

## LESSON 12 ~ LIVING THE FAITH ADVENTURE

### SEPTEMBER 20, 2020

**Background Scripture: Matthew 4; Hebrews 11**

**Lesson Passage: Matthew 4:18-22; Hebrews 11:8 (NIV)**

**Introduction:** Life with Christ is an adventure and if all you are doing is going through the motions then you are living how Satan wants you to live. We consider it radical when one of our Church members or a relative decides to sell everything and go off to do missions work; or move to another city, or anything that seems “abnormal” to us. Or, Bob hears God’s call and sells his home and moves to Africa. We get so caught up in normal life and we think that is all there is. Life with Christ is an adventure where we can’t worry about our circumstances, because God’s word is full of promises to take care of us as we walk in obedience to His voice. When we make a sincere decision that is based on the divine ways of God, and act from that place, a chain of events is set in motion to help us manifest in the call God has on our life.

When we use our intellect to solve our problems, or when we have difficulties and find that our needs are not being met, we become frustrated, anxious, and fearful. We doubt God. We doubt ourselves. We diminish our confidence. When we do this, we live life primarily through the analytical mind that tries to control its environment to keep us safe. The analytical mind constantly looks within for a frame of reference to understand what is happening in our lives, especially in times of turmoil, to make sense of the circumstances we encounter. This is directly opposite to what living in faith entails. Living in faith takes you into the realm of mystery, where you do not know what is happening. This is not a safe place for most of us, and the number one reason for this is because we do not know and trust God and do not understand His workings. So how do we shift from using our *analytical* mind to using our faith mind? Let’s see how our lesson can help us to consider some spiritual practices to implement.

#### **Scripture Reference:**

##### **Matthew 4:18-22 (NIV)**

*18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 19 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” 20 At once they left their nets and followed him. 21 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, 22 and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.*

##### **Hebrews 11:8 (NIV)**

*8 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.*

**Topic Explored:** “*Living the Faith Adventure*” ~ What Is Adventure? One dictionary defines adventure as “an unusual and exciting, typically hazardous, experience or activity.” Let’s key in on two words – unusual and hazardous. We believe an adventure is “unusual” because it is something we have never done. There is an “unknown” factor that gets our blood flowing and excites us. The “hazardous” element is the presence of risk. In an adventure, there is usually risk

involved. It may be the risk of injury or the risk of loss. Whatever the case, pairing the risk and the unknown makes for an exciting experience – one that can bring great reward!

This is also what we believe God wants for us in our relationship with Him. We do not believe God is looking for those who want to play it safe or avoid all risk. He doesn't want us clinging to the pew and living for consistency or monotony and not trusting Him. God is looking for those who want an adventure with Him.

**Memory Verses:** *19* “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” (Matthew 4:19) NIV

**Lesson Focus: Matthew 4:18-22**

**Verses 18-22** ~ The Gospel of Matthew begins by giving us a glimpse into the inauguration of Jesus' earthly ministry at His Baptism in the Jordan River by His cousin, John the Baptist. Immediately afterward, Jesus is “led by the [Holy] Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil” for forty days and forty nights. (Matthew 4: 1-2). Jesus needed no “earthly help” to proclaim that He was the promised Messiah; that the Kingdom was near; and that He was bringing the Kingdom of God to those who would trust Him as the Savior of the World. He was, after all, the Son of God; God the Son; the Light of the World (Isaiah 9: 2 and Matthew 4: 16).

Yet, in His wisdom and grace, He began to choose earthly disciples to participate with Him in proclaiming the Kingdom of God and sharing God's love in Christ with the entire world. These same disciples, and those who would soon be chosen to join them, are the ones who would proclaim the life and death of Jesus and the saving, life-giving message of His triumphant resurrection! “As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ‘Come, follow Me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will make you fishers of men.’ At once they left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James and John, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they... followed Him.” (Matthew 4: 18-22) Jesus Chose these men and Changed them forever. He Chose these unschooled, unsophisticated men to be His Change Agents in the world. And God's message through them has changed the history of the world!

Jesus did NOT call the strong nor the brave, but rather He choose “ordinary people,” like you and me, – men and women, boys and girls, grandpas and grandmas – to be His modern-day disciples and to share in this faith adventure. By His grace He has chosen us to believe in Him as our only Lord and Savior; to stand firm in the truth of His Word, in spite of wicked worldly opposition; to serve Him through our loving service to those around us and to faithfully and joyfully follow wherever He leads us.

Through the waters of Baptism, through the life-giving Word of God and through the witness of the Gospel, God has chosen you to be His own. He has Chosen you in order to be faith-filled disciples, with the compassion, power, courage, and strength to be “fishers of men!”

**Lesson Focus: Hebrews 11:8**

**Verse 8** ~ Would you do it? Would you, like Abraham, leave the security of where you were and set out on a journey if you did not know where you were going? Sounds absurd, doesn't it? That's the kind of faith that honors God! To do what Abraham did, you would have to be absolutely convinced that the God, who called you, loved you and was able to sustain you and lead you. Faith is an adventure because it risks it all in obedience to Him. Abraham didn't set out on his own. It wasn't even his idea. He didn't wake up one morning and say, "God, I'm ready to move and I need you to lead me to another place." The Bible says, "*By faith, Abraham, when called to go...*"

It was God's initiative from the beginning, yet God didn't explain everything up front. When you live by faith, you will discover a truth. Sometimes, the path is not clear until you start the journey. It's called a "faith adventure". No wonder Abraham has been called the Father of Faith. What an adventure Abraham had – and we get to read about it as he set out in obedience to God's call!

As his story unfolds, you will find that it wasn't even so much about the destination as much as it was about the "adventure" itself. His journey of faith was met with obstacles, enemies, struggles, and challenges that kept him dependent on the God who called him. Abraham was also called the friend of God. When God is all you have, you discover that God is all you need! God did miraculous things through Abraham – miracles that even his critics would give God the credit for! I love that his journey also reveals the detours he took from faith, times of faithlessness, and doubt. Yet, regardless of the mistakes he made, he always returned to the God who called him and found Him faithful!

The God of Abraham is the same God today. Jesus described the kind of faith that honors God like this: You will not know all the answers. All you will need to know is that God does! That's the adventure of living by faith!

**Let's talk about it. . .**

**Making it personal:**

- You can probably name the same examples I can – Abraham was asked to leave his homeland and travel far away without knowing the destination. Noah was called to build a boat without water nearby or rain in the forecast. Moses was called back to Egypt and then to the wilderness. Peter was called to leave his career and was later called out of the boat. Lazarus was called out of the grave and Zacchaeus was called out of the tree. In each situation, these people were on an adventure with God. There was the unknown factor and the element of risk in each story! What "adventure" is God calling you to? Will you step out into the great adventure in your relationship with God? Will you give Him control and see where He leads? You will never look back!

**Closing Prayer:** "*Dear God, please give us humble hearts to yield to your instructions at all times, so that we can prosper and be a part of Your divine plan. Help us to obey you and be attentive for Holy Spirit's guidance. Let us follow when you lead, and may we be willing to receive your blessings whenever you are ready to bestow. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen!*"