

Our Solution Promised: Abraham

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[0 : 00] How you guys doing? Good? Good? How you guys doing? Good? Okay, we have competition. How are you guys doing? Okay, this side much better. That's so Hong Kong, right?

Hey, so we are continuing this. Let me share. You know, I get up here sometimes and I talk about things going on in our lives with our kids. And I do it because I just want you to know us and I think we're a family and we're sharing things together and we go on this journey together, right?

And so, and I share a lot about just I think as a father and as a husband, God uses these things to just show me my need for him, right? Shows me how I don't always have my act together like I want to portray it in front of everybody.

And I just continue to see his grace and mercy lived out in our lives. And so this, so I talked last week about really blowing it and I was like, okay. So this week we, Christina and I were putting KK to bed. It was Thursday night.

And so for about a month, God has, I think, just been talking or speaking to KK. He goes, KK's eight. She's our youngest. Please don't go up and talk to her after this. But I want to share it because it's, I think it's a family thing.

[1 : 12] And for about a month, he's been talking to her about just Christ and her need for the gospel and her heart is broken and all these things. And it precipitated from this idea only for about a month, even though we've been doing this for about four years, that she comes up with us as a family and we take communion together and we haven't let her take communion.

And so she just started asking questions about what communion is about and how does that play out in her life and why can't she take it? You know, so there's this selfishness there, but there's this wonder of what's it all about.

And so we were able to just sit down and, you know, me being the pastor, I want everything to be perfect and just right, right? So, you know, if you're a pastor's kid, whenever someone asks you a question and you don't know the answer, the answer is always Jesus, right?

Even if it's a mathematical problem, you say Jesus, right? I'm excited to pastor's family, that's okay. So I've been pushing her off, saying, well, let's think about this. Pray about it. Let's talk about it. No, let's think about it.

Talk about it. And so this Thursday, we were able to come together and she just, yeah, she just wanted Christ into her life. And we prayed right there and she came into God's kingdom.

[2 : 19] So it's pretty humbling, right? So you're sitting there, got to go. And she goes, I want me to get this right now. So before, God was outside of me, yes. But now he's inside of me, right? I said, yes. She goes, well, that's a good thing, isn't it?

I said, yeah, that's a very good thing, right? And so we wanted to share that with you guys. I think as a family, we go on this journey together, right? And we do things together. And you don't know it, but you've had an input into her life as you've touched her, met with her, encouraged her, taught her in these classes in amazing ways.

And so I think as a family, we all celebrate together. We do things together. So thanks for being faithful, right? So let me pray for us.

Father, we thank you for your faithfulness. We thank you for your son who's come into our lives. We thank you for the power of your spirit to open up eyes and hearts when we're far away and we're dead.

Just humbled by your mercy and your grace. Thank you for KK. Pray for all the other little kids here, Lord. Whether we know it or not, they don't just have one set of parents, but they have 300 sets of parents.

[3 : 37] And the words that we say and the encouragement in the classes we teach. And just the pat on the back and recognizing them and getting down on their level sometimes. To talk to them in the face is you use all those things.

And so we're all on this journey together as a family. Seeing your mercy and grace. And we just send all of you. Father, pray for us as a family that we wouldn't be so consumed sometimes to make our kids successful in this life.

Giving them the best education and the best tutors and all these things. Which these things are important, but that we wouldn't be so obsessed with those things. And we'd forget about the next life and the spiritual life.

And we'd leave our kids in a deficit because they never saw your son in our life. And we never talked about him. And we never brought them to church. And so we just thank you. We pray that we would be a well-balanced family.

Pointing to you in this world and in the next. And we pray that our kids would come to you at an early age and they would do mighty things for your kingdom. So Father, we love you.

[4 : 41] We desperately need you. Pray these things in your son Jesus' name. Amen. Okay, so we've been looking at this story. It's God's story. It's our story. We are in the fourth week of it right now.

We've learned that the Bible is this complete book. And at the center of this book and all around this book. And it permeates all the pages is God. And God's story is creator. And he's pursuing us. And he's pursuing his creation. He's pursuing you and me. He's pursuing little kids because he wants to bless them. He wants to bring them into the family. We're still in the book of Genesis. Whether you believe it or not. We're at Genesis chapter 12. And we're looking at this idea of Moses because he's writing this book. And he's doing it as a reminder to God's people. Because God's people have just come out of Egypt after 400 years of bondage.

And they're about to go into this promised land. And so God speaks through Moses. Moses writes down what God is telling him, what the Spirit is telling him. And he writes out this story of creation. And all amongst this story is this promise of God's faithfulness.

[5 : 42] And he's good and he pursues. And he comes out. And you see that we're broken and we're goobers, right? Goober's a Texas word for someone who doesn't have their act together even though they think they're really cool.

And we're goobers. And so we see in the beginning that this story begins in this perfect garden where God created this place called Eden. And he established his rule, his word by his law. And he creates his people, us. He creates us. And he places us in community. And we saw that our parents disobeyed and they went against God's rule that God gave them a choice to follow him or not to follow him.

But they sought to seek their own identity. And they turned their back on God because they wanted to be their own person. And we saw that everything was fractured and brokenness enters into everything.

Brokenness enters into our hearts and into our lives and into our creation. When we're broken and we can't see God properly, then we don't see ourselves properly because everything in his creation is defined by him.

[6 : 43] And if we can't see him or understand him or see him, then we can't define ourselves. We can't define others. We can't define creation. All these things are broken. And we learned that sin is always present.

It's crouching at our door. And we're struggling with this as we go on this journey. We're struggling with God's goodness. Is he really good? And we try to do it on our own. I love how C.S. Lewis puts it.

He talks about how we entered into the shadows. That we're in this shadow land and these shadows cover us. And it's difficult to see the light because we have shadows everywhere. And we see that we're in this story that man is kind of spiraling away in our brokenness. We're spiraling downward. And in the midst of this, we see that God is pursuing us. He's just kind of diving headlong into these things.

And all the while, we're just kind of moving east. We're moving east. We're moving away from God. And we see this pattern of God going after us. He wants to bless us. But we say no. And it happened in the garden, Adam and Eve.

[7 : 39] And God desired to bless them. And they disobeyed. And it happened with Noah. And he obeyed for a little while. But then things went out of control with his children. And I wonder sometimes, does God ever get tired of us?

Does God ever get tired of just putting up with our brokenness and our selfishness and our fallenness? But, you know, because we talk about all these times like, you know, where's God when this is happening?

And sometimes my question is, why is he still there? Doesn't he just want to give up on us? But God's word says he doesn't. He keeps pursuing us. He keeps moving towards us.

And we keep moving east. And we come to this passage today. And everything is kind of falling apart. And God continues to pursue us. And he comes in Genesis 12. And he looks at this one man. And he wants to enter into this relationship with this one man. It's called a covenant. We're going to talk about that a little today. It's this relationship. And what we see is that God pursues Abram, who's probably the second most important person in all of Scripture.

[8 : 39] I mean, he's the father figure for the three major world religions. And we're going to learn a lot about him in this passage, even though we probably should teach on him for the next 20 weeks.

We're just going to look at him for one day because we're just giving you a brief overview. But please go back and read God's word. Because in Abraham, we're going to learn about these things called faith and what it looks like.

And we're going to learn about this thing called redemption and why do we need it. We're going to learn about God's grace. And we're going to learn about our obedience. And we're going to learn about covenant. And we're going to learn about every other things. And so in this passage, in these moments we have left, I just want to look at three things, maybe four things.

The overarching thing is I want to look at, as I step and make noises, I want to look at just Abraham's God. What does this passage tell us about God? Because the whole Scripture is pointing to God.

So what does this passage tell us about God? The next thing I want to see is I want to look at what does this passage tell us about God's call to Abraham? What do we learn about this call that Abraham receives that changes everything?

[9 : 41] We want to see what he responds to that and how he responds to that. And then I want to look briefly at his journey. And we're just going to fly through that. So I need you to focus. I need you to pay attention. Okay? Okay, good.

Just want to make sure you're there. And so we're going to look at all these things. And we're going to try to figure out what does God have to teach us about himself? And what does he want us to do and learn in this process? And the amazing thing when we get to these stories is that you realize the last 11 chapters have been about creation and everything from nothing and God moving and man.

And that's a lot, 11 chapters. But the next 14 chapters, he's going to talk about this man called Abraham and how he wants to enter into this special relationship with him. And it's a huge thing. It's our story.

It's not just Abraham's story. It's our story. And the first thing we see in this passage that we read up there that Chris read in chapter 11 is that we're told that Abraham, his father, Terah, and his family are actually living in Ur.

They're living far east from where the promised land was. Remember last week we talked about the Tower of Babel and that when God came down and he stopped everybody from speaking Texan, which was terrible.

[10 : 46] But after everybody stopped speaking Texan and they couldn't understand the proper language or verbiage, they just scattered. And what we see is these people scattered all throughout Mesopotamia and what is Babylon and Iraq and all these places today.

And you look at the archaeology there and it is amazing. You can go on Wiki and look at what's happening there. I spent a couple hours just reading it this week.

But they've excavated all these cities that these men built when they left and they scattered. And at this time in Abraham's life, which is probably 2092 BC, this area was well established.

It was amazing, amazing cities. I mean amazing cities. Ur was probably the, I read this one article, the guy said it's probably the most comfortable city of the ancient world.

I mean you could be really comfortable in Ur. It was this great commercial center. It was very powerful. The people were very influential. It was also this major center of cultic worship. [11:48] There was some really dangerous and bad things going on there and sacrifices of people and children. They worshiped the moon god. And actually Terah's name actually means moon.

So Abraham's father was named after this worship that they were doing. And it pervaded everything. And we see that Abraham and his family was right in the middle of that. And for some reason we see in verse 1, God calls him.

I don't know if you've ever thought about that. If we're reading scripture slowly like Jillian encouraged us to do. God calls him. God speaks to him.

It's not because he's good. It's not because he's kind. It's not because he's open-minded. But for some reason God in his grace and his desire to pour out his blessings on this man.

We just see that God comes into Abraham's life and invades it. And he introduces himself to him. Now I don't have any idea what this looks like. I mean it could have been a dream. It could have been a voice.

[12:49] We see in verse 7 later on that God actually appears to him. But he doesn't appear to him now. But in the midst of all this spiral and this downward fall and this moving east.

God comes to Abraham in a very comfortable setting where he has everything. And everything is perfect. And he says just this one word. He says go. He says leave.

Go forth. Get ye forth. Get you out of here. And this would have been a crazy time if you understood the culture. And you've been listening to the last four sermons. Because up until this point very few people were obeying God.

Very few people wanted God to speak to them. Very few people wanted to listen in human history. But God speaks to Abraham and he says go. And if you look at these passages verses 1, 2, and 3. He basically says leave everything. Can you imagine if you're there? I mean leave everything. Leave your country and your relatives and your family. And your households.

[13:47] And probably most importantly what he's saying is just leave your idols. And leave your gods. And leave all these things that you're worshiping. Leave all these things that give your life meaning. Leave all these things that give your life identity.

Leave all these things that are important to you. And I don't know about you guys. But when I read this passage there seems to be a massive amount of uncertainty here. Right? He doesn't give Abraham a lot of details.

I mean I think that's how some of us feel sometimes in our journey. We want a lot of details. We want more words. We want specific A than B than C.

But he doesn't do that in Abraham's life. And I think about this. I just wonder what was that conversation like that night when he went to bed? Can you imagine what would have happened? I mean if it was like me.

Probably he's laying in bed and he's like Sarah. I mean Christina. Sarah. Christina I really love you. And Christina goes okay so what did you do wrong this time?

[14:45] Right? Because that's what I always say when I'm in trouble. Right? And he said you know Sarah I really love you. And she goes okay. What's going on Abraham? He goes well I talked to God today. And she's like okay God who?

Nana the God of the moon? No no I talked to the God of our father Noah. I talked to the God of our father Adam. I talked to the God who created all these things.

Remember those stories we've heard about? Well God spoke to me. Oh really? Okay so what did God tell you? Well God told me that we're to go. What does that mean?

Go. Well he just said go. And she goes okay so where are we going? And he said well we're going to go out somewhere. Well how do we get there? Well we don't really know.

But we'll know when we get there. Now women it happened there. You're driving in the car with your husband. And he's lost.

[15:49] And you look over at him and say don't you think we should stop and get directions? And he goes no no no we'll get there. We just drive fast enough and drive long enough. We'll get there. But don't you think we should do that?

No no. How do we know? We're going to know. When we get there we're going to know. Right? That's exactly the same kind of argument that Sarah had with Abram. So we see that it's from the very beginning. It's just not now.

It's something inside of men that's there. And remember Babel was this amazing city. It was full of security and certainty. It was a city. It was a name. It was based on your works.

Babel was a lot like Hong Kong. You are who you can do. What you can produce. And what you can make. That's what you're known for. And that's the type of tower and building that you can build for yourself. And God is just calling him.

And he's basically saying leave all these things. Leave your house. Leave all these things you're living in. And I want you to live in a tent. And by the way I just want you to trust me. I want you to trust me. Verse 1 through 3.

[16:46] You see God is entering into this covenant with Abraham. He enters into this agreement. He wants to bless him. It's the same thing that's been happening throughout the story of the Bible. In the garden he wanted to bless us. Throughout these times he wants to bless us.

And there's different types of covenant in the Bible. There's kind of a bilateral covenant. And we know a lot about this because we see all these clay tablets from these places where Abraham lived. I mean there's thousands and thousands of them.

And you can read about covenants there. And there's covenants and agreements between two equals. And there's covenants and agreements between someone who's greater and someone who's lesser. And this is what this is right here. And so he comes into this covenant with him. And the covenant is just based on God. It's based on God's word. It's basically God is just promising Abraham himself. The only thing that Abraham has to do is he needs to just trust God. He needs to just have faith in God's word. He just needs to go, right? That's the only thing he has to do. He just needs to go. I mean I could get into a lot of other things in this covenant because I just kind of wonder about, you know, he gives them this sign in this covenant.

[17:50] This sign is circumcision, right? And if I were Abraham I'd be thinking, okay, why circumcision? And Noah got like a rainbow, right? Can I just get a rainbow?

I don't really want circumcision. But he didn't really have a choice, right? So Abraham just got circumcision. I don't know. But I think, I personally think it was just this symbol that he carried within his whole life.

And whether he was using whatever was circumcised for good or for evil, whatever he was using it for, he realized that God was with him. And God had a promise to him.

And God desired to bless him. And we see four times in Abraham's life he comes against these really hard, difficult things. And each time he doubts.

And whenever he starts to doubt, God comes in. And God, the God of the covenant, comes into his life. God reminds him of this promise. God reminds him of what he wants to do with his life. God reminds him of his faithfulness.

[18:51] God reminds him of his character. God says, I'm going to make you a great nation. I'm going to bless you. I'm going to give you this land. I'm going to give you this inheritance. I'm going to give you this great name. I'm going to make you a blessing to all the people.

That's verse 3. At the end of verse 3, you can just put in brackets right after the word blessed, you can put Jesus. Because that's where that blessing is going to come from all people.

And all these things we see in Abraham's life, they require this massive amount of trust. Question. What does God get out of this covenant?

If we're reading the Bible slowly and thinking about this interchange, what does God get out of this covenant?

The only thing that God gets is he gets someone to bless. He gets a people that he can call his own. And he can bless them. And over 285 times in the Old Testament, we just see these words that God is pursuing his covenant people.

[19:57] God is pursuing us. God is desiring to pour his love on us. And he's desiring to bless us. And what we see is that Abraham, he just obeys. I mean, he doesn't do it perfectly.

He responds by taking God at his word. He surrenders his life. He gives up the things he's clinging to. He gives them all to the Lord. And for the first time in human history, what you're going to see in the Bible, for the first time is that someone travels west.

Someone travels towards the Lord. And Abraham is 75 years old. And remember, he left everything. He left it all to follow the Lord. He left everything.

He left the known for the unknown. Believing that he was going to be blessed by something he hasn't seen yet. He left the known for the unknown.

Believing God's goodness in his character. That God was going to bless him. So here's a question for us today, guys. Have we ever done that?

[21 : 00] Have you ever left the known for the unknown? Has God called you to leave something behind? Anything?

Has God ever called you to give up an idol? A sin? A fear? Shame?

Guilt? Has God ever said, hey, trust me. Trust me, I can do that. I can do it. Trust me. And when we read Abraham's story, I just realized that this story is our story.

It's the story of the Christian life. And God is just asking you and me to trust him, to let everything go and to follow him. But the struggle we learned is in our brokenness, right?

It's in the shadows. And these shadows come in. We want to trust ourselves. We want to doubt whether God is really good. And we want to do something greater than God can do. And Scripture says that's just impossible.

[22 : 03] Because you can't do anything greater than God's going to do. Because he's God. The next thing you see in verses 6 through 9 is Abraham just leaves. He takes everything.

He takes all his possessions. And he heads off on this journey. And for the next 13 chapters, what you're going to see is that every time he comes into this journey, he has to have trust in God.

I mean, he's facing and trusting God's character and God's word. And he's giving up everything that he's clinging to by nature. Because society and the culture and the things he was going to give up, his country, which was the land, which was all important to people during that day.

His relatives, which was acceptance and prosperity and security. He's giving that up. And his house, his father's house. All these things got progressively harder and more difficult. And all these things got deeper and closer to his heart and to his idol and to the thing that he clung to.

And God was telling him just to give up this idea of security, stability, and significance. Because God wants to give it to us. God wants to take all those things out of our hand that we're clinging to.

[23 : 15] And he wants to give it to us. And so we see in the passage that he, because Ur is way over here and Canaan is right here. And there's this river up here. And here's this desert. So no one crosses through the desert because you would die.

And so he leaves Ur in Mesopotamia. And he travels this water and trade route. We know it. We've seen all the cities. We know exactly where it is because he doesn't want to get near the desert. And he comes into the north of the Holy Land, this promised land, this land that God has given him.

And right away he enters into this land and he sees there's a problem. I mean, there's these Canaanites everywhere. They're pagans. They're worshiping idols. There's these altars. There's these human sacrifices.

He comes to Shechem and there's this tree where people gather around it to hear the wind blow through the leaves. And it speaks as messages of God. And it was this evil, wicked place. And he looks there and says, God, what have you done in my life?

You brought me to the worst place possible. You told me that I had the exclusive right for a franchise with Diet Coke in the Holy Land. And you brought me into the Holy Land. And there's Pepsi everywhere, right? I'm trying to make it applicable to me, right?

[24 : 17] But he's saying that. He's saying, and God comes to him in the fears. And God just reminds him again. God reminds him, hey, I'm with you. Wherever you're at today, no matter how difficult it is, if you're God's family, if you're God's child, he's saying, I'm with you.

I'm there. I haven't deserted you. Even though it's out of control, I'm there. My covenant is faithful. My word is faithful. I am faithful. Trust me. The passage says he leaves Shechem and he travels down to Bethel.

And it's even further south. And the same thing happens. There's opposition and there's worship and pagan worship. And you start to realize maybe what God is trying to tell us is that just like in Abraham's life, our life is always going to be lived out in this midst of struggle and opposition.

And misunderstanding because we've entered into this foreign land and there's these foreign gods. And each time what we see in this passage, each time Abraham comes, we're told in verses 7 and 8 that he builds an altar.

He builds an altar to worship God. I mean, basically what we see is that Abraham's response every time to God's grace is worship. Every time that God pours out his grace and mercy in his life, Abraham's response to that is worship.

[25 : 44] Remember, we defined worship about four weeks ago, right? We said worship is bending the knee and bowing and giving to whatever we worship what they're worth because of who they are and what they've done for us.

And so when he comes in and he worships Yahweh, he bends the knee to Yahweh, he bows and he gives everything to Yahweh because of who he is and what he's done for us.

And it's amazing to me that Abraham lives in this tent, which is movable and it takes apart and they travel to the next place. But he builds these massive altars to God, which are permanent.

And they're memorials to God's faithfulness. And it says here that he calls upon the name of the Lord. In Hebrew, what it says is he's actually, he's preaching. So he comes right up to this big pagan shrine and he builds a shrine to Yahweh and he just starts talking about how amazing God is.

About God's character and his goodness and all that he's done. In the passages, as people hear that, God's spirit just opens eyes and opens hearts.

[26 : 51] It's a miracle, right? Just like with KK that last Thursday, it wasn't some kind of formula that we did and we waited just the right time. We want to think that it's that type of thing.

But redemption and regeneration is this miracle that God comes in and he enters into our life and he opens our eyes and he opens our heart and we see how amazing he is.

And we're told that as Abraham does that, this crowd of people that God is gathering around him gets bigger and bigger and bigger because they're falling in love with this God of creation and they decide to go on this spiritual journey with Abram.

What we see in the rest of these 14 chapters is basically that at least 12 times in Abram's life, he hits something that is really difficult.

He hits something that's immovable. He hits something that's impossible. And he tries and he tries to do it on his own. And whenever we try to do it on our own, we always make a mess of things.

[27 : 55] And even though we make a mess of things, the scripture says that the God of Abraham, our God, comes into our life and he heals us.

And he fixes these things. And he pours his grace over these people that he's been pursuing from eternity past. Did you know that?

God is pursuing you. God is speaking to you. God is desiring this covenant relationship with you. God wants to be your God. He wants to take care of you. He wants to provide for you. And each time Abraham fails and God steps in, his faith grows because he sees that more truly.

He sees that God is amazing. He sees that God is faithful. He sees that God is always there. And the question in Abraham's life and the question in Tobin's life and in your life, I think it's always the same.

[29 : 04] And the questions are this. Can God do it? Is God faithful? Is God faithful?

Is God good? Does God really know me? Does he know all the things that are going on in my life? Does he really care for me? In the Bible, in the Bible, it says over and over and over, yes.

Yes. Yes. The God of Abraham is pursuing his people. The God of Abraham is pursuing his people. And the question we have to believe and think about is do we trust him?

Even when we make mistakes? Are we going to allow him to come alongside of us even when we want to do it on our own? Sometimes I feel like we're these little four-year-old kids. You know, your three- or four-year-old kids, you're trying to teach them something.

[30 : 16] And you're trying to help them do it, like tie their shoes. And the first thing they do is they pull away and go, I do. That was the second words my kids spoke after mine. I do. And God is saying, okay, you can do.

But he's there. He's coming alongside of us. And what I want us to see in this passage of Abraham, and what I want us to see in God's scripture, is that God is so faithful to us.

And if we are God's children, then God's faithfulness, and listen to me really carefully because we're going to get this messed up because people are going to ask me afterwards. But God's faithfulness to us is not based on our obedience.

Did you know that? If we are God's children, his faithfulness to us is not based on our obedience. It's based on his character. It's based on his character, who he is. And there's going to be many of us in here who are going to struggle with obeying, obeying, obeying, even long after we become Christians.

[31 : 32] And we're going to try to turn this idea of grace into works. And the story of Abraham and the stories that we've read all the way up to his point tell us that that's not how God works.

God is the only hero in our story. Not us. Not me. Do you believe that?

Here's some thoughts I want us to think about, guys, as a church. These are some things I've been pondering this week. God's call to Abraham required faith. The faith was in God and that God was trustworthy to his word.

In verse 1, the word go means to separate yourself. Separate from your past. Separate from your idol. Separate from your sin. Give those up. Allow God to take control of your life. How are we doing with that?

How are you doing with the going? It seems to me as I talk to people outside of the church, one of the biggest reasons they don't want to come to church is because they look at us and they realize that our lives are no different than their lives and they automatically dismiss what we talk about here because we're no different than them.

[33 : 02] But God's call requires us to surrender and to give to him. And this is how faith is lived out in God and his word is being lived out in our lives today.

And the question is, are we going? Are we surrendering? Or are we staying? Second thing is, I've been learning with is that we struggle with trusting the Lord today.

It's amazing. This whole passage and all these things in my life as I've been praying and meditating over this, I really struggle with God's faithfulness to me sometimes. And these passages tell us that he continues to be faithful.

He continues to be faithful. He continues to be faithful. Isn't it amazing how you and I trust sinful, broken people with things in our life?

Like our money and our food and driving next to us because they could go over the line and they could kill us in an instant. And we trust sinful, broken people with all these aspects of our life.

[34 : 18] But we're afraid to trust a holy, righteous God to take care of us. How are we doing with that?

The Bible says as we go on this journey like Abraham that we're always going to be wanderers. We're always going to be worshipers. We're always going to go to different places and we're going to pitch our tent realizing that our home isn't Hong Kong.

But it's heaven. But sometimes we get so confused and we lose focus and we focus on Ur, we focus on Babylon, and we focus on Hong Kong.

We realize and we think that that's our home. Where's your home today? Did someone want to watch you and you didn't know that?

You're watching how you used your things and your money and your stuff and all these things you're talking about in your life, in your time, in your energy. Where would they think your home is?

[35 : 28] Would they think it's in Hong Kong? Or heaven? And finally, the thing that's been challenging to me is that the life of Abraham and God's word says that as we go out and we're wanderers and we're worshipers, it means that wherever we go, we worship and we witness to God's greatness in our life.

That wherever God plants us, wherever we head out, verse 7 and 8 is an example for us that wherever he does, we are to build an altar there. We are to call upon the name of the Lord. We're to tell people of how great he is and how amazing he is. So that people will see his goodness, his faithfulness in our life.

And they'll come to him. How are we doing on that worshiping thing? How are we doing on the witnessing thing?

It seems to be really clear that as God's people, those are two of the things that we do as we see how awesome and wonderful and amazing and gracious God is.

[36 : 47] It's a response to the blessings he gives us throughout all the Bible. The response is always among God's people that we worship and we share. How are we doing with that?

I feel like after reading this, I need to spend some really good time with the Lord and just continually come before him and just confess and ask him to change me. And again, we're not asking people to be perfect, right?

The amazing thing to me about this passage, the amazing thing to me about everything we read is this. I grew up in a church and when I came to Christ, I read these stories and what the people told me was, you have to be just like him. You have to be perfect.

I mean, he's perfect. He's great. He's good. You need to be just like Moses. You need to be just like David. You need to be able to slay those giants. You need to be all those things. And if you don't do those things, something's wrong with you. And so I grew up as an early Christian struggling with performing and being and doing.

And what I did was I forgot grace. And the only reason these stories are in the Bible is because they're pointing us to somebody greater than Abraham.

[38 : 01] That's Christ. In the passage, it says that one day, this son will come from this foreign land, this amazing land, and he's going to leave his land and he's going to come to this world that doesn't like him, doesn't want him.

And he's going to go wherever he goes. He's going to build an altar and he's going to talk about God's greatness and he's going to worship to him. And he's not going to let anybody down. He's going to be perfect. He's going to be sinless. He's going to be holy. He's never going to make a mistake.

He's not going to do things that cause the Arab and Israeli conflict like Abraham did because he's God and he's perfect and he's 100% man and he's 100% God. And as we read these stories, we're asked this question, can we trust him?

Can we trust him? Can we trust him? And all these stories point to this Jesus who's going to come. And these men didn't even know what he would look like. All they knew was somehow God's going to have to make all these things right because I, my life is messed up.

And you and I look back and we go, yes. He has.

[39 : 05] The question is, are we going to trust him? Are we going to realize that he's good and he's faithful and that he has this relationship with us? Are we going to realize that he's pursuing us and he wants to bless us?

Or are we going to try to do it on our own? Does that make any sense? God.

The story's about God. The story's about him pursuing broken people. People are trying to fix themselves. And God's letting us, I do it.

But he's always there pursuing grace, mercy. The question is, will we let him? Father, thank you for this day.

Thank you for your mercy and your goodness and your grace in our life. Lord, I pray that we would learn from his life.

[40 : 15] Lord, I pray that we would learn from his life in the good, in the bad.

Lord, I pray that we would learn from his life. Lord, I pray that we would learn from his life. And realize that his life is an arrow pointing outward to someone who's going to come. Who's going to make all things right.

Who's going to establish a covenant that will never be taken away. It will be done in his blood. In his broken body. On a cross.

Lord, I pray for those of us in here who haven't yet entered into that relationship with Yahweh. God. The creator. The God of the Bible. Lord, I pray that you would open their eyes and their hearts to your son Jesus.

I pray that they would see that he is more wonderful and beautiful. That he's trustworthy. That there's a track record that far extends past any kind of stock.

[41 : 19] Or mutual fund they're going to invest in. This track record is for eternity. And it's headed towards eternity. And it's amazing. What I pray that they would ask their friends who brought them this day.

Or come up and ask us as staff. What does it mean? To give our lives to God. As KK did on Thursday night. To invite Christ into her heart. And they would do that.

Father, I pray for those of us who are your children. We've been on this journey. Some of us have been on these journeys for 50 years. And some of us have been on this journey for one week. And in this journey, as we go on it, we realize that you're not.

You're not calling us to be perfect. Perfect. If there was a perfect Tobin, we would need a perfect Jesus. You're calling us just to trust you.

To give our life to you. To realize that the perfect one will make all things and has made all things right. And we don't need to doubt.

[42 : 27] We don't need to fear. We don't need to have shame or guilt because he's taken all those things and he's poured his blood out all over those things.

And those things have been healed. So Lord, I pray for us as a church. That we would consider Abraham in his life of faith.

More importantly, we would consider your son, Jesus. As we think of all that he's done, we would allow that to change us. That we would be different.

That we'd be your people. Father, we love you. And we desperately need you. We pray all these things in your son, Jesus' holy name.

Amen.