

Mending Broken Fishermen
The Uncloudy Cloud
Hebrews 11:29-39; Hebrews 12:1-2
Genesis 25:29-34

Introduction:

1. We are going to be looking at an Old Testament and a New Testament passage
2. Hebrews 11 has a Hall of Fame (Faith)
3. People like Abraham, Sara, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph are mentioned
4. In this chapter we also read of low-brow and low road people, hardly paragons of virtue, vigilance, piety or success as one would expect.
5. Even more surprising as examples of triumphant faith is the extolling of lives which seem in much of the modern day faith teachings to have been disastrous failures
6. These giants in the faith-history of Israel, despite their victories, despite their sufferings, ***“did not receive what was promised”***
7. It is only to the generations living in the post-crucifixion world, including you and I, to whom the promise of the New Covenant has been revealed
8. ***Chapter 12*** with those in ***Chapter 11*** being called ***“ a cloud of witnesses”***
9. The imagery now changes to that of a race where we are being cheered on by the “heroes of faith” from ***Chapter 11***.
10. The victory goes to the one who runs with perseverance, the one who keeps looking to Jesus regardless of all else

The Lure of a Can of Soup:

1. So what are the foundational principles of your life?
2. I believe that being connected to God in a strong, growing relationship is the key principle by which we should order our lives
3. Through this series we are discovering that prayer and desire are linked
4. *Prayer is the middle place between desire fulfilled and a desire avoided*
5. It is right in that mid-place that we rediscover the power of a simple prayer
6. ***Genesis 25:29-34*** is the story of two brothers
7. We will just look at a slice of the story today – when desire goes awry
8. We all long to be originals – to express our unique selves
9. I am blown away by God’s creativity that makes us all different
10. Our desire to be original goes beyond the physical
11. *Dallas Willard – “The Divine Conspiracy”* writes about our distaste for being considered ordinary. *“ We are placed in a specific context to count in ways no one else does – that is our destiny”*
12. But there is a catch – we often settle for something less than our originality
13. We “sell our birthright” for a can of soup.
14. Lock this in : *in every situation there is something to avoid and something to engage*
15. All lures draw you away staying true to the person God is creating in you

16. Caving in is easier than remaining faithful – that is **The Esau Moment**
17. How we respond will determine whether we remain authentic or take on the role of an imposter or betrayer

Happy ever After :

1. We all live with at least a few big dreams
2. In his second inaugural address in 1937 Franklin Roosevelt said this : “ *each age is a dream that is dying, or one that is coming to birth* ”
3. There are also dreams that fool us
4. Then there are dreams we never mention
5. The older one gets, the more one learns to accept (grudgingly) that some of our dreams are not going to come true

The Cloud of Witnesses :

1. Two things from this list :
 - many of these heroes were not true to their dream
 - many had dreams that did not come true
2. The roll-call of witnesses is as much a rogue’s gallery as a shrine for saints
3. The cloud of witnesses is cloudy indeed
4. This cloud of witnesses is a condensation of troubled, sometimes tortured, sometimes triumphant lives of ordinary men and women made extraordinary by an unclouded faith in an unclouded God

The Challenge for us :

1. God may not see fit to grant us our greatest dreams
2. But we need to remain faithful
3. These people from **Hebrews 11** lived this dream of a relationship with God
4. So what do you desire above all else?
5. Corrie Ten Boom “ *does God answer your prayers? Often, but not always* ”
6. We are called to be part of that “ *Great Cloud of Witnesses* ”
7. This means we will live and love in the light of a faith in an unclouded day, and an unclouded God
8. These are people who put God first – who keep God in everything they do.
9. Press on – stay connected to God and don’t lose your dream, don’t give into the lure of the soup can, and hold onto Jesus