

**In the Beginning...Abraham**  
**March 18 & 21, 2010**  
**Genesis 12-17**

God always keeps His promises, even when we can't!

**Genesis 12:1-3 - Promises from God**

**1) The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you.**

- about 400 years since Noah
- When the world was corrupt, God chose Noah and destroyed
- When the world was again filled with pride God scattered and now he has chosen Abraham
- This is a command! He must sever 3 distinct ties:
  - His homeland
  - His relatives
  - Even more dear...His Father's family
- Abraham is about 70
- To a land that has not been revealed...at least Noah got a plan!
- God say's "Go" to Abram and doesn't fill in the details of where...just take that first step.
- Even as adults...we don't like uncertainty...the older I get, the less spontaneous I am!
- Jump in the car and go! Now, I have to know where I'm going, when I'll get back, when we will eat, is there a Starbucks close by?

**2) I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.**

- The first three things compensate for leaving and going:
  - make you a nation - instead of staying home
  - bless you - since you are leaving comforts & joys of home and family
  - make your name great - since you've left your father
- a blessing to others!
  - Tim always says I'm his blessing...
  - not just the one who is blessed, but the one through whom people will be blessed

**3) I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”**

- I will tell you that if you read the story of Abram, you will see this take place...even when he is wrong, where he has lied...those who treat him with contempt and cursed, those who treat him well are blessed.
- ALL the families on earth will be blessed through you!
  - How?
- There is a progression to God’s plan for humanity! To save us! To make us His own!
- Chose Noah & destroyed the world, Noah and the Ark a picture of Christ...then with pride people once again begin to disregard God and gather into on area on the earth (Tower of Babel) and God confuses their languages...and scatters them. Now he has chosen 1 man, to lead a nation...Abraham would eventually have Isaac, Isaac would have Jacob, Jacob would be called Israel...whose twelve sons would be the 12 tribes. And out of Abraham and his descendants, out of Israel would come the ONE man who would save us all, Jesus Christ. It would be through Christ that all the families on earth would be blessed!

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**Genesis 15 & 17 - A Contracts and Covenants with God**

**Read Genesis 15**

- God makes these promises and vs. 6 simply states, **“And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.”**
- That sounds so familiar
- Don’t ever confuse yourself by saying that the God of the OT is different than the NT
  - He is looking for those who trust and put their faith in Him
  - Not that they get everything right! Not that they work themselves into His favor
  - FAITH!
  - For Noah it was an Ark, for Abram it was leaving his land...faith is not a path to and easy life...but it is the path to blessing.
- Vs. 8 - **“How can I be sure?”**
- Possessing the Land, God’s Promises, descendants...how will I know for sure?
- The contract with God
  - In those days, you didn’t come to the table and sign on the dotted line.
  - This was a blood or life contract
  - The two parties would sever the animals in half and walk through them together as a bond and agreement to one another two the conditions of the promise

**Read Genesis 17:1-14**

- God's promises revolve around Abraham having many descendants, generations after generations...Abraham is 99 years old! His wife Sarah...90 years old!
- Not only their age, but what does God command they do to bind the covenant...cut away part of the area that impacts the promise of children!
- **17:15-27**
  - What a difficult day that must have been, no frozen peas.
- What is God trying to prove here? Their age? This circumcision?
  - IT IS NOT UP TO YOU!

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### **Jesus is the Promise**

- I can't think of a better way to end this series, "In the beginning..." and enter into our next series as we look at Jesus with Palm Sunday & Easter coming up.

- Abraham was given promises, Jesus is the promise:

Here's why:

1) Abraham left his father's house, so that he could be blessed and be a blessing. Jesus left His Father's House, so that He would be a blessing by being cursed!

- The contract with God & Abraham
- Galatians 3:6-14

2) Abraham was promised a child. Jesus is that child!  
- Galatians 3:15-22

### **What do we do?**

1) Give God your heart!

- Stop believing that you are doing God a favor by...
  - being good
  - working hard
  - coming to church
  - reading your bible
- We get caught up in this cycle of trying to please God by looking good, doing good, the right things...what God really wants is your heart!
- **Romans 2:28-29, "28) For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision. 29) No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by God's Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people."**

- Does God have your heart? (take a moment)

**2) Accept no substitutes!**

- White Mills Christian Camp / Fairdale Worship

- Don't let preferences keep you from connecting with God, through Christ

1 Timothy 2:5 & 6, ***"5) For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. 6) He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time."***

- The last 2 weeks, Noah and Abraham found themselves in strange, ever-changing, ever-moving environments...yet they still connected with God. They still gave their hearts and lives to him.

- Jesus is who brings you to the presence of God, accept no substitutes!

If through this series in Genesis, you've learned nothing...I hope you see how much God loves you, the cost at which HE went to redeem you, purchase you, save you! His plan is amazing.

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Close by **reading Ephesians 1:3-8**

- Prayer