

# Promise Believers #5 - Children of Promise

by Bob Hoekstra

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*In this sermon, Bob Hoekstra emphasizes that we are children of promise, born into God's family through faith in His faithful promises, and explores the relationship between these promises and God's law.*

**Duration:** 57:07

**Scripture:** Romans 4:13-18, Romans 5:4, Galatians 3:21-22, Galatians 3:29, Hebrews 4:11

**Topics:** "Gods Promises", "Spiritual Rest"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the relationship between God's promises and God's law. He emphasizes the importance of understanding that God's promises guarantee the life and provision of heaven, while God's law highlights our desperate need for everything the promises offer. The speaker uses the example of Abraham, who believed in God's promises despite the seemingly hopeless situation of having an elderly wife. He also highlights the connection between God's promises and finding spiritual rest, stating that true rest can only be found in the promises of God. The speaker concludes by emphasizing that we cannot live up to God's commands on our own, and therefore, we rely on God's promises for our salvation and growth in faith.

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## Transcript

Father, again we come seeking You and we come in the name of Jesus Christ. We come not on our own righteousness or any kind of access we could ever produce on our own. We just come in the name of Jesus, Lord, and know we're totally accepted, completely heard of You, and find all Your grace and love and resources and Your promises true and faithful.

Lord, we've seen that some of Your promises are exhilarating and some are humbling. But Lord, we're blessed when we're humbled by You because You give grace to the humble. And we humble ourselves right now under Your mighty hand.

We admit, we tell You right now how completely we need You, Lord. We must hear from You. We must have Your promises.

And thank You that You will speak. And thank You that You've made glorious promises, promises of life, and promises of edification, promises of encouragement, and even promises that warn us and awaken us and quicken us. Speak to us again now, we pray, by Your Holy Spirit.

Speak forth Your promises and may our faith grow in them, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen. Our God is a God of promises. We have seen that already.

We've seen that in the Old Testament. We've seen that in the New Testament. It's just the nature of God to express His heart and His will through His promises.

And then He proves able to keep them and faithful to keep them. The great preponderance of the promises of God are just edifying, encouraging, thrilling, faith-building, life-giving promises. And praise God that that is so much the tone of them.

But we saw nonetheless, some of them are sobering and serious and humbling. But that's fine too because whether we're thrilled or sobered by the promises of God, it doesn't matter. It's the fact that they're God's promises and they have an impact on our lives.

And we need to be lifted up and encouraged, oh, so regularly. But at times, we just need to be awakened and sobered and humbled. And His promises do all of that work.

Our God is a God of promises. You know what one of the major implications of all of that is? It's stated right out in the Scriptures and we'll read it. Our God is a God of promises and one of the implications is we are children of promise.

And that's what we're going to study in this time together. We're children of promise. That means we are born as the children of God through faith in the promises of God.

That's how we enter the family of God. His promises we believe and receive. But not only are we birthed by the promises of God, the promise of everlasting life through Jesus Christ, but we are also sustained and developed and made fruitful on the basis of the promises of God and our faith in what He has said He will do.

With that as our frame of reference for thinking, let's consider this fact that we are God's children by God's promises. Galatians 4, verse 22, For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondwoman, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh.

Yes, the flesh can produce its offspring, its fruit. But that which is born of the flesh is flesh, clear and simple and only and always. Jesus taught us that in John 3. And he of the free woman through promise.

Oh, what a difference. Abraham had two sons. On the surface it looks so similar, just two children, two offspring.

He was the father. They were his children. When you get behind the obvious and find out where they came from, one of those sons came according to the flesh, therefore of no use in the building of the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of promises.

The other son came through promise. The only way that second son, which really was his only begotten son, the only one born the way God intended, was if God would faithfully keep His promise. Verse 28, Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

The only way you and I could ever get into the family of God, the only way we could ever enter the kingdom of heaven was God being faithful to His promises. We couldn't get in by any human ingenuity, human righteousness, human resource, human effort. Oh, the difference between being born of the flesh,

human ability, and being born through promise, God's promise.

By God's faithfulness and by God's ability, we are in the family of God. We are children of promise. Romans 9, verses 8 and 9, that is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of promise are counted as the seed.

For this is the word of promise, at this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son. That's the promise of God. Abraham and Sarah could not have made that happen on their own.

When Isaac came forth, it was based on the promise of God, His ability, and His faithfulness. This was God's promise. I will come and Sarah shall have a son, a supernatural divine enabling to bring forth seed.

Verse 8, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. All across the country, all around the world, there are religious children of religious flesh. Churches, religious organizations around the world, by the flesh, religiously producing religious children of the flesh.

Oh, they're in religious organizations. They're in religious groups and activities. They're being told they are right with God.

But they're not, because it's on the basis of flesh, of works, of human righteousness, of man's promises to God, instead of God's promises to man. It's only the children of the promise that are really counted as the seed, the true family of God. Ephesians 3, 6, Ephesians 3, 6, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, Gentile and Jew alike.

For all of humanity, no matter race, color, background, religious or irreligious, all can and all must partake in the same way of the things of God. Only can be partakers through the promise of God found in Jesus Christ. That's how we get into the family of God.

That's how we grow, learn, mature and serve in the family of God. We partake of the things of God, the life of God, enter the family of God through His promise as we believe His promises. And thus we are day by day to draw on that same life in the fashion we entered it, that is by faith in the promises of God.

Oh, this is such a critical issue. We are God's children by God's promises. We are children of promise based not on our promises, but God's promises to us.

Now let's think a bit being children of promise, how this relates to matters like God's law. Let's think for a moment about God's promises and God's law. There's a profound relationship.

If we do not see it, you know what will happen? We'll naturally walk according to the flesh, just naturally by default. We won't have to even plan it. We won't have to decide this morning, I will walk according to the flesh.

If we don't know the relationship between the promises of God and the law of God, we'll just naturally like gravity, be pulled down to the level of the flesh. Galatians 3, 16 through 22, God's promises and God's law. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.

He does not say and to seeds as of many, but as of one and to your seed who is Christ. And this, I say that the law, which was 430 years later, that is after the promise to Abraham, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the

inheritances of the law, it is no longer of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. And it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one.

Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not. For if there had been a law given, which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the scripture has confined all under sin that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

Verse 29, And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Oh, woven through these verses is the blessed reality that what God has for man comes not through law. For that would depend on our performance.

Measured by God's law. Rather, what God has for man comes through the promises of God. Verse 16, The promises to Abraham and his seed primarily was made to a single seed that is Christ.

Therefore, all who are in Christ bear the blessings of the promises coming to and through Christ to all who believe. Verse 17, The law did not replace the promises of God. The law is about human performance.

Here's God's standard. Be holy, be perfect, be loving, be pure. Now go at it.

Let's see how well you do. The provision and blessing and kingdom of God, the family of God, the resources of God do not come to us on the basis of law. Human performance measured by the perfect, pure and holy standard of God.

It could never come to us that way. Why? Because we could never measure up. We could never ever qualify.

So the law doesn't replace the promises. That's not why the law was given to say, well, you didn't get it by promise. Let's see if you can get it by law.

Verse 18 reminds us it's by promise, not by law. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Verse 19 asks the obvious question, then why the law? The law was given because of man's sin, to reveal man's sin to him, to make it clear that we were in sin and needed remedy and relief and forgiveness and new life.

That's why the law was given, not to replace the promise, but to drive us to the promises. Verse 21, is the law against the promises? Certainly not. The only way the law could be against the promises, if the law was given to replace the promises.

No way. The law was not an alternative way to find life. It was a reminder, an emphasizing message.

You need the promise of God. For life eternal, for forgiveness. Verse 22, the law makes all guilty of sin.

The scripture has confined all under sin. The only option left is the promise of God and faith in that promise. The scripture is confined all under sin that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe, not those who perform well enough.

And verse 29 again, we are heirs by promise. All God has for us, all He wants to give to us as Abraham's seed, as those who are in Christ, comes by the promises of God. Let's not confuse God's promises with God's law.

God's promise brings provision, forgiveness, new life, strength, peace, hope, resource from heaven. God's law basically says, you desperately need everything the promises provide. Romans chapter 4 speaks of these same issues and just comes at it again and from a little bit different way, but saying the same thing.

It's about God's promises and God's law. Romans chapter 4 verse 13 through 18, for the promise that He would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect because the law brings about wrath.

For where there's no law, there is no transgression. Therefore, it is of faith. Why? That it might be according to grace.

What's the result of that? So that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, that is Israelites who had the law, Jews, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, just all throughout the world. One way, faith like Abraham who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made you a father of many nations in the presence of him whom he believed, God, who gives life to the dead.

Oh, praise God for that. We were dead. He gave us life, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did, who contrary to hope, in hope believed so that he became the father of many nations according to what was spoken, so shall your descendants be.

Another great statement from God about the relationship between God's promises and God's law. Verses 13 through 15 tell us that the promises are void if life with God can be found and developed by our ability to perform up to God's commandments on our own best effort. Listen, if you can live up to the commands of God on your own best effort, you don't need even one promise from God.

Anybody ready to go out and live without the promises? No way. We can't live up to those standards by our own resources and effort. They're too high.

They're too holy. They're too pure. They're too perfect.

They're too like God. Yeah, that's why it's God's law. It's a standard that matches His character.

If we had to relate to God, start out with God on that basis, or grow by doing our best to reach that standard, the promises are null and void. They mean nothing. They're of no use to us.

But we can't. Therefore, verse 16, it is of faith. Praise God that life in Christ is by faith.

Faith in the promises of God. Faith in what He's committed to do. Faith in His ability to do it.

Faith in His faithfulness to perform what He has said. Therefore, it is of faith. Faith is the only thing that allows life in Christ to be according to grace.

There's an absolute affinity, a fitting relationship between faith and grace. Grace is not of works, lest any man should boast. Grace is of the work of God.

Faith is not a work. Faith is trusting in the work of another. Therefore, it is of faith that it might be according to grace.

We've been looking at the promises of God being birthed by them and then living by them. You know what that's all about? That's all about living and growing in the grace of God. Living by the promises of God, that's all about living and growing in the grace of God.

It's all about faith. That just shall live by faith, by trust, by dependence. Oh yes, faith works.

But faith is not a work. Faith produces the mighty works of God in and through our lives. But faith is the dependence of man on the promises of God.

Faith is throwing ourselves upon His work, His ability and His faithfulness. That lets it be according to grace. That lets us fit in with grace because we are saved by grace through faith.

That not of ourselves, it's the gift of God that no man should boast. You know what this does? This results in the promise being sure to all the seeds. See that? Therefore, it is of faith that it might be according to grace so that the promise might be sure to all the seed.

How is it that you and I can rest in the surety, the certainty that these promises God has made will apply to and be effective in your life and mine because it's by the grace of God. Not an ounce depending on our resource performing, but God being faithful. That's what makes it sure.

If you threw in there any of our ability, little uncertainty starting to come in. Lack of surety. Oh, what a fantastic verse this is.

Therefore, it is of faith that it might be according to grace so that the promise might be sure to all the seed. We are the seed of Abraham because we're in Christ and the promises are sure to all of us. Why? Because it hinges on God's grace and us just trusting his gracious promises.

Are we blessed or what? Are we in a great place or what? Verse 17 and 18, As it is written, I have made you a father of many nations in the presence of whom he believed. Who did Abraham believe? He believed God who gives life to the dead. That's the God we serve.

He gives life to the dead. You and I were dead in trespasses and sins, Ephesians 2, and he gave us life. He gave us life.

Life is a gift from God. The God we serve, the God we trust in gives life to the dead. Do you ever feel lifeless and dead? Whenever we're operating on our own energizing, our own resources, our own ability, oh, there comes that moment of awareness of how dead we are.

What's the answer to that? Same as we found at the beginning. Jesus said in John 6, 53, You have no life in yourselves. Later in verse 63, He said, It's the spirit who gives life.

True life is always a gift from God. He's the only living one. Any real life anyone has, spiritual life is derived from found in him.

We also serve a God, believe in a God who calls those things which do not exist as though they did. He looked upon us dead in trespasses and sins, unrighteous, unfruitful, and said, There is a child of mine that shall bear fruit. He was calling things that did not exist as though they existed.

And now here we are, the children of God bearing fruit through faith in him. It's the kind of God we serve. And Abraham, contrary to hope, in hope, believed.

Abraham looked at himself. I'm going to have a child. This whole great nation that will bring blessing to the whole world because through that seed would come the Messiah.

That's going to happen through me. It was contrary to hope. He looked at himself.

He looked at Sarah, looked kind of hopeless. If you're about 100 and you have a 90-year-old wife, and God says, Through you is going to be a seed that will bless the world. You go, This is contrary to hope.

This just doesn't. There's not much hope here, Lord. Yeah, there's no hope.

But contrary to hope, looking at himself, in hope, looking at the promises, he believed and he became the father of many nations. That's the line of faith that we walk in. We face those same issues every day.

We look at our own resources. We look at what the opportunity or challenge is. And, oh, it's contrary to hope.

Looks kind of hopeless. And yet in hope, hope in him, we believe. And he again does in and through and with us what he did with Abraham of old.

And he builds his kingdom and adds to his family, his seed. Both numbers, new birth, and quality of life, growth in the faith. It's so important to have clear the relationship between God's promises and God's law.

God's promises make available, guarantee the life and the provision of heaven. God's law says you absolutely, desperately need everything the promises offer. Here's another issue.

God's promises and God's rest. You ever get a feeling like you just want to go, oh, Lord, I just want to lean back on you. The striving, the pressure, the demands, the impossibilities.

Well, you know, there is a wonderful relationship between God's promises and God's rest. It's this. Spiritual rest is found in no other place than in the promises of God.

Hebrews 4, verses 1 through 11. Hebrews 4. Therefore, since a promise remains of entering his rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them.

But the word which they heard did not profit them. Not being mixed with faith in those who heard it, they would not believe. For we who have believed do enter that rest as he has said, so I swore in my wrath they shall not enter my rest.

That is those not believing. Although the works, God's works for salvation, were finished, a done deal from the foundation of the world. For he has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way.

And God rested on the seventh day from all his works. That is works of creation bringing forth all of creation. And again in this place, quote, they shall not enter my rest.

Referring to those who would not believe and trust and therefore obey. And again in this place, quote, they shall not enter my rest. Referring to those who would not believe and trust and therefore obey.

Since therefore, verse 6, Hebrews 4. Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, his rest, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience. Disobedience always follows doubt and unwillingness to trust and depend. Again he designates a certain day, saying in David, today.

After such a long time as it has been said, quote, today. If you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts. You know, it's always today is the day of salvation.

The saving work of God is not a thing of yesterday or tomorrow. It's today. Will I believe today? If we want to walk in fullness of life, assurance of life, fruitfulness in life, today is the day to believe.

Verse 8, for if Joshua had given them rest, and he, God, would not afterward have spoken of another day, another day of a more full rest. Verse 9, there remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered his rest, God's rest, has himself, the human person, also ceased from his works, human works, as God did from his divine works of creation back at the beginning.

Conclusion, verse 11, let us therefore be diligent, be attentive, be careful to enter that rest. Lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience that came from their doubt, the children of Israel in the wilderness, not believing, not entering the rest of God, though they had been brought out of the bondage of Egypt, the world system and its sin and death. These verses are speaking of this issue By the promises of God, there is a spiritual rest for the people of God.

Not only a rest from self-righteousness and guilt, but also a rest from self-striving and failure. The promises of God not only establish peace between us and God when it comes to sin, but by his promise, the sin is covered, forgiven, and gone and remembered no more. But there comes another blessed rest day by day from that striving, we're maintaining the Christian life, spiritual vitality, a quality of fruitfulness and Christ-likeness and obedience.

There is a rest today from that depending on our best work, our best performance. And praise God there is such a rest, otherwise what? We're right back under the law. How many Christians, saved by grace, no they can't get heaven by law, get right back under the law when it comes to day by day Christian living? Praise God there's a rest from both.

A rest from sin and guilt. Oh, praise you Lord, I'm at peace with you. The guilt is gone, the sin is covered.

At rest with God. But now today a child of God, born again by his promises, there remains a promise to enter his rest. But verse 10, he who has entered his rest, God's rest, God's peace, has himself also ceased from his works, human works, as God did from his divine creative work.

If we want to walk at rest, at peace with God, not striving, not frantic, not wondering if we're doing enough and trying harder, we want to cease from our works and enter into his rest. It's an amazing spiritual paradox. Only then can we be abounding in the work of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:58 Do you remember the verse that comes before that? We've touched on it already. 1 Corinthians 15:57 says, Thanks be to God who gives us the victory, a gift, that's grace, received by faith, all that based on promise. That's the person, verse 58, that can always be abounding in the work of the Lord.

Not the human striving, fleshy work of a religious zealot. We want to be about the Father's business, but not based on human striving, trying to make it happen. It all depends on me, how hard I go at it.

Where's the rest in that? It's gone. There remains, therefore, a rest for the people of God. For the human mind, it's a paradox.

You mean, it's in ceasing from my works and entering his rest that I can actually abound in the work of the Lord? Right. Only the Spirit can make sense out of that. But he does make sense out of it.

I'll confess early on, I only knew as a Christian my striving to bless and please God. It didn't take me too long to get really weary. And though I don't perfectly understand how to perfectly walk in that perfect rest all the time, oh, I sure see a difference now, don't you? It's not us producing for God, it's us resting in the Lord who produces in and through us.

How hard does a grape branch strain to produce one grape? Say, hey, you don't know much about grape vines, do you? That branch just abides in that vine and here comes the life and here comes the grapes. That's the picture. That's the picture.

God's promises produce God's rest in us and then we can abound in the work of the Lord. Hebrews 6, 13 through 20. Again, speaking of God's promises and God's rest.

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no one greater, he swore by himself. Isn't that great? Saying, surely I will bless you and multiplying, I will multiply you. And so after he, Abraham, had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

For men indeed swear by the greater and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. I swear on the Bible, you know. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise, the immutability, the unchangeability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath that by two immutable things, that is God's promise and God's oath, God promising it and swearing on his name, that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the presence behind the veil where the forerunner has entered for us even Jesus. Having become high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek, that is the order of an eternal priesthood, not like Aaron where it was passed on man to man. What a great word about God's promises and God's rest.

Verse 15 says faith patiently endures, then sees the promises of God fulfilled. And so after Abraham, he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. See, we like Abraham have great glorious promises made to us.

You know what happens with our flesh, our humanity, our natural mind? It's like, I don't think the promise is good, it hasn't happened yet. God, I gave you 24 hours, what's the deal? Surely you can fulfill these 8,000 Bible promises in 24 hours. Yes, he could, but he doesn't.

Faith waits on God. Often we miss the blessing of the promises of God through our fleshly impatience. Lord, I'm praying for patience and I want it now.

Doesn't fit. Lord, I believe your promises today for a few more hours. It's those who patiently endure, they just wait upon the Lord.

They don't just kick back and let time pass, they wait on the Lord. As time passes, they put their hope in the Lord. And he's going to fulfill his promises.

Well, he didn't yesterday. Well, yes, he did. To the measure and degree we depended on him and to the extent of his will and his timing, he perfectly fulfilled his promises yesterday.

And he will today and tomorrow, right on down until we obtain every aspect of every promise that he has for us. Patient endurance, it's where we obtain the promises. And verse 17, we are heirs of promise, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise, the unchangeability of God's will and counsel.

God just swears I'll do it and puts it in his own name. A double certainty, his oath and his promise, his name and what he declares he'll do. You know where that leaves us? Middle of verse 18, God does all this that we might have strong consolation.

Strong consolation, mighty comfort, strong consolation for those who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. That's what faith does. Get strong comfort, mighty comfort from God.

Because we fled for our refuge, our hiding place to lay hold of this hope, this expectation, this anticipation set before us in all the promises of what God will do. Here's how great this hope is, how mighty, how effective. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul.

Do you ever feel like you're drifting? Kind of off the waterfall, you're drifting down the river and here comes Niagara and oh Lord, it's all over. Here's the anchor, an anchor for our soul. Just hope in the Lord.

Just flee to Jesus for refuge. Just hide in him. It anchors the soul, makes it sure and steadfast, even lets us go inside the veil.

Think of this, you talk about the grace of God, the promises of God. Look at this picture. Back under the old covenant, the law, there's a picture of man relating to God.

Man on his own doesn't just bop in through the veil. Here I am Lord, open up. It's me.

Everyone stayed out of that veil. Once a year, one went in. And that was the shedding of blood of animals to show us only by sacrifice.

Just a picture of the perfect sacrifice to come. He's come. His blood has been shed.

Now in his name, we just walk right in there and are anchored there whenever we put our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. The high priest, the robes, the rules, the regulations, the animal sacrifice. And he timidly went in there one time a year, hoping it wouldn't be struck dead.

And all the ceremonies in preparation for it. Look at this contrast. We go, oh Lord Jesus, I need you so much.

I hide in you. I count on you. Where are we? Boom, right inside the veil.

What a difference between living under our performance and the law and living by the promises of God under grace. Just calling on the name of the Lord Jesus. Living in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Fleeing for refuge to the hope that is ours in the Lord Jesus. Just lets our soul be anchored inside the veil. Right there in the very presence of God where Jesus has taken us.

God's promises bring God's rest. A certain solid anchor of hope that secures our spiritual life. With God in Christ letting us live inside that veil.

Inside the family. In the very presence of God. We're children of promise.

Birth by his promises, living by his promises. God's promises and God's law. Oh, God's law drives us to God's promises.

But God's promises thereby can produce a spiritual rest. A peace, an abiding, a confidence, a surety, a certainty of access, acceptance, intimacy and fellowship, provision and certainty. With that in mind, let's spend our last few minutes in some reflective conclusion about the promises of God and being children of promise.

Hebrews 11.11, by faith Sarah herself also receives strength to conceive seed. And she bore a child when she was past the age. Couldn't have been done.

How did this happen? Because she judged him faithful who had promised. So often we're like Sarah. We look at ourselves and we say it's past the possibility.

I can't do it. Either time wise or resource wise or hope wise or strength wise or confidence wise. But if we'll just judge him faithful who has made promises to us, we'll see Isaac's birthed in our life.

That is God doing things we could never produce on our own. That is the work of God. Bringing forth Isaac's fruit that we could never produce on our own best effort.

We've already brought forth too many children of the flesh, too many products of Hagar. Clever ingenuity, man's best effort. God wants to see more Isaac's in our life.

If we'll just judge him faithful who made these promises to us, we'll be like Sarah. Even though we can't, God can. Hebrews 11 verses 17 through 19.

By faith Abraham when he was tested offered up Isaac and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son of whom it was said in Isaac your seed shall be called. How could Abraham even lay on the altar the very product of God's promise which was the very means for future fulfillment of all of the promise of God? How could he do that? Sometimes we're called to do that. God promises us certain things and we can't produce it.

We believe him and he does it and then the day comes he says okay now lay that on the altar. Put my faithfulness to you so far on the altar unto me for my will, my use, my purpose where if I don't work it will be of no further value. How could Abraham do that? He concluded that God was able.

He came to this conclusion. Hey God promises me a nation through Isaac. He wants him on the altar.

If he dies there God's able to raise him up and we'll have to if he's going to have this nation even from the dead from which he also received them in a figurative sense. A child of resurrection. Our God is a God of resurrection.

How many times things look so dead to us even things God did for us they look like they die before us sometimes. On the altar of God he can raise them up again. He's able.

He's faithful. Romans 4 19 through 21 in reflection again. God's promises and what to do with them and not being weak in faith.

He did not consider his own body already dead since he was about 100 years old and the deadness of Sarah's womb sure didn't look good. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief but was strengthened by faith giving glory to God. Praise your Lord.

Glory be to your name. Oh can't wait till that child comes for Sarah and I. Oh we're just expecting over her being expected. 90 and 100.

How was he doing that being fully convinced that what he God had promised he God was also able to perform. The only way to give glory to God in impossibilities impossible situations when everything screams out against what God has promised to do. It's the focus not on our circumstances and their impossibility but on God and his promises.

Abraham believed. He concluded that the promisor was able to raise up this promise seed and the promisor was able to give life to a dead womb. We can grow strong in faith when we put our attention on the one who makes the promises.

Every one of us probably has enough circumstances to bury us in doubt and fear disbelief and disobedience. But the promises of God are there to consider and by them faith grows behind the promises is a faithful able one. It brings us to our last verse.

You say yeah but I struggle with doubt and unbelief. Well where does faith come from anyway? Romans 10 17. So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

Faith comes by hearing and the kind of hearing that produces faith comes by hearing the word of God. We might hear these things and go yeah but it's so hard for me to believe. You know what the answer is not strain harder, crank down on your faith.

It's listen up one more time. Faith comes by hearing. Faith comes from God saying I will do it.

Faith comes by considering the one who promised is able to do it. Faith grows when we hear that the able promiser is faithful and reliable. Here's how wise we become.

We become the universal geniuses. God declares his faithfulness in a thousand ways. And shows it in ten thousands of ways.

And we end up putting our faith in him. Boy are we sharp. See faith is anchored in him.

His promises, his ability, and his faithfulness. We are children of promise. What do children of promise do? Trust the one who promises.

Let's pray together. Lord we're so glad you arranged it this way. Oh thank you Lord.

Bless you and praise you. You make the promises. You show yourself able and faithful.

What's left for us Lord we will trust in you. Thank you for letting us be children of promise. May we continue to listen to your promises that faith might grow.

That we might abound in the work of the Lord. Resting in your faithful ability. In Jesus name we pray.

Amen.

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