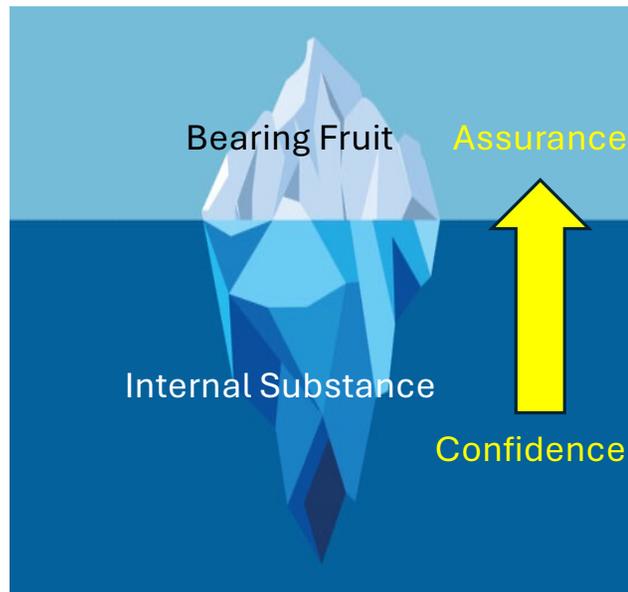




Stories of Great Influencers (1)

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What is Faith?



Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see...By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible (Hebrews 11:1-3).

Faith is a God-given ability to trust the future God has promised. It is the confidence in what is not yet visible, received, or manifested. To live by faith is to live in the present based on a future promise. This conviction drives us to act with a strong commitment.

Christian influencers look toward the future, living by faith in the promises of God.

Influential Faith

- Influential faith
 - Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1).
 - It provides profound impact through authentic, lived-out devotion rather than mere outward show.
 - To influence others, you must first be anchored in something you cannot see yet.
- Influence is certainty
 - When everyone else is confused or faking it, a true influencer is grounded in a reality that doesn't depend on outward appearances.
 - Cain had the 'evidence' of the visible world (his crops, his hard work, his physical strength). But Abel had the evidence of things not seen (a relationship with God). That is why Abel's influence lasted and Cain's turned into chaos.
- Confidence through faith:
 - Because you have faith in God's promises, you act with a level of confidence that others find magnetic. People follow those who have a conviction about the future.

Abel, the First Martyr

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- Who is Abel?
 - Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil...Abel brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor... While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him (Genesis 4:2-5, 8).
 - The name is thought to mean breath or vanity. The second son of Adam and Eve and the younger brother of Cain.
 - A shepherd who offered the best of his flock to God, his sacrifice was favored over Cain's. Consumed by jealousy, Cain murdered Abel, making him the first recorded victim of murder in the Bible.
 - The first man of faith.
 - He had not seen God yet believed.
 - By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead (Hebrews 11:4).

Abel, a Legacy Influence

- True worshipper
 - By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did (Hebrews 11:4a)
 - Cain and Abel worshipped God. Both brought offerings to God in the course of time (at the harvest time).
 - Even though both worshipped God with offering, but God accepted Abel's offering only.
- Righteous man
 - By faith he was commended as righteous (Hebrews 11:4b).
 - Abel shows a fuller sense of the claims of God to the best.
- He still speaks by faith (Hebrews 11:4b).
 - Abel's influence was not based on a long life or a successful career; it was based on the quality and heart of his sacrifice.
 - True influence doesn't die when you leave the room (or even the world). Because Abel had the substance of faith, his voice outlasted his life.

The Heart of the Offering: Abel vs. Cain

Feature	Abel's Offering (More Excellent)	Cain's Offering (The Routine)
Quality	The First-Fruits: He gave the very best (the firstlings and fat portions).	The Leftovers: He gave "an offering" (likely what was convenient or extra).
Motivation	Faith-Driven: He acted out of a desire for relationship and trust in God.	Duty-Driven: He acted out of religious obligation or habit.
Spiritual Posture	Humble Heart: Acknowledged the need for a sacrifice (the lamb).	Self-Reliant: Relied on the work of his own hands (the cursed ground)

God's
Response

The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering (Genesis 4:4)

On Cain and his offering he did not look with favor (Genesis 4:5)

The Legacy of the Dead: Abel Still Speaks

- Abel's faith continues to instruct and inspire believers today.
 - **And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead** (Hebrews 11:4c).
 - Even Abel didn't have to shout, his actions (the offering) spoke for him.
 - Death couldn't silence the substance of his faith. Although dead, his life's dedication to God speaks a message of trusting God in all circumstances, even unto death.
 - Abel's life was cut short, but the substance of his faith was so heavy that it left a permanent footprint in history.
- Influences lives on
 - Your influence lasts much longer than your short time on earth.
 - History (dates and facts) vs. Influential legacy (the continuing voice of the soul)
 - Influence is like a spiritual echo.

The Echo of Faith

- Influence starts with internal, unseen substance
 - Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1).
 - You can't give others what you don't have yourself. Before you can help your community, you need to fill your own heart with God's Word
- Influence is the sacrifice of the heart
 - Like Abel, your influence is determined by the excellence of your sacrifice.
 - Are you giving God your firstlings (our best energy/presence) or just your leftovers?
- Influence is fruit that lasts.
 - Your influence is a seed. You might not see the fruit this season, but by faith, you know the harvest is coming.

The Able Lesson:

True influence

- It never dies because God makes sure your message reaches the people who need to hear it, even after you're gone.
- History is written in ink, but influence is written in the Spirit. Go out this week and be a living sermon that is worth hearing for the next hundred years.

The influence questions

- How will history remember you?
- A couple of decades after you die, how will your descendants remember you?
- Will they remember your titles, or your truth?

The Abel Commission

- Abel reminds us that true influence is measured by the testimony of your faith. You are being sent back into your ministry not just to perform a job, but to be a Heavenly Influence.

The Call to Action

- This week, I challenge you to:
 - Identify your substance: What unseen promise of God are you standing on right now?
 - Offer your firstlings: Give God your best energy and your full presence in every conversation.
 - Speak even when silent: Let the quality of your work and the integrity of yourself be a voice that still speaks long after you've left the room.