

This guide is an invitation to follow Jesus with greater purpose and hope. It will help you to explore the scriptures and challenge you to live out your faith. Each week we'd love for you to think about how you relate: **Up** (with God), **In** (with church) and **Out** (with neighbors).



Weekly Questions:

- How is God getting my attention? For help, think about these areas:
- How are you living up with God?
- How are you living in community with other followers of Jesus?
- How are you living out on mission with your neighbors?
- What are you going to do about it?

From Garden to Garden: Calling 1 Genesis 12:1-9

- **The Call to the Unknown: Listening Over Haste.** In Act 3 of our journey, God launches a rescue mission in the ruins of human crisis by calling specific individuals to carry God's restoration to the world. God calls Abram to leave his country, his people, and his comfort zone to follow God into the unknown. True calling is an invitation into a deeper way of living that requires us to pay attention to our inner life. What is the core impulse or work in your life right now that you feel you "cannot not do" if you are truly living out your own identity? Which of the calling-drowners (haste, overworking, boundary confusion, mistaking busyness for godliness) is most active in your life today? What familiar comfort or dynamic of personal "security" might God be calling you to leave behind in order to discover who you are becoming?
- **Instrumental Blessing: Shared, Not Hoarded.** God's promise to bless Abraham is bound to a relational mandate: "you will be a blessing." In the economies of God, blessings are strictly instrumental rather than exclusive. They are intentionally given to be distributed generously to the world, not resources to be hoarded out of a survivalist mindset or an elite sense of spiritual exceptionalism. When a community of faith forgets this, focusing on its chosen status to the exclusion of outsiders, it corrupts its identity and becomes part of the world's fragmentation. True biblical blessing (*baruk*) means proactively praising and seeking the highest good for the other across political, economic, racial, and neighborhood divides. How do you distinguish between an "exclusive" view of God's blessing and an "instrumental" one in your daily practice? In what areas of your life (finances, emotional energy, unique talents, safe spaces) are you most tempted to hoard resources rather than share them as a conduit of blessing? What would it look like to extend *baruk*—seeking the absolute best and actively honoring—to someone who falls completely on the opposite side of your political or cultural worldview?
- **Running With The Wind: The Diminishing of Harm** The historical ancient covenant promise that God will "curse those who curse you" is frequently misread as an act of divine, lightning-bolt vengeance. In the Hebrew language, to curse (*qalal*) translates to making something small, lightweight, or insignificant. God's curse acts as a boundary-marker that diminishes the ultimate impact of destructive choices so they cannot permanently destroy what is good, making room for restoration. God is a powerful wind moving in a definitive direction to bring goodness to creation. Resisting His movement by sowing malice or division is like running directly into a blinding gale. Where do you currently feel the exhausting friction of "running into the face of the wind" in your spiritual life or primary relationships? How can you practice a holy, *qalal*-shaped response to toxic or destructive dynamics around you by intentionally withholding your affirmation and attention from things like gossip or

manipulation? Think of the Olympian Eric Liddell's words: "When I run, I feel his pleasure." In what regular actions or natural strengths do you most clearly sense the pleasure and alignment of God?

- **Practice: Living Sent**

To follow the calling of Abraham means stepping actively into spaces of blessing. This week, lean intentionally into the direction the Spirit is blowing through these daily habits:

- **The Haste De-escalation Audit:** Identify one pocket of your day driven entirely by unreflective busyness. Carve out 15 minutes of intentional stillness to silence all electronic devices, slow down your breathing, and listen to what your life and God's Spirit are trying to tell you.
- **Proactive Baruk Expression:** Identify a person in your "Out" circle (a neighbor, a coworker, or a stranger across a boundary line) who may feel invisible or small. Reach out to them with a specific, tangible act of encouragement, service, or praise that honors their divine identity.
- **Regular Altar Building:** Abraham built altars at every step of his physical journey to ground himself in worship. Identify a significant change or transitional space in your week (a new task, a difficult meeting, or an evolving routine) and dedicate that specific location and moment to God through a deliberate prayer of surrender.
- **Where is God inviting you to step out of your comfortable spaces and become an instrument of blessing this week?**