

LIFE WITH FAITH

Hebrews 11:13-16



SYNOPSIS

We continue on in our Advent series learning about a life with faith, specifically a life that looks ahead with the destination in mind. In our passage, we see people that the author of Hebrews has said were ones that lived with faith. They were all longing for a better country - a heavenly one, understanding that they were foreigners on the earth. They were sojourners who were passing through, looking for their true home - Life With God.

To look ahead to a better country requires a few things. First, we need to recognize the limitations of our human hands. Second, we need to realize the overarching story of God where we can anchor our faith from a beginning to an end. Third, we need to understand what our true end is and work backwards from there to allow that to dictate how we live our lives.

Yet as we try our best to live life with faith, it is inevitable that we will run into obstacles. The three obstacles that were shared were distorted nostalgia, mischaracterization of God, and disappointment.

Though we face these obstacles, we continue to look ahead and recalibrate along the way as we press forward on our faith journey. Advent is a season to remember the coming of Jesus. We anchor our faith in His first coming - that what He has come to accomplish on the cross is sufficient for us. We also anchor our faith in His second coming - that He will come to restore all things and reign with perfect justice, righteousness, and peace. This faith simultaneously allows us to rest in His promises and press on for our true home as we live a life "with God".



OUTLINE

1 LOOKING FOR A BETTER COUNTRY (A HEAVENLY ONE)

Recognize Limitations of human hands: Though we've been given the gift of co-creating, we understand that there are limitations to what we can build. Our empire-building falls short of the city not built by human hands, but prepared by God for His bride.

Realize the overarching story of God - There is a beginning and end to the Story of God and we find ourselves within that. We are not just random dots of existence, but we need to anchor ourselves.

Knowing our true end - We need to understand what our true end is (a Life With God), and allow that reality to shape the decisions we make, the habits we establish, and the actions we take.

2 OBSTACLES IN OUR JOURNEY OF FAITH

Distorted Nostalgia is the idea that we can forget the dangers and pains of being enslaved to sin and death (and look back longingly at that life). Just as the Israelites looked back at Egypt longingly, we too can suffer from this distorted nostalgia.

Mischaracterization of God is the idea that we can sometimes view God as incapable of delivering us, or an evil tyrant that does not have our best interest in mind.

Disappointment is the idea that we can be disoriented by unfulfilled promises when we don't see it according to our timeline, or if we misunderstand what God's promise really is.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Icebreaker: What's one of the biggest disappointments that you've faced in your life?

2

Can you think of examples in your life that require differing degrees of faith? What's something that requires the most faith?

3

What things currently hold a "distorted nostalgia" in your life? What things in life do we settle for instead of reaching God's promised end?

4

Have you ever thought that life with God is not as great as promised? What led you to that place?

5

Have you ever had disappointment in people, institutions, or your idea of God cause you to push God away?

6

How can we live with the end with God in mind? How can we live in faith of God's promises?



BIG IDEA

A life with faith is one that keeps the destination in mind. For us, that destination is life with God. He is our true home. Though life with faith is a long journey that is not easy (not to mention the obstacles that we run into), we know that we are being led by the Spirit of God as we long for our eternal home. May this Advent season remind us to pause and reflect and anchor our faith to the realities of His first and second coming.