

“Staying Intimate”

Pastor Cameron Brice | Sunday, April 19, 2020

Brief overview of the life of Abraham:

Once named Abram, Abraham was the first of the Hebrew patriarchy. Around the time that he was seventy years old he was called by God to leave his family, inheritance and homeland of Ur to a place God would show him (**Genesis 12:1**). His life was full of deep encounters with God, where he received promises concerning his legacy outnumbering the stars (**Genesis 15:1-21**). When he was ninety-nine years old God changed his name from Abram meaning, “The Father is exalted” to Abraham (**Genesis 17:3-8**). Abraham literally means the father of many nations. A year after God’s promise to Abraham his wife Sarah gave birth to a son named Isaac (**Genesis 21:1-5**). Isaac was the father of Jacob (**Genesis 25:20-26**) who was later called Israel (**Genesis 32:28**), the nation from which Jesus descended. Because of this, Abraham is known as one of the literal fathers of our faith as followers of Jesus. He is not only literally a father of our faith, but the motif of his life is a fatherly example of how we can walk in faith with God.

KEY TEXT (Romans 4:17-21 TPT): 17 That’s what the Scripture means when it says: “I have made you the father of many nations.” He is our example and father, for in God’s presence he believed that God can raise the dead and call into being things that don’t even exist yet. 18 Against all odds, when it looked hopeless, Abraham believed the promise and expected God to fulfill it. He took God at his word, and as a result he became the father of many nations. God’s declaration over him came to pass: “Your descendants will be so many that they will be impossible to count!”

1. We, like Abraham, have varying promises from God.

A. There are over 3,000 promises of rest, fulfillment of needs, forgiveness of sin, eternal life, health and healing, protection, peace, joy, victory, sonship, freedom from loneliness, strength and so on.

B. The promises of God are at odds with earthly realities.

- i. Health is at odds with sickness.
- ii. Forgiveness of sin is at odds with shame.
- iii. Prosperity is at odds with poverty.
- iv. Joy is at odds with depression.
- v. Victory is at odds with loss.
- vi. Peace is at odds with anxiety.
- vii. Sonship is at odds with orphanhood.
- viii. Protection is at odds with danger.
- ix. Strength is at odds with weakness.

C. Abraham's promise of becoming a father was at odds with infertility.

D. What principles can we take from Abraham's life, and see the promises of God invade our earthly realities?

2. "(Abraham) contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken..." - **Romans 4:18 NKJV**

A. He believed contrary to hope.

- i. The image we receive from this statement is that there were things battling against Abraham's hope.
 1. This is the nature of the promises of God being at odds with hopeless, earthly realities.
 2. There are no miracles without seemingly hopeless situations.
- ii. The promises of God are heavenly realities that are positioned on the other side of intimacy with God amidst hopeless, earthly realities.

B. Abraham had the promise, but he had to remain intimate with Sarah and God despite the hopelessness of his situation.

- i. Without becoming weak in faith he considered his own body, now as good as dead [for producing children] since he was about a hundred years old, and [he considered] the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 But he did not doubt or waver in unbelief concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong and empowered by faith, giving glory to God. **Romans 4:19-20 AMP**
 - a. "He considered his own body".
 - He did not deny the earthly reality, but he did not doubt or waver in unbelief concerning the promise.
 - He continued in intimacy with Sarah despite the earthly realities.
 - If we do not immediately see a response we cannot allow earthly realities to drive us away from intimacy, but rather deeper into intimacy.
 - The devil tries to leverage delay into weakness.
 - b. "He grew strong and empowered by faith, giving glory to God."
 - **Glorify - Doxa** – "to praise, to stand in the brightness of."
 - "Go into His courts with praise" - **Ps. 100:4b**
 - Abraham would enter into the courts of God, and then bask in the brightness of who God is.
 - He engaged in intimacy!
 - We MUST be intimate with God while we wait for the promises to be fulfilled!

Prompts:

1. Start by praising God. Praise God for what He has done in scripture. If you feel like He hasn't done anything in your life, praise Him for what He has done in people around you. Praise Him for whatever you can think to praise Him.
2. Holy Spirit, have I allowed hopeless, earthly situations to take me out of intimacy with Jesus?
3. Father, I repent for allowing these things to drive me from You instead of towards you. I ask you for your forgiveness, and for the help of Holy Spirit to engage once again in intimacy with you.
4. Holy Spirit, you are the teacher, what scriptures relate to my situation? What promises pertain to what I am going through? (If you feel unsure, google scriptures about health, forgiveness, joy, finances, peace, anxiety.)
5. Take the scriptures spoken or found and begin to draw near to the Father everyday with those promises. Pray through them. Declare them. Sing them. Think through them.