

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church



Weekly Sermon Series

Taking Root: Walking Wet...Stars of Faith Genesis 15:1–7; Romans 4:13–25

We are among many who are identified as “Children of Abraham.” Isn’t that remarkable? Maybe you haven’t thought about it much, or maybe you have. Three great world religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, all claim to be children of Abraham. Now that’s star power!

Abram, or as he later is known, Abraham is a biblical figure who faced incredible challenges. He is old. He’s asked by God to take a great journey to a promised land. On top of that he has no legitimate children of his own. So he has an inheritance problem. If that weren’t enough, God is telling him that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars. Is he going mad? The stress has to be getting to him and one wonders if he’s delusional. That is what I wonder as I read this story. Somehow Abraham trusted in God despite the many reasons not to. That’s why the faith of Abraham is legendary.

Many years ago a teenager was severely burned in an accident involving a train derailment near his home. I went to the hospital to see him, now in a burn unit, with 80% burns over his body. His mother was there along with other family and friends. His doctors said that his chances of survival were in the range of one in a hundred. It appeared hopeless. Yet, I will never forget his mother as she

spoke about her son. "He's going to make it," she said. "I know he's going to make it." I saw the situation and my heart sank. I was with the doctors. It looked bleak. Yet, of course, they were doing everything they knew how to do to care for him even though they felt it may not be enough.

The mother's faith was stark, severe, unyielding. I privately had great concern for her if he should die. The weeks and months dragged on. And still he hung on. Finally he was released from the hospital with many scars that left him unrecognizable to me and others who knew him. Yet his mother knew him. She believed God would help him recover no matter what the odds. And God did work miracles through the wisdom and care of many doctors and nurses, family and friends, and the faith of his mother. I remember this mother because she had the faith of Abraham.

What stars of faith have you known? Do you know someone who has the gift of great faith? What struggles have they faced? Do you see yourself as someone who has a strong faith? Has your faith been tested? Share your thoughts. What does it mean to say we have Abraham as our father, the father of our faith? Lord, grant us faith and help us overcome the struggles we face each day. Amen.

-- Week of March 29, 2009