



Path to Purpose: The High Price of a Little Lie

Genesis 12:10-20

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1. “The urge towards self-preservation resides at the core of human nature.” (Sigmund Freud) When was a time, similar to Ken’s story from his time in seminary, that the urge towards self-preservation caused you to make what ultimately turned out to be an unwise choice, perhaps even that went against the values you claim to live by?
 - a. In that situation, how did you or have you experienced any of the issues that crop up when we step out of God’s will, and try solving problems with our own, reflexive, efforts at self-preservation: complexities multiplying, pain in others’ lives, a ripple effect in generations behind us?
 - b. How did the situation resolve, if it did at all?
2. Read Genesis 12:10-20.
 - a. Why did Abram and Sarai decide to venture into Egypt?
 - b. What was it that made Abram’s actions foolish?
 - c. How do we know the line between self-preservation and disobedience to God?
 - d. What would have been more faith-filled responses to the situations Abram and Sarai found themselves in?
 - e. However, despite his foolish decisions, what evidence do we see of God’s amazing grace?
3. Self-preservation is an instinct that can’t be easily disobeyed. However, when we become Christians, we commit to dying to our old selves in order to obediently follow Jesus. Read Galatians 5:13-26.
 - a. In this passage, the apostle Paul contrasts a life fueled by self-preservation (our old, sinful natures, “the flesh”) with a life fueled by the presence and power of God’s Spirit, which resides in every Christ-follower. Contrast the works/acts of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit.
 - b. What is the difference between an act/work and fruit?
 - c. Practically, how can we die to ourselves? How can we resist our instincts in order to obediently follow Jesus?
4. The good news is God isn’t afraid of our mess-ups. He grants us more grace than we ever deserved. Because through Abram will come a son, named Jesus Christ who will never sin but yet will die on a cross to take away the sin and the punishment we all deserve so that when we put our faith in Him, the son of Abram – Jesus Christ – we become a child of God, and just like Abram, we get to walk with God. Read Acts 3:19-26.

- a. According to v. 19, what are the two components of true repentance?
- b. What is the result of repentance?
- c. How have you experienced confession and repentance counteract the negative effects of sin and disobedience?

Challenge: What situation are you in right now where you are feeling the strongest temptation towards self-preservation tempting you to make unwise and ungodly choices? What part of your life are you trying to control instead of trusting in God? What do you need to do to course correct? Who do you need to come clean with so that you can receive freedom and forgiveness?

Prayer: Lord, there are moments in life in which I am overwhelmed, scared and doubtful. In those moments, my instinct is to run, or hide, or fight, rather than turn to you. Help me, in my moments of unbelief and fear, to trust in you and your promises. Remind me of your unfailing presence and your steadfast love. Teach me to walk in obedience, even when my instincts demand I run away from you. Lord, I am thankful that, even in my moments of doubt and disobedience, you never waiver in your love for me. May your abundant grace and love continue to transform me into a new creation every day. Amen.

STUDY DEEPER

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/lord-help-my-daily-unbelief>