off the edge. **(PICS)**

You know what the truth is, whenever I do something that's a little scary and requires faith, I realize how much fun it is, and I wonder why you didn't do it sooner!

Have you had a moment like this?

- Think of Mary being told by an angel that she was going to give birth to Jesus
- Think of Gideon being told to whittle his army down to 300 and attack the midianites
- This of Esther who boldly revealed her heritage as a child of God's people, and risked death by doing so
- How does faith look in your life?
- On a personal level? Finances, a marriage, a house, a healing...
- On a Kingdom Level? What has God laid on you heart?
 - To reach people for God
 - To serve in a ministry
 - To be sent onto the mission field
- What does great faith look like in our lives? How do we grow in our faith? In our boldness. If we look at all the great stories of faith in the Bible, they all have one thing in common.. **They required obedience**

Main thought for this morning: Great faith requires Obedience

- Faith is about learning to trust God and obey him, because he knows what's best for us.

- If I had to ask for a show of hands as to how many of you battle to hear the voice of God, I'm sure there would be many hands. Sometimes we can live in the lie that God doesn't speak to us, and that we don't know how to hear his voice.
- Obedience is really about learning to hear the voice of God, believing that he's spoken, and walking in obedience to what he's said

Enter: Abraham. If not the biggest giant of faith in the Bible

- Genesis devotes 14 chapters to his life
- Hebrews 11 devotes 9 verses to Abraham

The Call of Abram (Gen 12:1)

12 *The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.*

(IMAGINE THIS, MANY OF US HAVE MOVED, but IMAGINE NOT KNOWING WHERE YOU ARE GOING! A CASE OF PACKING UP AND HITTING THE N1 or N2 and that's all you know...)

² *"I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;*

*I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.^[a]*

³ *I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you."^[b]*

⁴ *So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran.*

SLIDE (God repeats his intention 'I will', 6 times. He promised to give them their own land)

AMP verse 4

⁴ *So Abram departed [in faithful obedience] as the LORD had directed him; and Lot [his nephew] left with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.*

God is giving Abraham a promise

For Abraham, there were some real challenging faith moments!

- What promise has God given you! Do you have a promise, a dream and desire that you believe God has planted in your life?
- **FAITH IS ALWAYS A RESPONSE TO A PROMISE** (To what God has said or promised through his word) Sometimes the promise is merely, that God will look after us. Sometimes as you step out on the tight rope, you'll see the other side, but sometimes you won't, but you have to hold on to who God is.

1) REAL FAITH CALLS YOU TO STEP OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Hebrews 11:8-10 (NIV)

⁸By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

- Leaving one's family in these times was a huge thing to do. This was a first time for him, it was new!
- Think about your first time's – swimming, diving, riding a bike, it takes faith
- **Having faith forces you to step out into the unknown**

- What is our comfort zone? You know what mine is, keeping warm under the covers in bed in the morning, there was one morning when it was 5 degrees when we woke up, it took great faith to throw off the blanket and run to the shower!

- **On a serious note! What is our comfort zone?**

- How about at church on a Sunday? Sometimes we can be really comfortable, from finding our park, to finding our chair, to chatting to the people we enjoy chatting to, to making sure that church ends by the time we think it should end!

For years, I never found it easy to get up and pray for people? Especially when you're young. God has taken me on a journey with this...

STORY: I remember recently feeling led to pray for someone, but I didn't have a word for them. I sensed God saying that he would give me a word for them as I prayed for them. I Wrestled....

You have to step onto the wire! It's when we step onto the wire that our Spirit comes alive! Because it's made for this.

Every part of our flesh fights it! But when we step out into faith and obedience we begin to allow God to take control...

- Faith is about changing comfort zones from the physical to the Spiritual. Stepping out in obedience becomes fun the more we do it.
- The more we learn to discern the voice of God, the more comfortable it becomes to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.

2) REAL FAITH CALLS YOU TO TRUST IN THE IMPOSSIBLE

Faith will call you to trust in the impossible, when the impossible is staring you right in the eye.

¹¹And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she^{11a} considered him faithful who had made the promise. ¹²And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

Abraham says in Gen 17:17

*"Can a child be born to a hundred-year-old man? Can **Sarah**, a ninety-year-old woman, **give birth**?"*

- I will make you into a great nation... Ok God, well how about now!
- God is not concerned about when, but rather how

What was God asking for? Their obedience. True faith is about our heart.

Smith Wigglesworth (1859 British evangelist)

Smith Wigglesworth was born into a poor family and had to work from the age of 6. He gave his life to the Lord at the age of 8 and had his first encounter with the presence of God at the age of 10. As a bishop laid his hands in him he recounts encounter saying:

"My whole body was filled with the consciousness of God's presence, a consciousness that remained in me for days"

- Wigglesworth was supernaturally healed of appendicitis, and its recorded that he went back to work that same day. This resulted in him praying for people with appendicitis around the world and its believed that every single person he prayed for with this condition was healed.

"Fear looks; faith jumps. If I leave you as I found you, I am not God's channel. I am not here to entertain you but to get you to the place where you can laugh at the impossible, to believe and to see the goodness of the Lord in the Land of the living"

- Wigglesworth was a man of faith who moved in tremendous signs and wonders.
- There were 14 accounts of the dead being raised to life. In one of these accounts, Smith walked into a funeral parlour, took the corpse and held it up against the wall and command it to come back to life, he did it 3 times and on the third time the corpse came back to life.

Faith can be offensive to those who aren't walking in it. Faith is aggressive, it looks for problems to solve, for opportunities to arise.

What's important is that you're hearing the Lord and you're acting upon what he says.

- ❖ **Picture of automated sliding doors** – Blue Route doors not working

May we pray daring prayers. Big prayers! What are you trusting God for right now? If you can't think of anything then you need to ask God for something to trust for.

When it's not impossible, when it looks likely, the glory doesn't go to God, when it's beyond us, that all the glory goes to Him!

Too many of us, live for safety, we live for a position

- Live for a purpose, not a position!
- If you have a pulse, you have a purpose

3) REAL FAITH CALLS US TO BE WILLING TO SURRENDER THE VERY PROMISE WHICH GOD GAVE US

¹⁷By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, ¹⁸even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.

- The very thing that they had just been blessed with was now being taken away
- God wasn't being this harsh sadist God towards Abraham, he was testing his heart of obedience.

Story: Before moving here, we had recently bought a house. We knew God had given it to us. But one year later, we knew God was calling us into a new season. For the first few months, I thought, let's rent it out, hang onto it. One night I distinctly heard God tell us to sell it.

- If God has blessed you once, will he not do it again, and again, and again?
- There will always be new things to trust God for.

➤ **Walking in obedience attracts the favour of God**

Does my flesh want Faith? No, it wants comfort, but my Spirit has been designed to trust God.

GREATEST FAITH – JESUS HAD TO SURRENDER TO THE WILL OF HIS FATHER, AND BECOME OBEDIENT TO DEATH. AND SOMETIMES WE BATTLE TO TRUST GOD FOR LONGER THAN A FEW HOURS...

CLOSE

Look at what Hebrews 11 ends with and gives account for

Hebrews 11

¹³All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. ¹⁴People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶Instead, they

were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

We walk in faith because we know this is not our final home! This is not our eternity!

Great faith requires obedience!

Will you be obedient?

- What is God calling you to trust for right now in your life?
Are your eyes glued to the object, or to the journey to get there?
 - We will never learn to trust God, unless we desire to be obedient to him
 - We will never learn obedience, unless we desire to trust him
 - **As I was praying into this. I believe I heard God saying: May we a church that is known for our faith in the impossible. A church people that have great faith, that believe and contend for healing, for salvation, for hope to rise in our families and in our valley.**
 - **May we be a church that is known for their great faith!**

This morning I sense that God wants to minister to us

2 Pictures to share:

Picture of people sitting in their chairs being strapped in for the service!

It's about hearing the promptings of the Spirit. Lord, who must I pray for, who must I speak to, do I need to respond to this?

Picture of a tight rope suspended across our church with many of us jumping on and giving it a go. Exercising Child-like faith!

In order to have child-like faith, sometimes we need to reverse some of our learning patterns.

I saw it being a safe place, for us to receive prayer, for us to grow in our faith, for us to learn to hear God's voice, for us to feel free in worship.

I believe of us have faith in the Lord and in the Word, but we've lost our faith for miracles, for breakthrough, for healing.

It's almost as if God wants to take us onto the wire and teach us how to balance again. To teach us to trust in Him for breakthrough in our lives.

But we need to take the step. I believe there are many of us who need prayer for healing, breakthrough, for a word from the Lord. But we've got to unstrap from our chairs. From our mindsets of thinking

Ministry: Those who need healing or a touch or a breakthrough
Also those who need to rise in faith, we want to pray for a fresh touch from the Holy Spirit.