A Prayer Workshop

*Morning Edition*

Discovering and Applying Biblical Prayer Principles

from Hebrews 11

*Session Five: The Faith of Abraham*

*Praying Like a Pilgrim*

Hebrews 11:8-10

Hebrews 11:8-10 (ESV*) 8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.*

Praying in faith goes hand-in-hand with walking in the Spirit, that is, living in obedience to God’s revealed will. Like Abraham, God will call us (at some time and place) to risk our lives upon His promises, even if we don’t know the eventual outcome of that individual act of obedience. How can we do this? By realizing that God will walk with us and will honor our faith with His blessing.

1. We pray from a foundation of obedience.

Beware of the “prayer smokescreen.” That is, be careful that you are praying not around God’s will, but in it. When we are living lives of conscious disobedience, we need not think that somehow prayer covers the bases. On the other hand, when we are pursuing what we know of God’s will, we can have every confidence that God is hearing and answering desires from His own heart.

Scriptures: Psalm 66:16-20; Proverbs 28:9

Prayer prompts: Father, help me put sin to death in my life.

Father, help me avoid all that draws me away from you.

Father, help me live up to my knowledge of you.

2. We pray through times of uncertainty, alienation, and impermanence.

Everything in our nature drives us toward the secure, the familiar, the lasting. But Abraham left all of that in his native Ur in order to wander in tents among a strange culture. Prayer lends inward stability to outward (apparent) insecurity.

Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 4:7-11; Romans 8:35-39

Prayer prompts: Father, remind us that there is security only in your will.

Father, free us from choosing comfort at any price.

Father, help us embrace the adventure of faith.

3. We pray in terms of God’s eternal plan, not just the temporary state of things.

Even though Abraham and company “toured” the Promised Land, he knew that ultimately NO EARTHLY MANMADE CITY was his inheritance. And it is not ours, either, since believers ARE the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21.

Scriptures: Hebrews 12:22-24; 13:14; Revelation 3:12; 21:2, 10

Prayer prompts: Father, help me remember that my home is not here.

Father, let me trust You to establish your Kingdom.

Father, help me love life but not The World.

Let’s pray. . . A Model Prayer for Pilgrims Psalm 122 (ESV)

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

I was glad when they said to me,

“Let us go to the house of the Lord!”

2 Our feet have been standing

within your gates, O Jerusalem!

3 Jerusalem—built as a city

that is bound firmly together,

4 to which the tribes go up,

the tribes of the Lord,

as was decreed for Israel,

to give thanks to the name of the Lord.

5 There thrones for judgment were set,

the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

“May they be secure who love

you!

7 Peace be within your walls

and security within your towers!”

8 For my brothers and companions’ sake

I will say, “Peace be within you!”

9 For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,

I will seek your good.