

Sovereign Grace Church
“Isaac, Jacob & Joseph” outline
June 18, 2017

Hebrews 11: 20-22

The original recipients of the letter to the Hebrews were very worried about the possibility of increasing persecution as they stood increasingly alone without the civil protection of the Jewish faith. Since the promises conveyed to the Father's were of a coming time of blessing, joy and rest they tended to think that the less problems they had and the more goods they had, the closer they were to the fulfillment of these promises. They expected a Messiah which would smash their enemies and institute an alternative political order.

The promises were actually of a particular kind of blessing and joy which derived their power from close fellowship with the Triune God. This kind of blessing allowed the recipient to experience joy and contentment even in the context of suffering and defeat. Many did not understand that their trials and tribulations were themselves blessings which allowed their faith to develop and prosper beyond what it would without them.

The lives of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph reflect this growth in faith in the midst of trying circumstances. A faith that saw its culmination in the life of Jesus lived out in close connection with His Father and the Spirit as they together defeated evil by overcoming it with good! This same power is granted all those who abandon themselves to God....even and especially in this life and in this world. The original recipients had to be reminded of the blessing of walking with Christ even and especially during times of travail.

1. The Faith of Isaac v. 20
Gen. 26: 2-5; 25: 20-28

2. The Faith of Jacob v. 21
Gen. 32: 22-32; 49: 29-30

3. The Faith of Joseph v. 22
Gen. 15: 13-16; 50: 24f.

Lessons:

- 1. A trans-generational promise**
- 2. Dying in faith is dying in hope! II Cor. 4: 16-18**
- 3. What our Old Covenant brethren did not see....we have! Jn. 17: 3**

Questions for Reflection and Conversation

- 1. How has your faith grown over the years? As you reflect on your past what are the occasions that God has used to bring you closer to Himself? Were you conscious that that was what was going on at the time?**
- 2. How can we best transfer a godly character to our children? Why is it not enough to read the Book of Virtues or even the 10 Commandments? What is the primary deficiency of God's law? (Rom. 3: 20) What is needed to compensate for this deficiency?**
- 3. How do difficult relationships provide opportunity to grow in our desire to follow Christ? What does it mean to "die to self" in the context of loving those with whom we find difficulty? Is it possible to have a unified community of faith while their remain disagreements & contentions? How do you *picture* a unified community of faith? If your *picture* conflicts with your brother's does it mean the end of a unified community? Where does anger & contempt fit in with our desire to love one another (Matt. 5).**
- 4. What are some of the privileges which we as New Covenant believers have that our Old Covenant brethren did not? What difference do these things make? How might we say that we have had the privilege of *seeing* that which our Old Covenant brethren only *hoped*? If we have in some sense *seen* the promise, why are still required to live by faith? In what sense do we still yearn for the fulfillment of the promise?**