

Finishing Well

2025-08-17 – Hebrews 11:8-19



Have you ever wondered how people will remember you when you are gone? As we come to the end of our series we are going to look at how Abraham and Sarah are remembered in the book of Hebrews. Come join us as we consider what they are remembered for and how we can finish well.

Good morning. It's on, it's on. Well, if you've got your Bibles this morning, we're going to do something kind of crazy. We've been at the beginning. Today, we're going to jump to the end. We're going to be in **Hebrews 11** today as we come to the end of our series on Abraham.

We have been looking at Abraham's life since May, from the moment God called him from his father's house, his land, and his relatives, until last week, we looked at the moment when God told Abraham, "Sacrifice your son on the mountain I will show you." And, of course, God stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac. But in that passage, we saw Abraham, in faith, trusted that the Lord would bring Isaac back to life if he had gone through with it.

Today, we are going to look back on Abraham's life through the lens of Hebrews 11. In Hebrews 11, we are in a famous place in Scripture that many people call the "Hall of Faith." It is full of examples, Hebrews 11, of people from the Old Testament and the moments of their lives most worth remembering and most encouraging for us and how we think of how we should walk today.

Our goal today, from looking at the life of Abraham, is to think about what it would look like to **Finish Well** in our lives. And there's an irony here because Abraham does not finish well. If you read carefully in the final passage, we learn about Abraham's life before he dies, Genesis 25. Abraham takes a third wife after Sarah dies. He has six more sons, after Sarah dies. God had told him, "All your blessing and all the everything will go through Isaac." Sarah had said, "Make sure the inheritance all goes to Isaac," and Abraham, in the final years of his life, he gives a portion of that inheritance to these other six sons and sends them on their way.

When we read carefully the final years of Abraham's life, it's kind of a bummer. And if you're surprised by this, you haven't read the Old Testament well, because in the Old Testament, very few people finish well. Abraham, Isaac, Moses—he doesn't get to enter the promised land. The Book of Judges, all the men who are heroes in the Book of Judges, just read with a critical eye, and you will think twice before you name your son Samson. King David, a man after God's own heart—well, the further into his life you get, the more you go, "Oh."

Solomon... I bring this up because most people in the Old Testament don't finish well. We remember them, though, for the things they do well, for the most part.

Have you ever thought about how you will be remembered? Have you ever thought about how you'll be remembered at your funeral? Who might speak, what they might say. As a pastor, I get a lot of insight when a family member passes. I sit, you know, and talk to the family, asking what do you want to say? you know like, tell me about this person," and we talk about the stories of the person's life. Do you ever think about how you'll be remembered? Or maybe you don't want to think about it. You say, "I don't care. I'll be gone." I've had people say that to me. Some of you are in agreement with that, but whether or not wherever you land there, I promise there is one person you will care about how they remember you. Because as we just sang, someday, you will stand before the throne of God above. Do you ever think about what He will say? Do you ever think about, will He say, "Well done, my good and faithful servant"? Because in this life, we should strive to hear nothing else in the end.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Our goal today, as we look at Abraham's life through the lens of Hebrews 11, is to consider what it looks like to finish well. And if you are a believer here, let me say, **set your sights on finishing well**. In the Old Testament, they didn't finish well. In the New Testament, with the Holy Spirit, they did. The apostles did not shirk away; they did not deny the resurrection. Peter, as he was hung upside down on a cross, did not say, "Never mind." Paul, as he was beheaded, look at the lives of those in the early church, and what you see again and again, and look at the lives of Christians throughout history, and you see that with the Holy Spirit, we can finish well. And we can learn from Abraham and, even from Sarah, principles for how we can walk forward and seek to finish well in this life.

To that end, let us pray.

Father in heaven, we thank You for this day. Father, we thank You that You sent Your Son. And as we talk about setting our sights on finishing well before You, we know that He finished perfectly. We know that He finished well. He died on the cross; He said, "It is finished," and it was true. Our sins are forgiven by His death, and we praise You, Lord, that in His resurrection, we know that we can have life to the full. I pray, Lord, that this morning Your Spirit would be moving in our midst, that You would give us eyes to see and ears to hear what Your Word has to say. And Lord, I pray You would be speaking to me and speaking through me, that these would be Your words and not mine. I pray, Lord, that as we look at Abraham's life and consider the great moments of faith, that we would be strengthened and encouraged and challenged to set our sights on finishing well and to follow in the example of Your Son. It is in His holy and precious name we pray. Amen.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised

Well, we're looking at **setting our sights on finishing well**. And the first thing we're going to see as we look at this, we're going to look today, and we're going to see that we need to remember the reward He has promised.

By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and set out for a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance. He went out even though he did not know where he was going.
Hebrews 11:8 CSB

As we look at the life of Abraham, the first thing we're going to see in Hebrews 11:8 is that we need to remember the reward He has promised. Hebrews 11:8, ***"By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and set out for a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance. He went out even though he did not know where he was going."***

The Lord said to Abram: Go from your land, your relatives, and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.
Genesis 12:1-3 CSB

Now, this is Genesis 12:1-3. God called, or the Lord said to Abram, ***"Go from your land, your father's house, and your relatives to the land that I will show you, and I will make you a great nation. I will bless you."*** God promises Abram descendants like the sand of the seashores and the stars in the heavens. And He promises that he will have a land that God will show him. And if you remember, Abraham at the start of the passage, he's a 75-year-old man without any children, with a barren wife. And he's never heard of this God before. Like, maybe he's thought about a creator God, but the first time God speaks to him, He says, "Go, leave behind everything you've known. Leave behind your security, your inheritance, and go where I will send you." And Abraham goes.

And if we read carefully from Genesis 12 through the end of his life, one thing we see very clearly is that Abraham, even when he doubts the promises of God, he says them to God in order to say, "God, You've promised this." In Genesis 15, when Abram is doubting and he says, "God, You said I'll have descendants, and yet my heir is going to be the servant in my household," God says, "You will have descendants. Go look at the stars. Your descendants will be like those." And Abraham believes, and it's credited to him as righteousness. Later, he says, "God, how will I know I will inherit this land?" And God does the covenant where they split the animal in half, the sacrifice, you know, and the covenant, and God passes through.

Every time Abraham in his life wonders and questions God, his question is, "God, You've said You'll bring about this promise. How will You bring it about?" And God, again and again, shows Himself to be faithful. It's important to note that Abraham in his life does not see those

promises carried through, but throughout his life, he clings to, he remembers the rewards that God has promised.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised

Brothers and sisters, we must do the same. You look at the promises that God has afforded you with, the things that He has said to you in the New Testament. I'm just going to use some from John because we were there in the spring. In John, we are born—if you are a believer, we are born again. We are children of God by the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And if we are born again, it means we have eternal life. If we have eternal life, the promise of the Good Shepherd is that He holds us in His hand, and nothing will ever snatch us away. And if we are followers of Him, the eternal life we have, it's not just that we will live forever, but He says, "I'm going to My Father's house to prepare rooms for you." We will someday dwell with God in His house as His children forever. And if we doubt that promise at all, remember, Jesus didn't just make those promises. He died and rose to prove that they were true.

If we want to set our sights on finishing well, we are going to remember the promises He has for us for all eternity, and we are going to set those before us. We are going to look to that finish line and what God has promised. That is what Abraham does, even as he has no idea who this God is who is making these promises to him. **Remember the reward He has promised.**

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised

Seek the city with foundations He has prepared

This brings us to the second point. **Seek the city with foundations He has prepared.**

By faith he stayed as a foreigner in the land of **promise**, living in tents as did Isaac and Jacob, coheirs of the same **promise**.¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Hebrews 11:9-10 CSB

After God calls Abraham, **By faith, Abraham stayed as a foreigner in the land of promise, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, coheirs of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.**

Now, I love these two verses because the language of foundations is so amazing, and we may not understand this today, but imagine you lived in a tent your whole life. What does a tent lack? Foundations.

The hope of Abraham and his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob was that someday they would be in a city that God had built. They would be in a place where God and His people would dwell together. You see that promise in Genesis 15 and 17. You see that promise echoed through the Old Testament. You see it echoed through the New Testament. And what Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob hoped for was that someday God would bring about this promise to their descendants, and they hoped for something that God would bring about that in their day they couldn't even fathom.

We must seek the city with foundations He has prepared for us. Today, we have a lot of advantages over Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob because we have the New Testament. We have the picture in the Book of Revelation. The writer John in the Book of Revelation, he describes the heavenly city whose architect is God, who laid its foundation.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and He will live with them. They will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and will be their God.

Revelation 21:1-3 CSB

Revelation 21:1-3 says this, ***"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and He will live with them. They will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and will be their God."***

The language, as you read forward, of streets of gold, of a place with no sorrow or pain or tears, a place of peace, a place where God and His people dwell together for all eternity. What Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob hoped for, we have a much better picture of, and I want to make sure it's clear. The picture we have of it, we cannot even fathom. We don't really understand what it will be like.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised

Seek the city with foundations He has prepared

We have just a little taste at the end of the book, *The Last Battle*, *Chronicles of Narnia*. C.S. Lewis describes heaven using a simple illustration. The people who—spoiler—like, they die. They wind up in heaven. They eat from a tree, and they eat a fruit, and the imagery C.S. Lewis uses, as he says, after eating this fruit, it's like they've never had fruit before. And everything in this life pales in comparison to even that little fruit they picked off the tree.

And I always love that illustration because when you read it, you just think, if the smallest of things, a bite of a fruit off a tree, is so delicious there, then what will everything else be like? And we cannot fathom. We cannot fathom a world without our problems and our strife. I cannot imagine a world without my sin issues because I hope to someday, and I know someday we will. But we cannot even fathom what heaven will be like. But we have a much better idea than they had, and we should hope for it. We should believe in it, and we should seek the city with foundations He has prepared.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised
Seek the city with foundations He has prepared
Trust the promises of Him who is faithful

This brings us to our third point. **We must trust the promises of Him who is faithful.**

We must trust the promises of Him who is faithful.

By faith even Sarah herself, when she was unable to have children, received power to conceive offspring, even though she was past the age, since she considered that the one who had **promised** was faithful. Therefore, from one man—in fact, from one as good as dead—came offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky and as innumerable as the grains of sand along the seashore.

Hebrews 11:11-12 CSB

Hebrews 11:11 says this, ***"By faith, even Sarah herself, when she was unable to have children, received power to conceive offspring, even though she was past the age, since she considered that the One who had promised was faithful."***

And I must pause here. I must pause here and tell you that when I read this passage, I knew we were going to be in Hebrews 11, the final week of this series the entire time we were going through this series. When I read the name Sarah, my honest first thought was, "Why is she mentioned here?" Think about what we know about Sarah in Genesis. Do you think of anything positive? Right, all of our first memories of Sarah are like, well, you know, she convinced Abraham to get with Hagar. She pushed Hagar out. She lied that she was a sister. You don't see a lot of good things. When she first heard that she would have a child, she laughed.

And yet, she's mentioned here, which means when we read back through Genesis, we need to look for those moments of faith. And when we look for them, they are evident. First and foremost, just very practically, we're all adults here. They kept trying to have children when God said at 100 and at 90 they should. So that's an act of faith, I think. Good. Good. I thought we were very stone-faced there. But that's an important little thing. She also, when they had Isaac, she gives glory to God. In the interaction she has with Ishmael and Hagar after Isaac

is born, they are all about protecting the one God has said is the child of promise. Sarah does show faith.

On top of that, from neither Sarah nor Abraham do we ever see them say, "Maybe this isn't working out. Maybe we should head back home." There is faith evident when we read through the passage. It may not jump out at us, but Sarah is not remembered in the Book of Hebrews as, "Don't be like her." She's remembered for her acts of faith, and I think that is so important as we read this passage, and her faith is that she considered that the One who had promised was faithful.

Therefore, from one man—this is Abraham—in fact, from one as good as dead, this is referring to he was 100, came offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky and as innumerable as the grains of sand along the seashore.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised
Seek the city with foundations He has prepared
Trust the promises of Him who is faithful

Both Abraham and Sarah trusted the promises of Him who was faithful. And in their lives, they didn't see these promises come to pass. They saw one child. Isaac had two. Jacob had 12, and like, that's like you go to the beach, and you walk, and then you've got a little sand in your sandal when you leave. But now you look across the generations of what God has done through the work of Christ on the cross, and you realize how many children they had.

Trust the promises of Him who is faithful. He will carry them out.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised
Seek the city with foundations He has prepared
Trust the promises of Him who is faithful
Look with long to the heavenly place

This brings us to our fourth point. Look with longing to the heavenly place. Look with longing to the heavenly place.

These all died in faith, although they had not received the things that were promised. But they saw them from a distance, greeted them, and confessed that they were foreigners and temporary residents on the earth. Now those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.

Hebrews 11:13-14 CSB

Hebrews 11:13 says, "***These all died in faith.***" Now, these words at the start of Hebrews 11:13, "***These all died in faith,***" are referring to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah. They all died in

faith. They all died without foundations to the city. They all died without seeing the multitudes that would come. ***They all died in faith, although they had not received the things that were promised.*** But their hope was in them.

We know their hope was in them because they stayed in the promised land. At the end of Jacob's life, God tells him to go to Egypt. And so Jacob does go to Egypt, but he doesn't go there until God commands it because at a different point in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's life, they put their faith that the Lord will bring about what He has said. ***They did not receive what they were promised, but they saw them from a distance, greeted them, and confessed that they were foreigners and temporary residents on the earth.***

Now, I love these words because these words are not just for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah. You go to the Book of John when Jesus is talking to His disciples at the Last Supper, and He says, "I am not from the earth, but the Father sent Me into the earth. I am not from the world, but He sent Me here, and just as I was sent into the world, those who are His, the disciples, are no longer from the world, but they are sent into the world." And all who follow Jesus, we are no longer of this world, but we are in this world. But it is not our home. The foundations of where we live are not anywhere in this world. There is not a nation in this world that is the Kingdom of God. There is not a place in this world that matches what the Kingdom someday will be. We are not in our final place.

You see this all through the New Testament. In Peter's writings, he calls us exiles. This is not our home. All of our hopes, should be in the world to come. That is our final place, and it is not our final resting place. It is our final place where we will be with God for all eternity, in the same way that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah were foreigners and temporary residents, so are we.

I hope you believe that. It's hard to believe that sometimes. I was reflecting today on there was a time in my life when my wife and I, when we were at Moody, our second year at Moody, there was like a six-month span where down the hall were two of our best friend couples. And we spent so much time together, and during that time, it felt like heaven on earth. But I look back at that time, and as good as that time was, I know heaven will be so much better. I don't want to long for what was in the past because even if I could go back there, it is nothing compared to what will be in heaven. This is not our final home.

If you want to set your sight on finishing well, keep that in mind. Whatever happens in this life, whatever happens day-to-day, wherever you find yourself, this is not your final resting place. Do not think it is, at all. ***Now, those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.*** So, hopefully, you say these things. Hopefully, you know that you need to be seeking a homeland that is not found on this earth.

If they were thinking about where they came from, they would have had an opportunity to return. But they now desire a better place—a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 11:15-16 CSB

If they were thinking about where they came from, they would have had an opportunity to return. Now, with these words, the author of Hebrews is pointing to the idea that they could have said, "We want to go back to the land of Abraham's father." They could have said, "We want to go back there," but instead, they put their faith. ***They desired a better place, a heavenly one.*** Now, the only example we have in the story of Abraham of somebody longing to return, by the way, is Lot's wife. You think about the one person who looked back with longing as God rained down judgment. She looked back and wanted to return, and so she turned into a pillar of salt.

If we are longing for the better place, a heavenly one, look at the promise: ***"Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them."***

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised
Seek the city with foundations He has prepared
Trust the promises of Him who is faithful
Look with long to the heavenly place

We must look with longing at the heavenly place. And you may say, "Well, how do we do this practically? Look with longing at the heavenly place." Do you know how Jesus taught His disciples to pray? ***"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*** As we were taught to pray by our Lord, that prayer is, "I'm thinking about, Lord, Your will in heaven. Let us see it done on the earth." Let us long to see it done on the earth, and then let us practically remember that this earth is not our final home. Look with longing to the heavenly place.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised
Seek the city with foundations He has prepared
Trust the promises of Him who is faithful
Look with long to the heavenly place
Do not doubt death has no sting

And this brings us to the last point we're going to see. ***Do not doubt, death has no sting.*** The phrase "death has no sting" is an idiom referring to the idea that death is not the end. Death is not the end because when we die, we go on to eternal life. This is true for both those who believe and those who do not believe. But for one, it is eternal life, for those who believe. For those who do not believe, it is eternal death and separation from God and hell for all eternity. **But do not doubt, death has no sting.**

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. He received the **promises** and yet he was offering his one and only son, the one to whom it had been said, **Your offspring will be traced through Isaac.** He considered God to be able even to raise someone from the dead; therefore, he received him back, figuratively speaking.

Hebrews 11:17-19 CSB

Hebrews 11:17-19 says this, "**By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. He received the promises and yet he was offering his one and only son, the one to whom it had been said, 'Your offspring will be traced through Isaac.'** He considered God to be able even to raise someone from the dead, and therefore he received him back, figuratively speaking."

Now, this is referring to what we saw last week, Abraham binding Isaac, placing him on the altar, ready to sacrifice Isaac in obedience to what God had commanded. And if you remember what Abraham believed in Genesis 22, and what is being pointed to here, is that Abraham believed that even if he did sacrifice and offer Isaac as a burnt offering, because God is faithful to His promises and said His promises would come about through Isaac, what Abraham believed was that God would raise Isaac from the dead. He believed that God had the power to do this and would bring it about, in Genesis 22.

That is such a marvelous thing that Abraham was able to reason out from seeing the sovereignty of God over the course of his life. And what Abraham reasoned out there, we have a far better example of because Jesus, when He walked on the earth, He talked often about the fact that He would die on the cross. And every time He talked about it, every time He talked about His death, He promised He would rise on the third day. He would raise Himself to life on the third day.

You read carefully through all the Gospels, and you realize that not that Jesus knew He would die—He knew He would rise. Of course, He did. He was fully God and fully man. But you realize that, and He never once promised to die without promising His resurrection. Every time Jesus talked about His death, He promised His resurrection, and when He died, no one believed it would happen. Abraham's faith in Genesis 22 was phenomenal. Those who saw Jesus walk on water, feed 5,000, heal, give the blind sight—those who saw all of those things from Jesus still did not believe. But that doesn't mean Jesus didn't do it.

He died for our sins. He rose from the grave, and with His rising from the grave, what we know, and the promise that we have, is that death has no sting. His power over death is sure. He raised Himself from the dead. Death has no power over Him at all. And if death has no power over Him, you can be sure it has no power over us who believe because of all of the promises we have, that if we believe in Jesus, we will have eternal life.

Set Your Sight on Finishing Well

Remember the reward He has promised
Seek the city with foundations He has prepared
Trust the promises of Him who is faithful
Look with long to the heavenly place
Do not doubt death has no sting

If you wonder, "Well, do I have to do anything?" think of the story of the criminal on the cross. There were two criminals nailed to crosses on either side of Jesus. One hurls insults at Jesus and says, "If You're the Messiah, save Yourself and us." But the other criminal rebukes him and says, "You know, we're guilty, but this Man is innocent." And then he says to Jesus, "Jesus, when You enter Your kingdom, remember me." And Jesus says to him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with Me in paradise." His faith was in Jesus and in the kingdom that Jesus would have. And he's with Jesus forever. We don't know that guy's name, but we know his faith. And his faith is an incredible illustration for us today of the fact that death has no sting.

Set your sight on finishing well. I hope you see that all five of these points speak to our eternity. I hope that has been abundantly clear in Hebrews 11, when we look at the life of Abraham and Sarah, all of the promises point towards eternity. Their acts of faith, we should read them, and we should think about what God has promised us, that some of it we've received. We have the Holy Spirit. If you are a follower of Jesus, you are, even now, a child of God, sealed by the Spirit. God sees you as His child. He sees your sin covered by His Son's blood. That's true now. But someday, we will see it in its full glory, on the other side of the grave, or whenever He returns.

Set your sight on finishing well. First and foremost, remember the reward He has promised. Seek the city with foundations He has prepared. Trust the promises of Him who is faithful. Look with longing to the heavenly place, and do not doubt, death has no sting.

Now, when we list all of these out, when we are thinking, if we're going to finish well, we need to think about the finish line and beyond. That's kind of the big idea. Think about the finish line and beyond. And sometimes this can be misconstrued and twisted and distorted. Sometimes people say, "Well, I get to go to heaven when I die, so it doesn't matter what I do in this life." That is not the point of these passages. Abraham didn't say, "Well, I get to go to heaven, so I don't need to leave my father's house."

The examples we have were people who trusted in what the Lord had said, and so they walked in obedience, but their focus was on what was to come, and that impacted how they lived every day of their lives. There is a phenomenal quote from C.S. Lewis on this from his book Mere Christianity.

If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelicals who abolished the Slave Trade, all left their mark on Earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with Heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth 'thrown in': aim at earth, and you will get neither.

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

"If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English evangelicals who abolished the slave trade, all left their mark on earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at heaven, and you will get earth 'thrown in'. Aim at earth, and you will get neither."

I love this quote, and this is from the 1940s. And you read this quote and think, "I wish I could read his Mere Christianity 2025 edition," because he has such a keen understanding of the human spirit and culture.

If we want to walk well in this world, if we want to walk faithfully, we are going to think of the promises we have not yet received, trusting that He who has promised them is faithful to see them through.

If you are a Christian, if you want to hear, "Well done, my good and faithful servant," someday when you stand before Him, be thinking even now about where you will be for all eternity. Be thinking even now about someday you will stand before Him. If you're trying to think, "Well, what do I do today? What do I do this week?" I want to encourage you, the simplest thing to do is start adding into your prayers the idea of heaven. When you pray in this world, when you see in the news something about what's going on around the world or in our country or anything, and you see war and you see famine and all these things, in your prayer, pray that the Lord would provide, pray that the Lord would make His name known in this world. But then offer up praise that someday, in the new heaven and new earth, these things will not exist.

When you've got a sick family member, when you visit someone in the hospital who's having surgery or when you do that, don't just pray, "Lord, heal this person." Pray, "Lord, thank You that someday we won't need surgeries anymore." Add that simple thing to your prayers, and you will start to set your sight on finishing well. **Think about the life to come, and it will impact how you live this one.** If you set your mind on heaven, you'll be setting your mind on,

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." That is how our Lord calls us to pray. That is how we should pray, and that is how we should walk in this world.

Let's pray.

Father in heaven, we thank You for this day. Father, we thank You that You are seated on the throne in heaven, that You are God Almighty, that You reign. You are judge of all the earth, and Father, we thank You that You are all-powerful, all-knowing, You are everywhere. And we thank You, Lord, that You sent Your Son, that He died for our sins, and that for all who believe, we will have eternal life, we will not perish, though we deserve to perish. But we will have eternal life.

We will be able to stand before Your throne, not in our own strength, but because of the work of Your Son. Father, I pray, if anyone here does not know You, that as they've listened today, that Your Spirit would open their eyes to the truth of Your gospel. And for us who do know You, Lord, I pray we would leave today reinforced with the knowledge that where we are today is temporary. I pray we would not set our sights on the things of this world. We would set our minds on the things above. We would look to the finish line. We would look to when we will stand before You, and we will trust in Your promises concerning heaven and where we will be for all eternity.

Father, we thank You that You have made a way for us to stand before You. We thank You for the work of Your Son, Jesus, our Messiah. We pray all of this in His holy and precious name. Amen.



Digging Deeper – **Finishing Well** – Hebrews 11:8-19

1. What stood out to you from the sermon?
2. How do you hope people will remember you when you are gone?
3. How do you fear people will remember you when you are gone?

Read Hebrews 11:8-19

4. As you read through these verses, what stands out to you?
5. There are four “by faith” statements in this passage. What are the actions that Abraham and Sarah take in each example?
6. What do these verses reveal about the character of God? How do they show us His purposes?
7. What are the rewards of faith mentioned for each of those four “by faith” statements?
8. What is the focus of the faith Abraham and Sarah throughout these verses?

In the book *Mere Christianity*, CS Lewis has this to say about setting our hope on heaven:

If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The Apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelicals who abolished the Slave Trade, all left their mark on Earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with Heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth ‘thrown in’: aim at earth and you will get neither.

9. Is your faith set on the realities that God has promised in the future? Why or why not?
10. Why is it difficult to set our mind on the world to come? What keeps us from being heavenly minded?
11. The questions this week focus on two things? How you will be remembered and what you place your faith in. What would it look like in your life to live these two things up? Be specific.
12. A productive thing to do right now, or this week, would be to write out a prayer about how you want to finish. Read through Hebrews 11:1-12:2 and consider what you hope will be said about you. Pray through.
13. Take some time to end in prayer by sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.

