

Following God's Lead in 2019

Hebrews 11:1, 8-12

Are you happy, are you content, and are you happy and content?

Hebrews 11:8-12 (NIV) *By 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. By 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. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. And 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.*

Paul called Abraham the "father of all those who believe" That includes us today at SSUMC. James was the half-brother of Jesus and he called Abraham the "friend of God."

If we are to follow God's lead in 2019... that requires faith

Classic definition of Faith:

Hebrews 11:1 *"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."*

Hebrews 11:1 (NLT) What is faith? It is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. It is the evidence of things we cannot yet see.

Hebrews 11:1 (Msg.) The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see.

This is a true story of faith, one that leads to contentment and to happiness for Abraham. V.8

Faith is a verb. James and Paul teach us that faith requires action. This means that we must step out in faith and follow God. If our faith is real, it will lead to contentment and happiness." Faith requires movement toward and with God.

If we are to have contentment and happiness we must...

- Leave the where to God.
- Believe in God even though we do not know how He will work things out.

Promise / Premise...obedience brings blessing (God is glorified...others are blessed...we are blessed)

1. Follow God even when you do not know where it will lead you

Seemingly God spoke to Abraham as he was going...words still "ringing" in his ears...he was practically on his way.

How many times does God speak and we hesitate? When you walk with God you sometimes walk without knowing where.

2. Follow God until He shows you "when"

Have you ever asked? When will I get the answer?

- When will the healing come?
- When will the forgiveness come?
- When will the financial hard times end? When, when Lord, WHEN LORD?

The essence of our faith allows us and even compels us to leave the when to God even if for a lifetime (ouch!) We must understand "life as a journey." V.9

For Abraham the joy was in the journey and he remained faithful to God, waited and FOLLOWED as the Bible says... "for the city whose builder and architect is God!" V. 10 This is how he found contentment and happiness.

3. Follow God because he knows how when we don't. V.11

God told Abram to look up and count the stars. Your answers, your contentment and happiness will be found in 2019 when you look up to God. (It could be that we all need to spend more time on our knees this year.)

Our lives have a lot questions: Where God? When God? How God?

Following God in faith is all about leaving the "where, when and how" to God and trusting Him for His best. With an active faith in God we can find contentment and happiness, because with God the Joy is in the Journey.