

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week of October 11

FAITH ADVANCING

Hebrews 11:8–10

MAIN POINT

Advancing faith obeys God's call, lives faithfully in the present world, and hopes for the world God is preparing.

LOOK → UNDERSTAND → CONNECT → APPLY → PRAY

LOOK — What does God's Word say?

Read Hebrews 11:8–10 together.

1. What does Hebrews 11:8 tell us about Abraham's response when God called him to leave his homeland?

Leader follow-up:

- What did Abraham know about where he was going?
- What did he have to trust God for?
- What does his response teach us about the relationship between faith and certainty?

2. Verse 8 says that Abraham obeyed and went out "not knowing where he was going." What stands out to you about that statement?

Leader follow-up:

- Why would leaving without knowing the destination be difficult?
- What did Abraham know even though he didn't know all the details?
- How does this show that faith moves forward based on God's Word rather than visible certainty?

Leader Note: Abraham didn't have a detailed roadmap. His faith was not based on knowing exactly what would happen; it was based on trusting the God who had spoken to him.

UNDERSTAND — What does it mean?
--

3. Hebrews 11:9 says that Abraham lived in the promised land "as a stranger in a foreign country," dwelling in tents. Why is this significant?

Leader follow-up:

- How could Abraham live in a land that was promised to him while still living like a stranger?
- What does this tell us about the difference between God's promise and its present fulfillment?
- How does Abraham's experience connect with the Christian life?

4. Verse 10 says that Abraham was "looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God." What was Abraham ultimately hoping for?

Leader follow-up:

- Why do you think Abraham's hope went beyond the land of Canaan?
- What does it mean for God Himself to be the architect and builder of this city?
- How might hope in God's future shape the way we live in the present?

Leader Note: The sermon emphasized that the ultimate promised land is not simply a vague spiritual existence. Scripture points toward a redeemed creation where God dwells with His people in resurrected and perfected bodies. Romans 8, 1 Corinthians 15, and Revelation 21 develop this hope.

5. The sermon described Christians as living as "aliens and strangers" in this world. What does that mean—and what doesn't it mean?

Leader follow-up:

- Does being a stranger mean withdrawing from the world around us?
- How can we live differently from the world while still being engaged with the people around us?
- What does 1 Peter 2:11–12 add to this idea?

Leader Note: The goal isn't disengagement from the world. The sermon described the Christian calling as *living in this world for the sake of this world while longing for the world to come*.

CONNECT — How does it connect to our lives?
--

6. Abraham had to move forward without knowing exactly where God was taking him. Where do you find it difficult to trust God when you cannot see what comes next?

Leader follow-up:

- What makes uncertainty difficult for you?
- Do you tend to want a clear plan before you obey?
- What would it look like to take the next step of faith even without knowing the whole path?

7. Abraham lived in the present world as someone whose ultimate hope was somewhere beyond it. How can we become too settled in this present world?

Leader follow-up:

- What things can make us forget that this present world is not our ultimate home?
- How can comfort, possessions, career, success, or entertainment shape our priorities?
- What helps you keep the promises of God's future in view?

8. How can our hope for the world God is preparing actually make us more faithful and engaged in the world we live in now?

Leader follow-up:

- How might future hope affect the way we treat people?
- How might it affect the way we work, serve, parent, or care for others?
- Why doesn't longing for the world to come mean checking out of this world?

Leader Note: Abraham's future hope did not make him passive. The sermon specifically emphasized that his hope shaped how he lived—he was engaged, righteous, and influential among the Canaanites.

APPLY — What will we do with it?

9. What is one area where God may be calling you to take a step forward in faith, even though you don't know exactly how things will turn out?

Leader follow-up:

- What is making you hesitate?
- What has God already made clear through His Word?
- What would a faithful next step look like?

10. What is one way you could live more intentionally as a "stranger" in this world while still being faithfully engaged in it?

Leader follow-up:

- Is there something about your priorities that needs to change?
- Is there a worldly value you need to resist?
- Is there a way you could more intentionally do good and point others toward God?

11. How could your hope in God's promised future change the way you live this week?

Leader follow-up:

- How might it change the way you respond to difficulty?
- How might it change the way you think about possessions, success, or comfort?
- How might it give you greater courage to obey God?

Leader Note: “Faith advancing” means that future hope produces present obedience. We don't simply wait for God's future—we allow that future to shape how we live today. The key movement is hope → faithfulness → obedience.

PRAY — How should we pray about it?
--

Share briefly:

- Where do you need faith to take the next step even though you cannot see the whole path?
- Where are you tempted to become too comfortable or settled in this present world?
- Where do you need greater hope in what God is preparing?

Pray for one another:

Ask God to give us an advancing faith like Abraham's—faith that obeys His call, trusts Him when the future is unclear, lives faithfully as strangers in this world, and eagerly looks forward to the world He is preparing.

Pray also for other requests, needs, and praises mentioned by group members.