

FOLLOW ME AND MULTIPLY
GEN. 12:1-3; 2 COR. 9:10



CONNECT

What's the biggest risk that you have ever taken? What did taking that risk feel like?

WORD

Genesis 12:1-3 (ESV) – ¹ Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

2 Corinthians 9:10 (ESV) - ¹⁰He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

WHAT

What does the Bible say?

This passage in Genesis 12 gives us the beginning of the story of Abraham and it begins with a command to take a leap of faith for a promise of a future blessing. Abram is one of the last descendants of a dying people group. He is old and he has no children. He lives in a land where no one acknowledges the one true God, but rather worship many false gods and idols. There has been no one to teach Abram about God. There are no books or sacred texts for Abram to read to learn about following God. Yet, despite this, Abram has the strength of faith to leave everything behind and follow God into an unknown land. He trusts God to provide for him and fulfill his promises to him. His faith affirms his vision.

It took a tremendous amount of faith for Abram to believe that God would make him into a great nation. He was 75 years old and he had never had any children. He had worked hard through his life and he was settling down to enjoy the end of his life in whatever comfort he had established for himself. It must have seemed to Abram that the end was near for him. The last thing that he was thinking about was uprooting his family and relocating to a strange land, but the vision that God revealed told him to do exactly that.

Abram's obedience to God's vision for him was the beginning of the greatest story in human history. His commitment to follow God transformed the way that we interact with our Heavenly Father. It ushered in the restoration of our relationship with God.

God certainly fulfilled his promise to Abram. After many trials and tests of his faith, Abram became Abraham, the father of many. It's hard to overestimate the importance of Abraham in human history. Three major faiths, which account for more than half of the world's population, look to Abraham as the father of their faith. Abraham is a man who was not content to sit back and rest. He stepped out on faith and multiplied his life.

In verses two and three God promises that he will bless the people of the world through Abraham. He will heap blessings onto those people that treat Abraham and his descendants well and he will curse those who mistreat them. Over the years, God has fulfilled this promise and he continues to do so to this day. Even when the people turned their back on God, he continued to preserve them and bless them.

God's promise to Abraham still exists today and is the root reason for the decline and fall of many empires. When the Greeks overran Palestine and desecrated the altar in the Jewish temple, they were soon conquered by Rome. When Rome killed Paul and many others, and destroyed Jerusalem under Titus, Rome soon fell. Spain was reduced to a fifth-rate nation after the Inquisition against the Jews; Poland fell after the pogroms; Hitler's Germany went down after the holocaust of anti-Semitism; Britain lost her empire when she broke her faith with Israel. This is also one reason why the United States has been so blessed. The United States was one of the first modern nations to grant full citizenship and protection to Jewish people.

When we follow God and trust him to fulfill his promises to us, his power to multiply us and heap blessing upon us is unlimited. His calling to us to follow him is not about what we have to offer to his service. It is a powerful invitation to be present while God does incredible things. It is an invitation to be a part of the continuing story of Abraham. It is a call to see the kingdom of God multiply and to be present while God transforms the lives of people around us.

SO WHAT

What is the relevance to my life?

- What really stood out to you in today's message and lesson? What would you like to discuss further with the group?
- Notice how God says "I will" in this passage. The previous chapter in Genesis is about the tower of Babel. So here we see a contrast between the plans of man and the plans of God. Have you observed this contrast in your own life? How have God's plans differed from your plans?

- What did Abraham do to deserve God's blessings? Did he have any special skills or abilities that God needed?
- In the story of Abraham, what does God ask Abraham to do? What does God require of Abraham?
- Abraham had to leave behind the comfortable life that he was living in. He had to leave the home that his family had established for generations and go somewhere new and potentially dangerous. What empowered Abraham to take this risk?

NOW WHAT How do I apply the word to my life?



How does this lesson change the way you think about following Jesus? Why did God choose this moment to bring this lesson to you?



What has God laid on your heart with this lesson? How does understanding the story of Abraham change your relationship with God?



What does God want you to do differently this week as a result of this lesson? What will you do to deepen your relationship with Jesus and commit to following him despite the risk?

How can we help you and hold you accountable? How can we pray for you? What can we do to show our love for you this week? Who do you know that needs to hear this lesson? Who can you share it with?

