**God’s Promises & Blessings**

Genesis 12:1-3 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. 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.  I 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.”

God’s promise to Abram (Who’s name will later be changed to Abraham) had multiple components, including the promise of many descendants, divine protection and the promise that through Abraham’s descendants all nations would be blessed. But the first thing Abraham had to do was to obey God’s call.

*Genesis 12:4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him;*

We are told in Hebrews 11:8 *By faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out to the place which he was to receive for an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he went.*

This was probably no easy step for Abraham to leave his family and everything he knew behind to go someplace he knew nothing about.

**🡪the first step in receiving God’s blessing is to obey his Calling**
Abraham was convinced that God was able to do what He had promised and he made the choice to do what God told him to do. If Abram had chosen not to go, God would have found someone else and we might be reading about Johnny, the father of nations.

Now when Abram was around 70 years old he received this promise and he still had no children. Latter Abram became impatient and tried to take things into his own hands (As we often do) and had a son name Ishmael with his wife’s servant. Even though Abraham messed up God still renewed his promise!

**🡪When we mess up God is there with mercy and grace**

Genesis 15:4-6 And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.” And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

 At 90 years old God told Abram:

Genesis 17:4-5 “Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

After years and years of waiting for God’s promise, Abraham had a son. Abraham was over 100 years old when he finally had Isaac.

His promised son had finally come. Abraham had waited a long time for this son and loved him dearly.

Have you ever had to wait for a promise? Did you have to waited for months or even years? Remember when you were a little Kid and your parents would promise you something exciting and it would seem like years for it to come to pass when it was only a few days or weeks.

In this generation people find it hard to wait more than a few hours much less days for anything. It seems like an eternity to cook that chicken pot pie in the microwave, doesn’t it? Imagine if you had to wait for over 25 years for a promised blessing. I am sure there would be times that you would think that God had forgotten about it and that it would never happen. Just the anticipation of waiting would be overwhelming. But when it finally came it would be amazing. You would love and cherish that blessing as Abraham Loved and Cherished his son Isaac.

But we don’t always have to wait years for God’s blessings. God blesses us all the time. Every day is a blessing. But when we do receive a Blessing, any blessing, we need to be careful that we do not put the blessing before the blesser. For example, if God blesses you with an amazing talent (Sports, Art, business) and then you let that talent become more important than spending time with God. The next thing you know you have put God in the back seat and the blessing up front.

You may love the blessing. It may change your life. It may be the most amazing thing ever. But we have to keep in mind that the blesser comes before the blessing. We find that God even tested Abraham to make sure that was not the case:

Genesis 22:1-6 Sometime later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!” “Here I am,” he replied. Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

God calls Abraham to give up the very blessing he has waited so long for. Abraham knew God’s promises to make him a great nation, to bless all nations through his decedents but now God was calling for his one and only son. God was calling Abraham to trust him!

Genesis 22:9-14 When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.“Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.” Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ramcaught by its horns.

God tested Abraham to see if he loved the blessing, Isaac, more than the blesser (God).

* **We need to ask ourselves this same question: Do we love the Gifts more than the Giver? The Blessings more than the blesser?**

Abraham named the place of the sacrifice “Jehovah Gyra” meaning God provides. Many times, God will not provide a new and greater blessing until you are willing to place the current blessing at his feet.

* **You have to be willing to give up what you have, to receive the blessings God has.**

Abraham could not see the ram in the Bush till he demonstrated that he was willing to give up his beloved Son. Once Abraham showed he was willing to give up the blessing for the blesser then God provided a solution. Many times, we are seeking a solution to a problem and God has the solution but is asking us to give the problem to him and then, and only then, will he provide the solution. This way we know the solution has come from God and that we ourselves did not resolve the situation. We need to realize all blessings come from God.

# James 1:177 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

 Are you showing up at church today looking for a blessing or are you here searching for the blesser. We need to make sure we are putting the blesser before the blessing. It is so easy to get wrapped up in the things we want and forget about what God wants for us.

* **Ask for God’s presence not just his presents**

If we look at the story of Abraham from Isaac’s perspective, we can see a picture of our relationship with God. We are on that mountain ready to be a sacrifice for all our sins but God provides a solution he provides the scapegoat which is Jesus Christ.

If we look at it from Abraham’s perspective, we see that sometimes God can give us a promise but then calls us to wait and have faith that he will provide. Only God knows when we are ready to receive that blessing and he may call you to give up something to receive something greater.

* **Sometimes God has to take something you have to make room for something you need**

The Bible does not tell us whether the long wait, for his promised son, was due to his impatience but the bible does have examples where a lack of faith caused delays in receiving the promise such as the children of Israel refusing to take the promise land so they had to wait 40 years in the wilderness.

If you hold onto what God has told you and walk through the doors that He opens for you, things will work out. Stay focus on Jesus and trust in Him and do not let fear and unbelief hold you back. You do not have to understand where he is taking you or why. Just know he will bless you when you get there.

* **If we want to see God move you need to take the first step in Faith**

Many of God’s promises come with an 'If you will do this, then I will do that' For instance with Abraham he said

Genesis 12:1-3 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. **And I will make of you a great nation**…

We see this in many of God’s promises

2 Chronicles 7:14 **'IF** My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, **THEN** I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land'

Psalm 37:4 **Delight** yourself in the LORD, **And He will** give you the desires of your heart.

Proverbs 3 :5 **Trust** in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding. In all thy ways **acknowledge** him, **and he shall** direct thy paths.

Maybe God is waiting for you to do your part so he can do His part.

Many times, in my life I did not understand what the Lord was doing or why. I just had to take that next step and trust that the problem was going to work out and time after time it did.

 But There have been other times where I could not wait and tried to do things on my own and failed miserably but the greatest lose was those times where God tried to give me a blessing but I was unwilling and untrusting to let go of what was standing in the way. I let fear and doubt ruin the very blessing God was trying to give me.

Sometimes we will try, like Abraham, to make the blessing happen outside of God’s time. We will think “I am ready” and wonder what is God waiting for. We will start **trying** to do all the right things: Study our bible, pray Persistently, remove all the sins. Doing everything we can think of to prepare for the blessing. But it is when we think we are righteous and ready that we fall far short of God‘s grace and blessings.

**It is when we feel unworthy that we are closest to his blessing**. If you have sin in your life don’t try to remove it on your own strength give it to Jesus and just be willing to let it go then he will lift you up. If God has called you to do something do not try to get there on your own strength let it go so God can get you there on his strength and by his grace.

Gideon wasn’t ready for what God called him to do, neither was Mosses, Joseph, David or any of the disciples … God had to wait till they were humble before he could use any one of them.

What things are most important in your life. Are you willing to lay them before your lord and savior if he asks you to? **Don’t think he won’t ask because he will?** If you are putting something before him he will ask for it. But when you are willing to let it all go for Christ then the greatest blessings will come!!!!

**Receiving God’s blessings**

Luke 5:5-8 One day as Jesus was standing by the see of galilee the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. He saw at the water’s edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.” Simon answered, When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So, they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!”

# Peter was an experienced fisher man who had a bad day fishing. Then this man Jesus, a carpenter, comes along and tells him how to catch fish. Peter could have let his pride take over and said “I know what I am doing and I can honestly say there is no fish out there to catch right now.” But Peter put his pride aside, looked past what He thought he knew, and acted in faith to what Jesus was telling him to do and was blessed for it.

# Something to think about: God told the Israelites to go in to the promised land but they refused and had to wander in the wilderness for forty years.

# Have you ever felt God was calling you to do something but you rationalized it away? Maybe saying things like “that will never work”, “they will never listen” or “I could never do that!” Have you ever stood in the way of something Jesus was trying to do in you or through you?

# Sometime we let what we think we know keep us from achieving something that God already knows. Basically, we second guess God.

# 1 Corinthians 1:25-27 For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength…God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

# If God ask you to do something you need to do it no questions asked, put aside all your objections and just do it. But we all know that is easier said than done.

**If you want to see God move in and through you, you need to take the first step in Faith. You don’t need to know the whole plan.**

# Think about all the things you could have accomplished if you just did what God asked you to do. The thing with God is if you don’t do what he calls you to He will find someone else who will and bless them for it.

# Remember Esther 4:14 where Mordecai told Esther “if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise from another place… And who knows but that you have come to your position for such a time as this?"

# If Esther had not stepped up we could be reading a book in the bible called Susie or Becky….

# Maybe God has put you right were you need to be, with the capabilities you need to have, right now, to fulfill his calling.

# So now Peter is on His boat and Jesus tells him to throw out his net. Peters response “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”

# When Jesus calls us to do something it usually requires an act of Faith on your part and it may make no sense to you?

# “Peter is basically saying this isn’t going to work but for you LORD…”

# If Peter hadn’t listened to Jesus, he would have missed the blessing. This wasn’t a small insignificant blessing either. We are told in Luke 5:6-7 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.”

# When Jesus calls you to do something it usually brings a blessing when and if you follow through on it. It might not make any sense to you at the time but that is how God works – He requires faith!

# The Disciples could have been worried about the nets breaking or their boats sinking but instead they focused on the blessing.

# Luke 5:8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!”

# If God is blessing you don’t look around at what could go wrong look at all that could go right! When the Lord does something, He doesn't do it half-way.

# Peter immediately became aware of who he was: a sinner and who he was in the presence of: God. When Jesus comes into your life you need to come to that point where you recognize who Jesus is and who you are in his presence. And when we recognize who He is there is only one response: We find this in verse 11 where we are told that Peter and his friend immediately pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed Jesus. (Luke5:11)

# The correct response to being in God’s presence and receiving His blessings is giving Him the glory and following Him!

# Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

# After this the disciples continued to follow Jesus and saw many more miracles. They even followed Him through persecution and death.

# Once you witness the blessings and miracles of God there is no turning back

### [Exodus 33:14](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+33%3A14&version=ESV) And he said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”