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## What You Need to Know About Ivy League Faith and Super Bowl Faith

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## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IVY LEAGUE FAITH AND SUPER BOWL FAITH

We are told that *“without faith, it is impossible to please God”* (Heb. 11:6), but what exactly is faith? Reduced to its most basic, rock-bottom element, faith is simply believing the Word of God and the God of the Word! Actually, two kinds of faith can be observed in the Bible—*Ivy League Faith* and *Super Bowl Faith*.

Both kinds may be readily seen in the life of the Old Testament patriarch Abraham. Thus, using the analogy of football, consider:

- **Ivy League Faith** is believing God in regard to what you cannot see. Here is an example: *“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went”* (Heb. 11:8). This faith came into existence when Abraham at 75 was living in Ur of the Chaldees. *“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee”* (Gen. 12:1).

Now Abraham had never been to Canaan and had no idea where it was located. But he believed God in regard to what he could not see. Applying this kind of faith to our lives today, we believe in a place called Heaven, having never seen it, but know it is a real place because God says it is! This then is *Ivy League Faith*. But there is another kind of faith—

- **Super Bowl Faith**—This involves believing God in regard to what you cannot understand. This is the ultimate in faith. Abraham had to call upon this kind of faith after hearing God’s following instructions: *“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of”* (Gen. 22:1-2).

How could this be, he must have wondered. Isaac was his only son from Sarah. He was the long-awaited heir of the Covenant – the one through which Abraham would become the *“father of many nations.”* But if he died now, none of this could happen. So what was his reaction? *“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure”* (Heb. 11:17-19).

This kind of faith is supernatural faith! So then, dear reader, if not yesterday, or even today, then probably tomorrow, you will be called upon to exercise this kind of faith— *“Lord, why on earth would you allow this to happen?”*

But keep in mind that God will not put upon you more than He will put in you to bear you up. And also remember, that He knows exactly — to the ounce — the amount of stress you can handle. *“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust”* (Psa. 103:13, 14). *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it”* (I Cor. 10:13).

In my mind no one describes and summarizes this any better than William Cowper’s great hymn—*God Moves in a Mysterious Way*:

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines of never failing skill,  
He treasures up his bright designs and works his sovereign will.

**You fearful saints, fresh courage take; the clouds you so much dread  
Are big with mercy and shall break in blessings on your head.**

His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err and scan his work in vain;  
God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain.

**And so He will!**

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