



LOVING JESUS, LOVING PEOPLE, PLOWING A COUNTER-CULTURE

TEXT: Genesis 12

MAIN IDEA: God calls imperfect people to trust him into the unknown.

LEADERS:

- If your group volunteered for a date to provide a meal for Lighthouse Pregnancy Resource Center, remember to keep working through the details with them. Look for the email I sent yesterday to leaders who volunteered.
- Signups are now available to join in our churchwide Community Engagement Project on for October 23. This is a day when we will all will join together to serve our various ministry partners in the area. To sign up, visit the digital bulletin on our website, where we will pair you with a ministry based on your skills, etc.
- We're baptizing right now. If you're a Christian but haven't been baptized, sign up through our digital bulletin.

GETTING STARTED:

- Watch this week's Community Extras Video.
 - **Icebreaker:** What has been the most rewarding thing for you about being part of a community group, either now or in the past?
 - **Opener:** What did you take away from the sermon this week?
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THE CALL OF GOD

Read: Genesis 12:1–3

📖 In the sermon, Ryan said that God's call in our lives always requires us to leave something behind. What has God challenged you to leave behind for the sake of following him? What is he challenging you to leave behind right now?

📖 Name the things that God promises to Abram in these verses. What strikes you as particularly important or interesting?

🧠 How do these verses speak to someone who feels that in the Old Testament God only cares about Israel?

🧠 Read Galatians 3:7–9. Why does Paul call Genesis 12:3 "the gospel"?

📖🧠 Read Jesus' words in Mark 10:28–31. How do Genesis 12:1–3 and this passages from Mark speak to a person who feels depressed about the call to follow Jesus, that it is only a call of suffering and loss, and a forsaking of all things good in our lives?



AN IMPOSSIBLE PROMISE

Read: Genesis 12:4–9

The promise to give Abram’s offspring the land of Canaan (v. 7) is absolutely huge in Genesis and the rest of the Old Testament. But the promise is also puzzling, because the first thing we learned about Abram and Sarai’s marriage is that they are old and have no children of their own due to infertility (11:30; 12:4). So, when Abram initially heard this promise, it would have made very little sense to him. Nevertheless, we see Abram repeatedly worshiping the Lord when he enters the land (vv. 7–8).

-  What are some things that God has promised you that you don’t understand?
-   Why is God worthy of our worship, even when we don’t understand him or his promises?
-  What is the significance of the comment in verse 6, “At that time the Canaanites were in the land”? How would you apply that to your life?

OFF TO EGYPT

Read: Genesis 12:10–16

The land of Canaan is utterly dependent on rain for its prosperity. When it didn’t come, famine was often the result. Egypt, on the other hand, had a more dependable source of water in the Nile River, which made sojourning there a logical solution to famine in Canaan.

-   How is this famine a challenge to Abram’s faith, especially in light of the promises God has already made to him?
-  In what ways does Abram display a lack of faith in these verses? What purpose does a story like this serve in the bigger story about Abraham, whose life is often portrayed as one of exceptional faith?
-  What is a circumstance that God brought into your life that made it hard to trust him? How did he help you work your way through that?



A SHAMEFUL RETURN

Read: Genesis 12:17–20



In what ways did Abram's lack of trust work against what God had promised him in 12:1–3?



It's hard to avoid the conclusion that Pharaoh seems to have shown more integrity than Abram during this ordeal. Why is it important for us to be seen as people of integrity before the eyes of an unbelieving world?



How does God show himself to be faithful, despite Abram's lack of trust?



When was a time that God protected you from the consequences of your own faithlessness?



Clearly the writer of Genesis wants us to see that Abram was not perfect and that he failed God, even after displaying such extraordinary trust just a few verses earlier. While this reminds us of the importance of God's grace, it is sometimes tempting to use stories like this to justify our own faithlessness ("Abram failed God, so surely it's okay for me to do . . ."). How can we guard ourselves against using God's grace to excuse our own sin?

PRAYER TIME

Thank God for blessing the entire world—including you!—through Jesus Christ, the offspring of Abram.

Pray for the boldness and faith for at least one thing that you know that God wants you to do, but that you are afraid to do.

Thank God for protecting you from the consequences of your own faithlessness.