

WEEKLY SERMON

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Faith in Action

Hebrews 11:1 tells us: Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

I look back over the past month and see great evidence of faith in action. Clearly Mary and Joseph's faith was tested, you could say to an extreme. In purely human terms an illegitimate pregnancy to be reconciled with Mary's betrothed, the Birth of God's Own Son in a stable! To top it off being forced to flee as refugees. Now we know all this was announced by angels or in dreams from God but wow, it certainly took faith on their behalf.

Of course, there are two other groups of people needing a mention here. First the shepherds, in effect night watchmen, normal, but what could be classed slightly dodgy working me. Sat on a lonely hillside their faith was to be tested by throngs of angels announcing the arrival of their new Messiah born locally in a stable. They could've been tempted to stay put, but no they headed straight to Bethlehem and their simple faith was rewarded. What a privilege they had to be the first to outsiders to witness the birth of the Messiah. And let's remember they are the ones who, you could say, started our Christian faith by being the first to spread the word of Jesus' birth.

On the other end of the scale we have star gazing, gentile Magi, they had the faith to follow "the science". They were so convinced that they travelled many miles to see this new-born King. They believed in Jesus as the Son of God when they saw Him on Mary's knee, there were no miracles or teaching to persuade them, no great signs of divinity to overawe them, only a new born infant helpless and weak needing His mother's care. And yet they had faith, believed what they saw, the divine Saviour of the world and they "fell down and worshiped Him."

We all as Christians have our heritage and history to encourage us, after all it's been seen and documented. We have confidence in Jesus as our Saviour and in The Holy Spirit's guiding power. So let us like the Holy Family, the shepherds and the wise men walk in faith, after all God's faithfulness is revealed through their stories. This should encourage us to walk in faith and trust God for the things we cannot yet see, knowing that in the end God is faithful to His promises.

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