

I Want Better

*Holding on to the promise in the space
between leaving and arriving*

Pastor Rich Saunders Jr.
ECHO CHURCH

Hebrews 11:13–16
NKJV

August 3 to August 8, 2026
SIX DAYS

There is a space nobody warns you about. It is the space between leaving what was familiar and arriving at what God showed you. You have obeyed, but you are still waiting. You have changed, but your circumstances have not caught up yet. And in that middle space, the old country starts to look attractive again. That is exactly where Hebrews finds a family who kept believing anyway.

Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob saw the promise from a distance, became convinced God was trustworthy, embraced what they could not yet possess, and refused to go back to what they left. Their faith was not measured by what they received. It was measured by the direction they kept moving. Over the next six days, we are going to learn to want better, and to keep moving toward it, even when the journey is uncomfortable and the promise still looks far off.

HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL

Each day gives you one movement of the message with something to read, pray, declare, and share. Take it slow. Read the scripture first, sit with the reflection, speak the declaration out loud, and pray the prayer in your own words. The social post is there so you can carry the word beyond your quiet time and encourage somebody else who is still in the middle space.

THE SIX DAYS

DAY	DATE	THEME
1	Mon, Aug 3	Still Believing at the End
2	Tue, Aug 4	Seeing It Afar Off
3	Wed, Aug 5	Embrace the Process, Not Just the Promise
4	Thu, Aug 6	Strangers and Pilgrims
5	Fri, Aug 7	The Road Back Is Still Open
6	Sat, Aug 8	I Want Better

Still Believing at the End

Faith that outlasts the outcome

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them.”

HEBREWS 11:13 NKJV

They died still believing. Sit with that for a second. Faith did not keep Abraham and Sarah from dying, but dying did not make them abandon their faith. They reached the end of their lives without changing their minds about God. That quietly confronts something a lot of us carry, the idea that faith is only proven when we finally get what we wanted.

Sometimes faith receives the miracle. Other times faith is what carries you when the miracle does not come on your timetable. You can stay faithful while praying for healing that has not shown up. While waiting for someone you love to come back to God. While building something another generation will finish. These believers did not die because their faith failed. They died with their faith still working.

Here is the honest balance. Not having received the promises does not mean God broke His word. It means they did not see the completed form of it yet. And we do have to be honest about the difference between a promise God actually made and a preference we just want Him to satisfy. God is not obligated to meet every expectation you have. He has bound Himself to His own character, His Word, and His purpose. Build your faith on that, and it will still be standing at the end.

PR QUOTE

“Faith is not proven only when you get what you wanted. Sometimes it is proven by what carries you when you don’t.”

DECLARATION

I will not let disappointment rewrite what I already know about God. My faith is built on His character, and it will still be standing at the end.

DAILY PRAYER

Father, thank You that Your faithfulness is not measured by my timeline. Teach me to hold on to what You have actually said instead of demanding what I simply prefer. When the outcome is delayed, keep my faith working. Let me be someone who is still believing at the end. In Jesus’ name, amen.

SHARE IT • SOCIAL POST

They died still believing. Faith isn’t only proven when you get the outcome you wanted. Sometimes it’s proven by what keeps carrying you when you don’t. Keep believing.

#IWantBetter #EchoChurch #DiedInFaith #Hebrews11

Seeing It Afar Off

Vision without possession

“...but having seen them afar off... and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

HEBREWS 11:13 NKJV

They saw through faith what they could not touch in their lifetime. That is spiritual perception, the ability to recognize what God is doing beyond what your present circumstances are showing you. Sometimes God lets you see something before He lets you possess it. That gap between seeing and having is one of the hardest places to stand.

You can see the kind of family you want to build while you are still healing from the family you came from. You can see freedom while you are still confronting old patterns. You can see purpose while your present season still feels confusing. You can see the ministry God is forming while you are still serving in a place nobody notices. Seeing it afar off means having vision without possession.

Faith does not pretend the distance is not there. Faith simply refuses to believe that the distance has the authority to cancel God's purpose. You do not have to be there yet to start becoming the person who can live there. The vision God gave you was not a tease. It was a preview. Let what you see in the distance start shaping how you live up close.

PR QUOTE

“The distance between where you are and what God showed you does not have the authority to cancel it.”

DECLARATION

God let me see it before He let me hold it, and that vision is not a tease. It is a preview. I am becoming the person who can live there.

DAILY PRAYER

Lord, thank You for what You have allowed me to see, even from a distance. When the gap between the vision and my reality feels discouraging, remind me that distance cannot cancel Your purpose. Help me start becoming today the person who can carry what You showed me. In Jesus' name, amen.

SHARE IT • SOCIAL POST

Sometimes God lets you see it before He lets you have it. The distance isn't a denial. It's the space where you become the person who can carry it. Keep the vision.

#IWantBetter #EchoChurch #VisionWithoutPossession #SeenAfarOff

Embrace the Process, Not Just the Promise

Becoming faithful before becoming visible

“...were assured of them, embraced them and confessed...”

HEBREWS 11:13 NKJV

Watch the order in this verse. They were assured, then they embraced, then they confessed. First, assurance. They became convinced the promise was reliable because the God who made it was trustworthy. Their circumstances did not support it at all, yet they decided God’s character carried more weight than their conditions. Assurance settles the matter on the inside before your circumstances confirm it on the outside.

Then they embraced it. Here is where it gets uncomfortable, because it is possible to want the promise while resisting the process attached to it. We want the healthy marriage but resist the healing it requires. We want the influence but resist the obscurity. We want the purpose but resist the preparation. To embrace the promise means you stop treating your current season as wasted time and start participating in what God is building in you.

And then they confessed, not just with their words, but with their lives. Real confession is bringing your identity and your conduct into agreement with what God said. Embracing the promise means becoming faithful before you become visible.

PR QUOTE

“Anybody can embrace the promise. Maturity is embracing the process that prepares you to carry it.”

DECLARATION

I refuse to treat this season as wasted time. If God is developing me, I am participating. I will become faithful before I become visible.

DAILY PRAYER

Father, I confess that I have wanted the promise while resisting the process. Give me the maturity to embrace the preparation, not just the outcome. Help me participate in what You are building in me, and to live like Your word is true long before anyone else can see it. In Jesus’ name, amen.

SHARE IT • SOCIAL POST

It’s easy to want the promise. Maturity is embracing the process that prepares you to carry it. Stop calling this season wasted. God is building something in you.

#IWantBetter #EchoChurch #EmbraceTheProcess #FaithfulBeforeVisible

Strangers and Pilgrims

Present, but not permanent

“...strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.”

HEBREWS 11:13–14 NKJV

A stranger was a foreigner living without the full privileges of citizenship. A pilgrim was a temporary resident traveling toward another destination. That is the posture Abraham and his family lived in. They were present, but they were not permanent. And that is how we are called to live in the world too. We work, build families, serve our communities, create, vote, and lead. But our identity is not ultimately handed to us by politics, possessions, popularity, titles, status, or cultural approval.

A pilgrim can appreciate where they are without confusing it for where they are going. We are not called to escape the world. We are called to live differently inside it. The problem comes when we start expecting temporary things to give us permanent satisfaction. We ask a career to give us identity, a relationship to complete us, and recognition to validate us. Those things may be blessings, but they were never built to carry the weight of eternity.

Notice something else. Their confession revealed their pursuit. They did not have to advertise that they were pilgrims. The way they lived made it obvious. So here is the honest question for us. Does the way I live make it clear that I am looking for something greater than what this world offers? What you consistently pursue, prioritize, and sacrifice for is what reveals what you are truly seeking.

PR QUOTE

“A pilgrim can appreciate where they are without confusing it for where they are going.”

DECLARATION

I am present in this world but not defined by it. My identity is not for sale to status, approval, or possessions. I am seeking a homeland.

DAILY PRAYER

God, help me live in this world without letting the world become the source of my identity. Let me enjoy Your blessings without asking them to carry the weight only You can carry. Make the way I live a clear declaration that I am seeking something greater. In Jesus' name, amen.

SHARE IT • SOCIAL POST

You're present here, but you're not permanent. Don't ask temporary things to give you permanent satisfaction. A pilgrim appreciates where they are without confusing it for where they're going.

#IWantBetter #EchoChurch #StrangersAndPilgrims #SeekAHomeland

The Road Back Is Still Open

Refusing to return to what God delivered you from

“And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.”

HEBREWS 11:15 NKJV

Abraham left Ur and later Haran, places tied to familiarity, family, and stability. Ur was not a terrible place. It was established and prosperous. He left what was familiar to follow God toward a place he had never seen. The danger was not that the old country still existed. The danger was that he could keep revisiting it in his mind. There is a difference between remembering where God brought you from and romanticizing it. Memory gets dangerous when it makes bondage look better than obedience.

That is exactly what happened to Israel in the wilderness. Under pressure they remembered the food of Egypt but conveniently forgot the slavery. It happens to us too. When obedience gets costly and compromise starts looking reasonable. When progress feels slow and familiar dysfunction feels safer than unfamiliar freedom. Sometimes you do not actually want your old life back. You just want relief from the difficulty of your new one.

And here is the part to sit with. They had the opportunity to return. The road back was still open. God does not always remove every exit. Sometimes maturity is having a way back and choosing not to take it. Not every open door is God's direction. Some doors are just testing whether you still believe that where God is leading you is better than where He brought you from. To be clear, this is never about staying in something abusive or dangerous. Refusing to return means rejecting regression, not staying trapped in harm.

PR QUOTE

“The availability of an exit does not mean God is authorizing your departure.”

DECLARATION

The road back is open, and I am choosing not to take it. Where God is leading me is better than where He brought me from.

DAILY PRAYER

Father, when the old country starts looking attractive, remind me why I left. Guard me from romanticizing what You delivered me from. Give me the maturity to see an open door and still choose Your direction. Keep me moving forward, not backward. In Jesus' name, amen.

SHARE IT • SOCIAL POST

There will always be a road back to the old thing. An open door isn't always God's direction. Sometimes it's just testing whether you still believe forward is better. Keep going.

#IWantBetter #EchoChurch #DontGoBack #KeepMovingForward

I Want Better

Better is defined by alignment with God

“But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country... for He has prepared a city for them.”

HEBREWS 11:16 NKJV

But now they desire a better. That phrase signals a decisive change. They did not overcome the pull of the old country just by gritting their teeth. They developed a stronger desire for what God had in front of them. That is worth holding on to all week. The answer to an unhealthy desire is not always more discipline. Sometimes it is a greater desire. When what God has ahead of you becomes more real to you than what is behind you, going back loses its grip.

But better does not always mean easier. God's better may require leaving the familiar, walking without complete information, serving without recognition, and waiting longer than you expected. Abraham's journey was harder than staying in Ur. It was better because God was in it. Better is not defined by comfort. Better is defined by alignment with God. And notice the tenderness at the end. God was not ashamed to be called their God, not because they were flawless, but because they kept believing, kept seeking, and kept moving toward Him.

Here is how the passage closes. They were seeking a homeland, but God was preparing a city. They lived in tents, but God was preparing something permanent. While they were walking, God was preparing. While they were waiting, God was preparing. You may be in a tent season right now while God is preparing a city. The tent is temporary. The preparation is not. So want better, and keep moving toward it.

PR QUOTE

“Better is not defined by comfort. Better is defined by alignment with God.”

DECLARATION

I want better, and I know better is not always easier. I will keep believing, keep seeking, and keep moving toward God, because while I walk, He is preparing.

DAILY PRAYER

Lord, give me a greater desire for what You have ahead of me than for anything behind me. When better turns out to be harder, remind me that better means being aligned with You. Thank You that while I am still walking, You are already preparing. I want better, and I am moving toward it. In Jesus' name, amen.

SHARE IT • SOCIAL POST

The answer to an unhealthy desire isn't always more discipline. Sometimes it's a greater desire. Better isn't always easier, but it's always worth it. While you walk, God is preparing.

#IWantBetter #EchoChurch #DesireBetter #HePreparedACity

A CLOSING WORD

You do not need a different promise. You need to keep desiring the better one. Keep your vision, even without possession. Keep your assurance, even without confirmation. Keep moving, even without complete information. And remember that while you are still walking, God is already preparing.

“I left because God called me. I continue because faith is carrying me. I refuse to return because I desire better. And I can desire better because God has already prepared something greater.”

Echo Church • Worship & Word • Pastor Rich Saunders Jr.