



Hebrews 11:11-12

By Faith Sarah did the Impossible Sun, Oct 26th 2008

The Real Christian life is Impossible ...

"A real Christian is an odd number, anyway. He feels supreme love for the One whom he has never seen; talks familiarly every day to Someone he cannot see; expects to go to heaven on the virtue of Another; empties himself in order to be full; admits he is wrong so he can be declared right; goes down in order to get up; is strongest when he is weakest; richest when he is poorest and happiest when he feels the worst. He dies so he can live; forsakes in order to have; gives away so he can keep; sees the invisible; hears the inaudible' and knows that which passeth understanding." — A. W. Tozer.

Faith sees the invisible, hears the inaudible and receives the impossible. –Corrie Ten Boom

Real Christian does and receives the impossible

- Real Christian life is impossible...by ourselves, in the flesh
- Only possible by God's work and strength
- Life He has for one...is one of overcoming impossibilities

It is this aspect of faith that God brings before us today in **Hebrews 11**

I. Who? Sarah? Abraham?

- 1. The first issue that is before us...whose faith is being held before us**
 - a. Each vignette here in Hebrews holds before us an example
 - b. In this one...there is actually a legitimate question of who is in view
- 2. NKJV, KJV, etc – appears that it is Sarah – Abraham’s wife – in view**
 - a. Very possible that the real focus here is Sarah
 - b. Without question, what she went through, was a journey of faith
- 3. Yet some strongly feel, it is not Sarah, but Abraham**
 - a. NIV, MacArthur, USB
- 4. Also possible...it is both (I like best)**
 - a. USB translation helps
 - b. Notice the word “also” the word also unique – combines them
 - c. Abraham is in view – before and after...but here includes Sarah with him

II.What? Bear a Child

- 1. For any, the bearing of children is a marvelous wonder – a gift**
 - a. Bible describes God doing this **Ps 139:13-15**
 - b. Child bearing and rearing indeed does take faith
 - c. But for Abraham and Sarah...so much more
- 2. For Abraham and Sarah – bearing a son – was their purpose**
 - a. God gave them a promise....that through their son...world blessed, Christ
 - b. Problem was....they were barren....

III. Abe and Sarah's Journey to Isaac

1. **Know that had Isaac when 100 years old**
 - a. Lived longer....Sarah to 127
 2. **Don't know much of their history before Abram was 75 years**
 - a. Know God called him, gave promise of a family before...but how long?
 - b. Also know his Abram, meant Exalted Father...did he know his whole life?
 - c. Sari's name meant princes....in the royal line...heir
 3. **Gen 12:2,7 – in the land – hear the promise – 75 years old**
 4. **Gen 12:15 – Run away to Egypt when it got hard**
 - a. Willing to give Sari up...and all the promises of God
 5. **Gen 13:1,15 – back in land, separated from Lot – hear promise again**
 6. **Gen 15:1-3 – doubt....is it Eliezar...my servant**
 7. **Gen 15:4-6 – Abram believed**
 - a. This is a key point, much happening in his heart – referred to thru Bible
 8. **Gen 16:1-4 – helping God out...with Hagar – 85 years old**
 - a. They waited 10 years...felt too long, God needed help
 - b. Don't hear from again for 14 years....
 9. **Gen 17:18 – doubted, laughed.**
 - a. Did not seem possible, gave God the option of just using Ishmael
 10. **Gen 18:9 - Sarah Laughed**
 11. **Gen 18 – names changed**
 - a. Abram becomes Abraham – exalted father
 - b. Sari becomes Sarah – Nobel woman, or Nobel mother
 12. **Gen 20:2 – runs to Gerer**
 - a. Again willing to give Sarah up...all the promises even at this late date
 13. **Gen 21:1-7 – Promised fulfilled in an impossible way**
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IV. Impossible Working Faith...

1. is Real

- a. Wonderful for me to see the realness of Abraham and Sarah
- b. If held fort as perfect people...glad...but leave knowing not me
- c. But seeing them, seeing God work with, grow them – gives hope

2. is Purified by God

- a. Talked about in detail last week – might get the cd, listen on internet
- b. But **Heb 11** gives us insight into how our works will stand in heaven
- c. **1 Cor 3:12-15** – all the junk is purged away – whatever left rewarded
- d. See it in the graph – decades gone...wasted...but God rewards good

3. is Needed to accomplish God's impossible promises

- a. Hear me clearly – so vital, if don't listen I might cause pain here today
- b. Faith is not creative...but responsive to God
 - i) Not us dreaming up things, forcing things
 - ii) That is not faith, that is presumption
 - iii) Jesus temptation
- c. In Highest measure – response to the Word
- d. **Rom 10:17**
 - i) Being God's word...even when seems impossible
- e. Yet God is still working, real, speaking – maybe in you or has
 - i) Given impossible promises....promises that are becoming such
 - ii) God does this – but my point is – it needs to originate with him
- f. What might those be?
 - i) Marriage? Healing? Ministry? Kids saved? Friends Saved?

4. is Caused by God...often by His delays

- a. God likes impossibilities...gives Him opportunity to prove His reality
 - b. Often will orchestrate things in our lives to bring about
 - c. Why did Abe and Sarah have to wait till 100 and 90?
 - i) Was it their folly? I don't think so
 - d. Don't get wrong, our folly can hinder – children of Israel turning a 10 day journey into a 40 year wandering
 - e. Yet...at times, it is God who orchestrates impossibilities, often by His timing
 - f. **Gen 18:14, Isa 60:22**
 - g. Illustrated in **John 11** – but Jesus timing with Lazarus
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5. is Strengthened by God

- a. Specifically here – physically enabling them to have kids
- b. It should have been a natural, physical impossibility...God overcame
- c. **Phil 4:13** – God can and does meet our needs, here financially
- d. God's work, done God's way, in God's timing, always have His supplies

6. is Found by focusing, accepting God's Faithfulness

- a. Here we get to the real application section...not that God hasn't applied
- b. How do we have such faith...in the face of impossibilities
 - i) Maybe you are in such a state right now...
- c. Notice – by focusing on Him...on His faithfulness
- d. For Sarah it was how God met her **Gen 18:13**...seemingly working in her
- e. **Heb 10:23**
- f. Look without and feel oppressed, look within and be depressed, look at Him and find rest

7. is Effective

- a. They did the impossible...had a son when should not have been able to
- b. One as good as dead – is God's description, kind of funny
- c. Physically and Spiritually

Conclusion

Rom 4:16-25

- Notice – calling those things that are not as they are

Application question – what are you doing right now that is impossible

- In truth the Christian life lived is...without Him
- Wonder if there is something God is calling you to, has...but you are giving up on....

Gospel – Matth 19:25-26