



November 10th, 2019: The Story of Redemption

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the grossest mess that you've experienced? Is there a particular kind of mess that you just can't handle?
- Eric said that God's story is a story of cleaning up mess. What mess is he cleaning up?
- **Read Genesis 15:1-3.** Abram has just gotten back from battle, and God promises that he will always keep him safe. Why isn't Abram comforted by that? Why is it such a big deal to Abram that he doesn't have a kid?
 - Describe a time when it was difficult for you to believe in God's goodness to you because something was missing from your life.
- **Read Genesis 15:4-6.** God promises Abram that not only will he have a son, but that his descendants will become as numerous as a whole nation. What is significant about Abram's response?
 - Sometimes it's hard for me to ask for help, and then when I do, I don't want to ask for "too much" help. Do you ever have difficulty receiving help, a gift, or forgiveness? How does it make you feel when more is offered than you feel like you deserve?
- **Read Genesis 15:7-10, 17-20.** Not only does God promise to give Abraham many generations, but he also promises to give his descendants a *large* tract of land (the whole country of Israel). How does Abraham respond? How do you think he was feeling?
- There is a lot of weird stuff happening here that needs a little explanation. In ancient times, a "covenant" was created when a more powerful party would promise protection to a less powerful country in exchange for something (typically loyalty, taxes, and men for the army). When this happened, the more powerful party would require the less powerful one to cut up some animals and walk through them, so that the party walking through the animals would understand that if they broke their promise, then they'd end up like the animals. What does it say about God that he would create this kind of covenant with Abram?
 - What is special about *who* walks through the animals? What will happen if Abram breaks the promise?
 - Why do you think God would change things up like this?
 - **Read Isaiah 53:3-8.** How did this end up playing out?
- Do you tend to relate to God as if He makes you walk through the animals, or as if He did? How would that look different practically?
- If God makes this kind of covenant with us, what does that say about how He wants us to relate to other people?