

## A Tent in the Promised Land

Heb 11:8-12



**Background:** The most intractable problems in Silicon Valley have to do with housing. Concerns about homelessness, a volatile rental market, unaffordable starter homes, and \$60 million mansions dominate headlines. The housing unsettledness of our time and place is not unique, however, and the most important considerations are not economic. We have been created to live in God's presence, our lasting home is in a heavenly city he has prepared for us. Hebrews tells us that, by faith, Abraham 'lived in a tent in the promised land' as he looked forward to the promised city - teaching us faith lessons to begin a new year.

### Sermon Text: Heb 11:8-16 (ESV)

*<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. <sup>11</sup> By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. <sup>12</sup> Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.*

*<sup>13</sup> These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. <sup>14</sup> For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.*

## Discussion Questions

### 1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you the most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

### 2. Sermon questions (pick 3)

- a. Steve told us that the world gives us this assignment, “Make the most of yourselves,” while God gives us this assignment, “Obey Me.” In many ways, this is the same as the choice between relying on yourself or relying on God. As you look back at 2021, can you remember any times where you were tempted to rely on yourself? And are there any times in your life coming up in 2022 where you know you’ll be tempted to rely on yourself?
- b. “God does not give us a blueprint for life.” How has this played out in your life? Or, when did you realize this the first time?
- c. “His ways are always better than what I had planned.” Name a time when you realized this truth in your life.
- d. Has there been a time in your life when you felt like you were transported to the city of God, when “the things of earth grew strangely dim”? (It’s ok if you don’t feel like it has happened to you.)
- e. What does it look like for you practically to live as if your real home is in heaven?
- f. As you look forward to 2022, what are you fearing?
  - What would it look like to enter into these fears knowing Jesus is present with you?
  - What would it mean for you to “fear not”?