

LESSON 5 | THE BEGINNINGS

WEEK 5: DAY 1

THE THREAD

DISCOVERING THE THREAD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE BIG-PICTURE STORY OF THE BIBLE

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.” - Galatians 3:28-29

This week your memory verse speaks of being adopted into God's family. If you have come to a saving faith in Jesus, you've been welcomed into the family as one of God's children. What a cool concept! In this week's devotions, you'll be learning a little about how God started His people, the Jews, with one (unlikely) couple, Abraham and Sarah. God's plan involved calling a people to Himself, then sending a Savior through those people.

Today, memorize the verses Galatians 3:28-29.

It started with Abraham and Sarah, but Jesus was always in God's plan. This week, focus on the pairs of words as you memorize these verses (Jew and Greek, slave and free, etc.). Learning them in pairs will help the verse stick. Try saying them out loud, focusing on the rhythm the pairs create. You'll have it down in no time!

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WEEK 5: DAY 2

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“And 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.” - Genesis 12:2

Imagine for a minute that you are alone at home. To keep yourself busy, maybe you are texting a friend, reading a book, playing a video game, or just daydreaming. Then God shows up. With a booming voice, he says something like, “Stop what you are doing. You are going to leave your house and everything you know. You are going to leave pretty much everything familiar to you, pack up your belongings, and you are going to take a journey. I am not going to tell you exactly where you are going yet. Just know I will tell you when you arrive. I have a plan for you, to bless you, and all of the people in the whole world will ultimately be blessed through you as well.”

How would you react? Well, this is exactly what happened to a guy named Abram (later called Abraham).

Take a moment and read Genesis 12:1-4.

Not only did Abram have to uproot his whole life, but he was also very advanced in age. He was settled down and was certainly not expecting God to show up in this way. But look how he responds: No questions, no concerns, no wondering. As a matter of fact, Abram says nothing at all; he just obeys. He heard the request, but he also heard all the blessings He would get out of it. Abram trusts God.

It can seem scary when the Lord asks us to follow Him into the unknown. Chances are you won't have to wander around in the desert until God says, “YOU ARE HERE.” He might just be asking you to tell a friend who doesn't know Jesus what a relationship with Him looks like.

Something To Think About...

- Do you struggle to trust God? Why do you think that is?
- How would it look if you just trusted He would take care of you during your steps of faith?

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WEEK 5: DAY 3

THE THREAD

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“On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,” - Genesis 15:18

Yesterday we talked about how Abram moved quickly because he trusted God. Do you remember how we looked at our own trust? We discussed whether or not you would be willing to just take everything you own in a moving truck until He says, “You are here.”

Now imagine you arrive, and someone else already lives there. Awkward, right? If God was going to make you move half a world away, why would you show up to a place with other people in it? The Lord says, “No problem, I wouldn’t have had you leave home and come here if it wasn’t yours.” Now your trust wavers a little, and doubt sets in, so you ask: “How is this going to work?”

Read the story in Genesis 15: 7-20.

Abram is a man of trust, but he does develop doubts. However, God doesn’t beat Abram up or yell at him because he is doubting the plan. Instead, God decides to make a covenant with Abram to assure him that he is not going back on his promise.

Something To Think About...

- Do you ever doubt God’s promises? Today, take time to think about how your salvation relies on Christ’s death and resurrection and not on anything you do.

“The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised.” - Genesis 21:1

Have you ever had to wait for a really long time for something that you were super excited about? Perhaps you have been saving money little by little for a car or something else expensive. You can't wait for the moment to arrive when you will “get” that thing you have been waiting for. However, have you ever felt like maybe that day might not arrive? This is something that happened to Abraham.

Read Genesis 21:1-7.

After the covenant we discussed yesterday, God changed Abram's name to Abraham. You might remember he was 75 when he followed God's call to leave, and not long after that, God said he would have a son. After almost 25 years (when Abraham is 100 years old), the promise is finally fulfilled. That is a long time to wait! As a matter of fact, along the way, Abraham gave up and even tried to make his own plan by having a son with one of Sarah's servants. However, God hadn't given up on His promise of a son with Sarah herself.

Following God can be tough. We can forget along the way that God will not break His promises to us. When we have a relationship with Christ, that includes never leaving us, loving us more than we can ever realize, and providing for us along the way. As we look at the lives of people like Noah and Abraham, we can see that it didn't mean things would always be easy.

Yet, when we look at a man who had a baby at 100 years old that had been promised to him, we can be reminded that God does not forget when he agrees to something. We can't always claim to understand why God works the way He does, but we can trust that He will walk with those who belong to Him.

Something To Think About...

- Have you ever felt like God has forgotten about you? What is one way you know He is always with you no matter what?

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“Abraham said, ‘God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.’ So they went both of them together.” - Genesis 22:8

Think for a moment about the most valuable thing you own. What if someone came up to you and asked you to destroy it? You’d think they were crazy, right? We don’t want people harming the things that matter most in our lives. We value those things in our lives that have meaning. The more they mean to us, the more we value them. This is healthy and normal, for the most part. (If you value your stuff more than people, maybe you need to re-think your priorities.)

Read Genesis 22:1-14.

Can you imagine how Abraham had to have felt about Isaac? He had waited until he was 100 years old to finally have a son. And now, God was instructing Abraham to sacrifice the one thing that he had been waiting a lifetime for. It seems certain that Abraham’s plan was to protect Isaac, not to harm him. Yet, Abraham did as the Lord instructed.

Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice Isaac, his only son, is a foreshadowing of Jesus’ death on the cross. There would come a point in time when God would send us His only son, and He would become the sacrifice. God loves us so much that He didn’t hesitate to send Jesus in order that we might experience freedom from our sins and eternal life in our relationship with God.

God didn’t hold anything back from us. And although He instructed Abraham to do this, He ultimately stopped him from bringing harm to Isaac. As you go about your day, ask yourself if there is anything that you have been holding back from God.

Something To Think About . . .

- Could you have trusted God the same way Abraham did in this story?
- Is there anything in your life that you have tried to keep from God? What area needs to be totally surrendered to God?