

The Faithful Servant

Grace Fellowship | Carlton Weathers | Genesis 24

And if you would, take your Bible and turn with me to Genesis chapter 24 where we will continue to walk through this chapter which Corey started last week. As you're turning there... I have battled about whether to do this, but I do feel that I should.

In 2003 when Grace Fellowship began, shortly after that—I don't know exactly when—several people, myself included, began to pray that **God** would make us as diverse of a body as we could be. I think of men like Don Sprayberry who is with the **Lord**. Don used to come to my office at the little white church often before we left; he would just pray that **God** would bring people to our church that were from different backgrounds.

You as a people have been faithful in many areas to go out into our community and love people that don't look like you, don't come from your backgrounds. I often ride still by where Glenn Addie apartments used to be. Think about all the hours that Ms. Pinkston and other volunteers and myself—even through shootings, right Ms. Pinkston?—loved kids.

But I have to admit, I've been a bit frustrated. As I've prayed, I've felt my heart questioning, "Why isn't it more?" Two years ago, J.M. was playing soccer with some Muslim students right down here past Miller Gym. And Jacob Toyo walked up and started a conversation. And J.M. invited him to church and he told him, "Brother, we don't have a Spanish service." Jacob said this, he said, "That's okay, I'm just longing to be with the brothers."

Jacob Toyo is a member of this church and he has been here faithfully for two years. Jacob, thank you. And he's been faithful to bring others. And then this morning, **God** is pleased to be glorified with Carlos's testimony and with our singing in Spanish, and to rebuke a pastor's heart and say, "Do you trust **Me** to make the church what **I** want it to be?" You can't make it diverse, but **God** can.

Church, this morning Carlos was telling—or Donnie was telling—that one of the reasons Carlos and these brothers still come to our church is because of the love they feel from you. There's no small acts. There's faithful acts. To love the person next to you, to go across barriers, to take the Gospel wherever **God** will take it, and plant seeds indiscriminately and let **God** do the work of bringing **His** people to **Himself**. Amen.

Praise **God**. Praise **God**. And you say, "How in the world will **He** ever get done preaching?" Well, that was kind of the introduction.

Because you see in our passage, we have a father who knows there is a promise that there will be a great people that will come through his son Isaac, and there's all kinds of barriers

that stand between him and that reality. Abraham's an old man at this point in his life. He's been journeying with **God** for years, following **Him** wherever **He** leads.

The Bible says Sarah died at 127, which means at that time, Abraham was 137. And the story we're in in 24 comes right after the burial of Sarah, so we're to assume somewhere around that time, with his close to 40-year-old son, Abraham says he needs a wife if there's going to be a chosen people. A blessed people, a holy nation. He needs a bride.

And so what we have here is the longest story narrative in the patriarchal recording. And it's odd, isn't it? I mean, if I was choosing—not if the **Holy Spirit** put it here, right?—but if I was choosing, there's a lot more exciting things that I would have loved to expand on in detail besides this. But **God** sovereignly puts **His** word together for **His** purpose.

And what **He** does in this great chapter, 67 verses, is shows how zealous Abraham is, the servant is, to find Isaac a wife—not from just any people on the earth, but from **God's** people. "Don't take for my son a wife from these Canaanites." Why? Because the Canaanites were cursed and they were going to be dispossessed of the land. "Don't take my son Isaac back to my homeland in Mesopotamia." Why? Because **God** has already said if Isaac leaves the area, **He** loses the land. He has to stay to gain the land that's been promised to him as an inheritance. "Don't take him back. You go, my faithful servant, you go and find a bride for my son from my people. You go, you find a bride."

You know, Corey made a great point last week that many of you young singles are looking for husbands or wives. I want to tell you just as he did, but I want to remind you sternly: You are not to take wives or husbands, Christians, from this world. If you do, you will suffer the consequences. Why? Because two becoming one flesh is a reality whether the two of you at the core are the same or not. And when you join yourself to someone who is not of the **Lord**, you are joining yourself to this world, and your spirit and their spirit will go against one another constantly. Friction.

Marriage is hard. Marriage is difficult for lots of reasons. So do not be so foolish as to go beyond **God** and say, "Oh, I'll do it my way." No. Strictly Abraham charges this servant, "Do not take an ungodly woman for my son. Go back to the descendants of Shem. Go back to my brother Nahor, to where he is. Take a bride for Isaac from them." Why? Because he will not settle for just any old wife. He wants this special wife. Abraham is willing to cross barriers, he as an old man is looking out for his son, and he's sending his most trusted, oldest servant to go on the great mission of finding a bride for the bridegroom.

And now we pick up the story in verse 10. First thing I want us to see about a faithful servant is that a faithful servant obeys his master. A faithful servant obeys his master. A faithful servant doesn't decide what he will do; he listens to what his master tells him to do and he does exactly what he's told to do.

Look at verse 10. Then, after Abraham's given the instructions, told him what to do and what he's looking for, it says, "Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, taking all sorts of choice gifts from his master, and he arose and went to Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor."

Now, what we have here is an immediate obedience is what we're led to. That word "then" connecting verse 9 to 10. "Then." Like, Abraham told him what to do. The servant asked one question and that is, "What do I do if she won't come back?" He said, "If she won't come back, you're released. You did your part." And Abraham's not saying that because he thinks she won't come back; Abraham's saying that because he fully believes she will come back. He trusts **God**. "Go on, do what I'm asking you to do. If she won't do it, you're free."

Then. Like, immediate. He takes ten camels, which is wealth beyond our imagination, and gold and bracelets and jewelry and all types of finery, and he goes back to the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia. Immediate, complete, submissive obedience.

Children, you are not obeying your parents when you begrudgingly, stalling, find ways around what they tell you to do. You're not. You may eventually do what they ask you to do, but don't kid yourself in thinking that is obedience. Faithfulness is immediate. "Oh, that's what I'm tasked to do? Go do it." Now all you parents are so glad I said that, but listen—they learn their characteristics from you often. Because they see you stall in your obedience to **God**. They see you procrastinate what **God** tells your family you should be doing. And so learning from you, they're imitating.

God's servants should be obedient immediately. We see that in verse 10. Second thing I want to see is that a faithful servant prepares for his mission. He prepares for his mission. Verse 11: "And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time when women go out and draw water."

Now, he doesn't just haphazardly go into town walking around—I mean, he could have. Abraham didn't tell him how to find the girl. But for some reason, right, he goes and he makes the camels kneel down and he's standing by the well of the city, and he knows the time of day that women will be coming out to draw water.

Now I want to set a scene for you here. Ten camels, all that goes with that, plus the servants that went with him most likely, plus all of the riches that he brought to share as a bride price for Isaac's bride. He went from Canaan over to Mesopotamia. You say, "Well, that's not that big of a deal, it's a hop, skip, and a jump." Yeah, somewhere between 400 and 500 miles. It took at least 18 months to get to his destination. Now do you understand immediate, faithful servants being immediately obedient? This is a costly trip. It's a painful trip.

He brings these camels into town, he goes to the well. Well, let's talk about that for a minute. You're in your mind thinking about this brick structure, this stone structure with a crank at the top where you run a bucket down, it scoops up water, and you run it back up. Think spring coming up out of the ground, usually in the lower places of the region. This is a desert region, but there's water and it springs up. And the city has basically made it possible to get to the water. So it steps down to this ravine with water bubbling up, and that's where they're collecting water. And they're coming back up the steps.

You say, "Well, how many steps?" Well, we don't know, right? But I mean, there's examples of steps anywhere down into these cistern places. There's examples even today in the Middle East of somewhere between 80 and 1,000 steps. So this isn't an easy task that's going to be taking place here. He's come to the place where all the women are coming, it's their duty to collect water, they're walking down into this hole in the ground essentially, dipping their jars, filling them up, and coming back up with that jar on their head or on their shoulder. They're coming back up.

Okay, so that's the scene. And what does he do? He says, "Kneel all of the camels right here and we're going to wait. We're going to wait." He's got a plan, he's got a preparation for his mission. It's not haphazard. He's on a mission to find a wife and he goes to where all the young women are coming. Smart man.

But the third thing we see in the text is that a faithful servant depends on **God** in prayer. So he's got his plan and he's traveled all this long distance and he's knelt the camels down, but he doesn't trust his plan. And he doesn't trust himself.

Look what he does in verse 12. And he said, "O **Lord God** of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love—*hesed*—to my master Abraham." That word is so hard to understand: steadfast love, *hesed* in the Hebrew. So hard. Why? Because it really can't be translated by one set of words. I mean, it's kindness, it's steadfast love, it's faithfulness, it's all of these things. Radical, this word is radical. **God** has this kind of love for Abraham.

"Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water." He's praying. "Please let the young woman to whom I shall say, 'Please let down your jar and give me a drink,' let her also offer to not only give me a drink but drink for my camels. Let her be the one whom **You** have appointed for **Your** servant Isaac. By this I shall know that **You** have shown steadfast love to my master."

A faithful servant depends on **God** in prayer. He depends on **God** in prayer. Why? Because **God**, he knows, is providentially over all of this. He's on the mission sent by Abraham, but he understands himself to be working in the providence of **God** to bring about a wife for Isaac which will bring about a chosen people. He understands that. So rather than depend on his own abilities to discern who this woman is, he bows his head and prays to **God** and says, "**You** tell me who she is. I'm going to be here waiting and I'm going to ask a young

maiden for water, and let the one who answers to give me water, not only do that but offer to water all of my camels."

Again, how hard of a task is this for Rebekah? Well, no easy task. I've already told you about the steps; we don't know exactly how many, but enough, right? Enough. If I said today, "Let's climb 100 steps up and down," you'd say, "That's a lot of work, man." So let's just say the minimum, 80 to 100 steps is what she's walking down to get water. She comes back up and this man that she doesn't know says, "Could I have a drink?" And she says, "Sure." She lets it down quickly and she gives him water to drink and she says, seeing his ten camels, "I'll water all of them too." Water them? A camel when it's thirsty drinks around somewhere between 25 and 40 gallons of water. Ten of them. Let's just go on the lower end, 300 gallons of water's got to be brought up here. From all these steps. Rebekah willingly, joyfully running up and down the steps, up and down the steps—maybe she makes 80 trips with a three-to-five gallon jar, which was typical.

So he says, "I'm not leaving it to chance. **Lord**, these women are coming, I'm going to ask for a drink. The one that gives me a drink, let her also offer to water my camels." And the Bible says that's exactly what happened. That wasn't his plan, that was **God's** providence. He didn't trust himself to find a wife for Isaac. He didn't trust himself. Some of you trust yourselves way too much. Not just with choosing a spouse, but with life. The very common things of life, how many times do I not pray and ask **God**?

God's providence is being displayed here. This is not chance or circumstance. This is not random. And one of the ways we see it is through the faithful servant praying to **God**. "Oh **God**, help me. Help me discern, help me find."

Well, a fourth characteristic of a faithful servant is he depends not just on prayer but he depends on **God's** loving-kindness. Notice he stresses that in these verses. He stresses the loving-kindness, the covenant love, the friendship that **God** has with Abraham. The servant doesn't even presume to call himself a child of **God**. He says—he doesn't say, "Oh **God**, my **God**," he says, "Oh **God** of my master Abraham. **Your** friend. If **You** love my friend, which I know **You** do with covenant love, then **You** will show me who this woman should be."

He draws on the loving-kindness of **God**. He draws on the fact that **God** has intended to bless Abraham, to bless Isaac, and to bless the whole world through them, and he knows **God** will make the mission successful. He's not depending on himself, he's depending on the providential **God** of Heaven. The **God** of his master Abraham. Now that's not to say the servant isn't also a believer in **God**; he most likely is, but he shows his humility, doesn't he?

He's here on a mission not for himself, he's here on a mission for Abraham and for Isaac. And so he invokes their name with **God**. "**God**, show loving-kindness to Abraham. Don't worry about me. I've walked 500 miles in the hot desert to get here, I've done all the work, brought these ten camels." Can you imagine dragging camels across a desert? Ten of

them. And all of the stuff that comes with them. Eighteen months I've walked. A selfish person says, "Do it for me." This is a beautiful picture of what a servant really is: immediately obedient, prepares for his mission, depends on **God** in prayer, and then rather than invoking his own name, invokes in humility the name of his master and calls on **God** to show **His** loving-kindness. Show **Your** covenant love, **Lord**, by giving me a clear picture of who this woman is.

Now a side note completely extemporaneous here: Young ladies, you're going to be tempted to spend all your time dollying yourself up to look beautiful. Verse 16 does mention that Rebekah's beautiful. But the focus of the woman in this passage is her character. Her character. How say you see that? If a strange man asks you to carry this many gallons of water up and down even 100 steps—if he asked you to do that, truthfully, most of you would say no. "Here's a jar, do it yourself."

But Rebekah—see she's asked a simple request: "Could I have a drink?" "Oh yeah, let me give you this drink." "You've got all these camels? I'll go, I'll take care of your camels. You've come a long way probably." She's so hospitable. She's so loving. She's making this man feel welcome. She has no ulterior motive; she doesn't know there's a prince in another land that she's going to get to marry. She doesn't know any of that. Character.

You see the Bible stresses, ladies, that you will win the husband by the kind of character you display. So young ladies, on your pursuit for a man, pursue THE man, Jesus Christ. Let **Him** shape your character and **He**'ll take you to the man of your dreams. Men, stop looking at how beautiful she is in her cover girl makeup. That's nice, but that will fade. But what will be beautiful in the years to come is when you have a woman of high godly character. In the gates you will praise her, and in the gates they will praise you for her.

Now I'm done. I'm a dad and I've got women in my home looking for husbands and we got a lot of young singles here and I just couldn't pass it up.

Let's get back to the main thing here with the servant. The servant. A faithful servant expects **God** to be faithful. He expects **God** to be faithful. Look at verse 15. Before he had finished speaking—he's praying, before he finished speaking—"behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her water jar on her shoulder."

Now he doesn't know that. That's for us, okay, that's an editor's note by Moses. But this servant doesn't know all those facts. The young woman was very attractive in appearance, a maiden whom no man had known, she was a virgin. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up. Then the servant ran to meet her. Because notice, he sees her go down and come up and he runs to her because he's expecting **God** to answer his prayer. He literally finished praying probably like this, and he looks down and this woman's running up the steps with a jar of water, and what does he do? He runs to her. Why? Because he expects **God** to answer him. He believes when he's praying.

God's going to do this. This is no question about it. **He's** going to answer my prayer. Why? Because **He** has covenant love for Abraham and his family and **He's** going to fulfill **His** word through the most simple, the most mundane, the most seemingly meaningless moments of life. Rebekah had no idea when she left Nahor's house that day that this was what was going to happen to her. The servant got there hoping to find a woman, and **God** knew all along exactly what was happening.

And so when you're praying, faithful servant, you're not praying with a bunch of maybes, I hope—**Lord**, if **You** could find the time—listen, when **God's** children pray to **God**, they expect that **He** will act on their behalf. And it's those prayers which **God** answers. It's those prayers which **God** answers. Now **He** might not answer it exactly like you want **Him** to, right, but **He** answers your prayers.

I think about it. Many of us pray and we pray with such formality. It's so beautiful, like if someone was listening into your prayer, it would just be like, "Man, he uses big theological words, it's so awesome. It's so good." That's not what this man does. He's very plain Jane. No high language. Real simplistic. "**Lord**, I got to find a wife. Please let it be the woman that comes to the well, draws water, gives me something to drink, waters my camels. I need help, **God**." He looks down, there's a woman, he says, "There she is." He's praying and believing.

So many times we're coming to **God** with all of our big language and all of our ands and ifs and buts and nors and yets and all of that to give **God** all the caveats that **He** might not answer our prayer, and instead what we should be doing is crying out like little children when we need our Daddy. And saying, "Hey, I need help! I've walked 500 miles, I've spent 18 months, I've brought ten camels and all the caravan back, but unless **You** give me a woman, I'm lost. I got no hope, so please do it." He looks down and he expected to have an answer and there she was.

When you pray as a faithful servant, you expect **God** to work and to do it. And he shows it by the immediacy with which he runs to the girl. He runs to her. And she, of course, fulfills all of these characteristics which he has asked **God** for.

A faithful servant, number six, does not presume on **God**. He doesn't presume on **God**. When the camels, verse 22, had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a half shekel and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels, and said, "Please tell me whose daughter you are." He has just had somebody do what he asked **God** for her to do. But he's not about to make any promises for his master Abraham and Isaac until he knows, "Whose daughter are you?" Why? Because way back in the first nine verses, what did Abraham say? "Don't just take a wife for my son from Mesopotamia, take a wife for my son from my people. From my people. From Nahor. Take my son's bride from our family."

And so he has to ask because he's not presuming. All this has happened and he's still not presuming. "Please tell me whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father's house

for us to spend the night?" She said to him, "I am the daughter—" notice how this must have been music to his ears—"of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." Ding ding ding ding ding! We have a wife!

But he didn't get there by some mystical miraculous way. He got there providentially by immediate obedience, by preparing for his mission, by depending on **God** in prayer, by trusting the loving-kindness of **God** toward Abraham, by being faithful, and by not presuming on **God**. This is how he got there. His mission is success, right here. And it's got some to go, but it's success.

Seventh—a faithful servant responds to success in worship toward **God**. Verse 24: She said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." She added, "We have plenty of both straw and fodder and room to spend the night." The man bowed his head and worshipped the **Lord** and said, "Blessed be the **Lord**, the **God** of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken **His**—there's the word again, *hesed*—steadfast love and **His** faithfulness toward my master. As for me, the **Lord** has led me in the way to the house of my master's kinsman."

So he immediately responds to this answered prayer, not with, "Hey boys, I'm something else, ain't I? You all thought when we were walking all the way across there, 18 months, ten camels, nobody will be able to find a wife out of one household amongst so many people. I had a plan. Worked out perfect." He doesn't do that at all. Because there's no boasting when **God** has truly done all the work. There's only worship. He fell on his face, he bowed his head, and worshipped the **God** of Abraham who was faithful in **His** steadfast love to his master.

Too many of us when we have success in life take all the credit, and when we don't have success in life give **God** all the blame. A faithful servant says whether good or bad comes, it comes from the hand of an **Almighty** and good **Father** from Heaven. **He** will surely do it. What's **He** going to do? **He**'s going to do **His** will. I know, no, but specifically—**He**'s going to do what **He** said **He**'s going to do. Come on now! I trust **Him**. I've put my whole life at **His** disposal. I'm an old man, the oldest of Abraham's servants, and I've done all this work, but only because I know **God** will do what **God** can do. I trust **Him** and so when the answer comes, that kind of spirit doesn't take credit for any of it, it just lays out before **God** and says, "Oh **God**, how great **You** are! Look at this!"

Now that would be easier in our minds if we just stayed over there in Canaan and **God** teleported a wife over for Isaac and it didn't cost us anything. Well, then we'd say, "Whoa, miraculous! So supernatural! This is awesome!" The problem is, that's not how **God** works most of the time. **God** works through the ordinary. **God** works through the providential grace that **He** shows to **His** people in little bitty circumstances all through life. **God** can remove the problems you're facing today just like that. The fact **He** doesn't do it is because **He** loves you.

And **He** has something great for you on the other side of those trials. What is it? I don't know. It's **God's** will, though. **He** will sanctify me. That is **God's** will. And it was **God's** will for this servant. Be a faithful servant. Immediate obedience. Prepare for your mission, depend on **God** in prayer, depend on the loving faithfulness of **God**, expect **God** to be faithful, do not presume on **God**, and when **God** works, by all means, worship **Him**.
Worship **Him**.

Eighth—a faithful servant will not be delayed from his mission. He won't be delayed from his mission. Now, 29 through 33, they get to the house. Laban—now it's interesting how Moses brings Laban up, isn't it? He brings him up here in this case of Rebekah. Why? Well, there's something coming with Laban later. And Laban's got the same character all this time. He always wants to delay. He always wants to delay, it's just him, it's just who he is. Laban runs out, he sees his sister wearing all this fine jewelry with a ring in her nose, which I'm not going to get into today. But it meant that she was a chosen one and she was a bride. She was going to be a bride. So Laban sees this and he's like, "Oh whoa, what's going to happen here?" So he runs out there as any good brother would, and he hears the story just a little bit of it from Rebekah.

And look at verse 31. "Come in, oh blessed of the **Lord**. Why do you stand outside? I've prepared the house and a place for the camels." So the man came to the house, unharnessed the camels, gave straw and fodder to the camels, there was water to wash his feet and the feet of men who were with him, and then food was set before him. I imagine they're hungry, it's the end of the day. But he said, the servant, notice he will not be—he will not be delayed from his mission, not even to meet his own needs. He's not worried about himself. He's not focused on how hungry he is. His stomach can be growling, who cares? I'm here to secure the bride for Isaac. He says, "Hey, here's food, eat." And this is what the faithful servant says: "I will not eat until I have said what I have to say." I will not eat, I will not delay, I will not put it off, I will not meet my own satisfactions. I'm here on a mission for my master. And I need to say what I need to say. Well, Laban said, "Speak on." I love that. I love that. "Speak on."

He won't be delayed from his mission. Ninth—a faithful servant speaks only the word of his master. I'm not going to read it again because we've already read it, but 34 through 41 is an exact recitation. An exact recitation of what Abraham told him when they were back in the Promised Land. He just says exactly the words just like his—why? Because a servant doesn't have the authority to make alterations to the message that the master has given. The master's given a message. And the only thing that Laban and Rebekah and the whole family need to hear is the word of the master. That's it. He didn't embellish, he didn't change, he didn't think, "Well, that detail's really not that important, we'll just put that one out and get—" no, he said exactly what he was told. Exactly what he was told because that's what a faithful servant does. A faithful servant speaks for his or her master. Whatever they say. They don't speak for themselves. They don't take any authority. They just speak the word.

So, tenth—a faithful servant speaks with integrity. Verses 42 through 48. "I came today to the spring and said, 'O **Lord**, the **God** of my master Abraham, if now **You** are prospering the way that I go, behold I'm standing by the spring of water. Let the virgin who comes out to draw water to whom I shall say, "Please give me a little water from your jar to drink," and who will say to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also," let her be the woman whom the **Lord** has appointed for my master's son.' Before I had finished speaking in my heart, behold Rebekah came out with her water jar and on her shoulder, and she went down to the spring and drew water. I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' She quickly let the jar down from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels drink also.' So I drank and she watered the camels. Then I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, from Milcah whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the ring on her nose and the bracelets on her arms. Then I bowed my head and worshipped the **Lord** and blessed the **Lord**, the **God** of my master Abraham, who had led me to the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. Now then, if you are going to show steadfast love and faithfulness to my master, tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left.'"

The faithful servant speaks with integrity. He told the story exactly as it was. This is no fisherman's tale. He doesn't let the details expand out, he just says exactly, doesn't he? Isn't that beautiful? You say, "Why is Moses repeating all this? We already saw that. Why didn't he just say 'Ditto'?" Because he wants you to understand: a faithful servant speaks with integrity, with honesty, with truthfulness. All of it.

A faithful servant fully discharges his duty. The last thing. He faithfully discharges his duty. "Tell me if you plan to show loving-kindness toward my master." That's the same word. He's asking Laban and the house to act like **God**. Are you going to show the same kind of love to me and to my master? I mean, are you going to do it? If not, tell me because I'm not staying here tonight and I'm not eating your food. You've been fine in your hospitality, I appreciate it, thank you. But I'm not going to stay in the roof under the roof here unless you're doing it. If you're not doing it, I'm on my way. Fully discharged his responsibility. He was told what to do, he went on the mission, he was a faithful servant. He was a faithful servant in every way to the very end when he discharged the last moments of his duty.

It's a beautiful story that has an even greater purpose. You say, "All this is great," but the danger of teaching the Bible is that we could say to you, "Go try to be this." Some of you have heard what I've said in this passage and you're like, "I'm going to be this person. I'm going to be this person." And then the ones of you that have been Christians long enough are like, "This is impossible! I can't do this!" And that's exactly what Moses wants you to think because that's exactly what **God** wants you to think.

If you think you will get to **God** through your faithfulness and your servitude, you are sadly mistaken. The portrait being painted by Moses here lays the groundwork for his first audience. Who is his first audience? The nation of Israel in the desert who has received the word of the **Lord**. Have they not? They have been commanded to go on a mission and they

are to carry out that mission of disenfranchising all the nations of the land until they have all the land, and then they are to bring the nations to the place of worship to worship Yahweh. The whole nation is referred to throughout the Old Testament—the nation of Israel is referred to as the servant of Yahweh. The whole nation. Isaiah's favorite way to refer to the people of **God** is servant of the **Lord**, servant of the **Lord**. He does it over and over again.

Isaiah paints this beautiful servitude portrait because he wants his people to know: "This is who you must be for Yahweh. You must be a faithful servant to Yahweh." Where would he get the idea of that? Well, because when Moses went to Egypt on **God's** command to bring the people out of slavery, in Exodus 5:1-3 he tells Pharaoh why they have to leave the land: Because they must sacrifice to the **Lord**. That word is the same as service. Worship is service. You are to serve the **Lord**. They can't serve the **Lord** here. Exodus 8 he says, "We can't make sacrifices in this land because it will defile the people of Egypt. They'll hate us for it. We must go three days' journey out into the wilderness so we may serve the **Lord God**."

Moses is writing this, it's a true historical picture of one man, a servant—notice he doesn't even get a name in the Bible. I know everybody, myself included, wants to think it's Eliezer—that's fine, but that's not what the text says. For all we know, Eliezer is dead. We don't know, it's been years since he was talked about. The oldest servant, the first servant, the one charged of all the household is sent on this mission to find a bride for the promised son.

And he discharges it perfectly and it's painted out with great elaborate detail why? Because Moses wants Israel to know this is the task you've been called to. You say you want to be **God's** servant? This is what it takes. But here's the thing about Israel: Israel is stiff-necked like we are, they are failures also aren't they? They are called the servants of **God** and they are in many ways the servants of **God**. Isaiah's favorite way to refer to the people of **God** is servant of the **Lord**, servant of the **Lord**.

In Isaiah 41:8-9 he says, "But you, Israel, **My** servant," speaking on **God's** behalf. "**My** servant, Jacob, whom **I** have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, **My** friend. You whom **I** took from the hands of the earth and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, 'You are **My** servant, **I** have chosen you and not cast you off.'" It goes on with more than just Isaiah 41. It's all through the servant writings, all about the people of Israel and how they are to live as servants to Yahweh.

The portrait they have for great faithful service is Genesis 24. They want to know how to be a servant to Yahweh, they look back to Genesis 24. They read it, they memorized it, they thought through it. This historical event was laid by **God** in the longest story about the patriarchs because **He's** laying a foundation. **He** wants **His** people to be servants.

But they fail. They do not accomplish the task because Israel becomes closed off and doesn't bring the nations to Yahweh. They actually became very cut off from the other nations in an ungodly way. So Moses paints this beautiful portrait of the ideal servant. Israel fails to live out **God's** call as this perfect servant.

But that's not the end of the story. Because there came a child of Abraham, born of the virgin. Listen to how **He** described **Himself** in Mark 10:43-45. "But whoever would be great among you must be your—what?—servant. Must be your servant. And whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the **Son of Man** came not to be served, but to serve, and to give **His** life as a ransom for many."

You don't leave here saying, "I'm going to be the perfect servant so **God** will love me," you should leave here saying, "There is a perfect servant and **His** name is Jesus." **He** has been faithful. Faithful to the very end. This is how Paul described **Him** in Philippians 2:5-11, this hymn of Christ that's so beautiful. But listen to it with today's passage in the background. "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though **He** was in the form of **God**, did not count equality with **God** a thing to be grasped, but emptied **Himself** by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form **He** humbled **Himself** by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore **God** has highly exalted **Him** and bestowed on **Him** the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is **Lord** to the glory of **God** the **Father**."

We have a great servant and **His** name is Jesus. And **He** left **His Father's** side to come and have a bride, and how did **He** do it? By being the servant of all. Servant to the very basest moment of **His** life, hanging naked on a cross, carrying and bearing their sins far away from the camp so that the **Holy God** might dwell with them. Not just with them, but in them.

That is our servant. And so when you read Genesis 24, you are to see the shadows of this most faithful one who came, lived, and died to have a bride, and **He's** calling you, Church. **He's** calling you to join **Him**. **His** service is so great that **He's** calling you into the same service through **His** power, through **His Spirit**, to go out, not perfectly, but to strive in worship of **God** to serve **Him** and bring many sons to glory.