

All Because of Faith (Hebrews 1:1-3;8-10)

Everyday we express faith in something. No one can live a single day without exercising faith. When you go to bed and sleep at night you have faith in your house that the roof won't fall down and the locks will protect you from a stranger. When you get in your car in the morning you have faith that it will start and take you to your destination. When you are on the road you have faith in other drivers that they will follow the traffic signals. When you mail a letter you have faith the postal system will get it to the right address. When you go to the pharmacy you have faith that the pharmacist will give you the right drugs. Faith is something that we practice in our daily life.

However, there are times that faith doesn't come so easily and naturally. The questions of what if constantly challenge us. Several years ago I took a trip to Korea by myself. I still vividly remember the moment I turned around toward the gate in the airport after saying goodbye to my family. As soon as I turned around and walked toward the gate, reality struck me that I am and will be all by myself taking the three weeks of journey. To be honest with you, I was scared. Will I be able to come back safely and be reunited with my family? What if I can't? Because of that fear, I needed someone to turn to. And right there and right in that moment, I sensed the presence of God so vividly. It was so vivid that I sensed that God was at my right at 45 degree up there. That's how vivid it was. Right in that moment my fear was melted away. I trusted that the trip will be meaningful and I will be able to come back safely. I had faith, faith which is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Certainly I believed in things I hope for, and things not seen.

In the book of Hebrews chapter 11, the author lists everyone in the Bible that made some unusual decisions all because of faith. Noah's decision to build the ark. Abraham's decision to leave his hometown and to head to where God directed him to go. Moses leading the Hebrews out of Egypt and the Hebrews walking the Red Sea as if it was a dry land, all because of faith. At some point of our lives we are called to leave the place that we are familiar with and start a new life in a new place, not only physically but also spiritually. Sometimes you have to leave your own family or church that you grew up. Other times you have to leave the relationships that have been significant for you but not anymore. And I'm sure back in Noah and Abraham and Moses' time as well as our own time, people asked questions of what if? But the question of what if didn't stop their journey. The anxiety didn't discourage them from following God's direction. It was all because of their faith in God.

In our journey as individuals and as a community we often ask questions of what if? What if things go wrong? What if the engine fails? What if we get lost in a strange place? What if the church doesn't go to the right direction? What if we don't have enough people and resources to support the church? Those questions at times make us wonder if this is the right path to take. However, these "what ifs" should never stop us continuing our journey. They should never stop us hoping God's hopes for us and for the church and for the world. They should never stop us being faithful to God who inspires us to see the picture that we haven't seen. We take this journey not because it always make sense for us but all because of faith, faith in God who initiated our journey and knows the directions of way in and way out and our final destination.

On the way back from Korea, I came with my mother. My mother's lifetime dream was traveling Japan. So I arranged to spend a couple of days in Tokyo on our way back. When we landed in Tokyo, it was a strange place for both my mother and myself. While we were walking in the crowd, I felt something under my hand. It was the hand of my mother. While I held her hand back, all of a sudden, I realized that it wasn't the hand that I used to hold. It wasn't the hand that held my hand to lead me the way. It wasn't the hand with such strength and conviction about life. It was rather the hand of surrender. She was letting me lead her way. She was completely depending on me. And I knew it was a hand of faith. And I knew it was time for me to turn to the one who was at my right hand side up there 45 degree all the way throughout the trip.

Somehow life is like going through a journey, new and unknown. There is a lot to explore and no matter how well we are prepared there's always part of life that surprises us. Even when we are not able to see what lies ahead, the God who called us to be on a journey knows our way in and way out. God who loves us so much will guide us the way. But it is our job to be steadfast in that journey by faith, which is assurance of things hope for and conviction of things not seen. Then someday God will lead you to your final destination safely.