

**Read: Romans 4:1-5,13-17**

## Faith is Hard

### **Genesis 12:3**

I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

The story is told of a man who was hiking on a narrow mountain pass. To his right was a steep cliff which dropped one hundred feet to the ground.

As the man slowly and carefully made his way up the path, he suddenly slipped and fell over the edge of the cliff. On his way down, he grabbed onto a branch sticking out the side of the cliff.

Hanging on for dear life, he cried out, "Help! Somebody save me!"

That's when he heard the voice from above, "I'm here."

"Oh, thank goodness! Who are you?"

"It's me, God."

"Oh, God, please help me! I'm going to fall!"

"I'll help you, but first, let go of the branch."

"What?!?!?"

"I said, 'Let go of the branch.'"

There's a long pause.

Finally, the man asks, "Is there anybody else up there?"

Trusting God is sometimes hard, isn't it? We hear God's voice in the distance telling us to let go. He will catch us. But that's hard. It's hard to trust completely when we can't see or understand why.

Faith is hard when kids are picking on you at school. Faith is hard when you feel everyone is against you. Faith is hard when everything that happens during the day seems to fall apart.

But look at Abraham. He trusted God. He let go and moved to a far-off land he had never seen. He trusted that he and his wife Sarah would have a child in their old age. He just trusted that God would take care of him. He just believed that God would keep his promise and send his Son to be Abraham's Savior.

Faith is hard, but it's worth it. Faith lets God be God. Where we can't find a way, God makes a way. Abraham received God's promise by faith and not by sight. He trusted in what God would do and not in what he had done. Through faith in God's promises we receive the forgiveness and heaven Jesus won for us on the cross.

If you find yourself struggling with faith, turn to God's promises. Read the stories of people like Abraham, Noah, and Ruth from the Bible. See how God always keeps his promises. Through their stories and through his promises, the Holy Spirit will help you to trust, even when it's hard.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Why do you think the man in the story didn't want to let go of the branch?
- What does God promise to give to you when you believe his promises even when it's hard to?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- What did Abraham have to "let go" and just trust God would take care of for him?
- Name one thing you would like to "let go" and just trust God will take care of for you.

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Your friend feels like she messed up so badly that nobody, including God, could ever forgive her. What could you share with her from today's devotion that might help her trust that God has and will forgive her?
- Is faith something you have to do to earn forgiveness and heaven? Explain your answer.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Lord, sometimes I struggle to let go and just trust you. Help me to trust in all your promises, especially your promise to forgive me and give me heaven because of Jesus. Amen.