

The Life Challenge

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Series: Christmas in Perspective

Title: No Faith, No Future

Text: Isaiah 7:1-17

Speaker: Matt Ewert

Date: December 1, 2019



WARM-UP

Share one thing that stood out to you from this past weekend's worship service.

DISCUSSION

Now that the first advent Sunday has come and gone:

- Share your favorite thing about the Christmas season.
- What do you find most difficult about the Christmas season?

Read Hebrews 11:1-22

- What do you notice about the way faith is described in these verses?
- How would you describe or define faith for someone (using your own words), based on the various ways it is described in these verses?

Read Isaiah 7:1-17. In this chapter, Isaiah calls Ahaz to have faith in God to save him from the threat of his northern neighbors, rather than depend on his own wisdom or political maneuvering. This required Ahaz to "do" something, not merely "think" something.

- Describe the difference between faith that exists primarily as a cognitive enterprise (mental agreement to certain ideas and beliefs) and faith that exists as concrete practicality (the actual living out of decisions and choices that reflect one's trust in God)?
- Give examples of each.
- Would you describe your own life of faith as being more defined by what you think, or what you do?

Walter Brueggemann categorizes Ahaz's faith challenge as "a matter of quite practical reliance upon the assurance of God in a context of risk where one's own resources are not adequate."

- Are there any areas of "risk" that you feel you are facing in life?
- Are you experiencing any circumstances or situations for which you feel like your resources or abilities are inadequate?
- What faith ACTION do those circumstances require? How well do you feel you are doing in that regard?

Finish by praying for one another, specifically in regards to areas in which people have shared that they need to exercise faith.