

"Walking on God's Path"

Genesis 12

Introduction:

Today we are going to look at a message from the life of Abraham and then next week we will get back to our study of the book of Revelation. Today we are going to follow Abraham and Sarah through some seasons of their lives in order to see what it looks like to follow the will of God in our own lives.

As you study the life of Abraham and Sarah, you will learn what faith is and how to walk by faith. You will discover that, when you trust the Lord, no test is impossible and no failure is permanent.

Before we get to Abraham's life I want to show you what David recorded concerning following the will of God.

Psalm 23:1-3

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

³ *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

From these 3 verses we can see 3 points about following God on the path which He summons us too.

- 1. Where ever He leads He will also provide.**

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Psalm 37:23-25

²³ *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*

²⁴ *Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.*

²⁵ *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*

2. While I follow God I can be assured of rest and peace as I surrender to Him.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

Hebrews 4:9-10

⁹ There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

¹⁰ For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

3. As I follow God I can know that the path He has for me is for His glory.

³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

With those Truths lodged within our hearts let us now look at what we can expect on the path.

Listen to the words of George Morrison:

"The victorious Christian life is a series of new beginnings."

I. Following God means...

A. Stepping out of your comfort zone.

Notice Genesis 12:1

God had called Abram when he lived Ur of the Chaldees. Now Ur has been uncovered by archeologists and was found to be a thriving metropolis in Abram's day. When he was called he was somewhere around the age of 75 which leads us to believe he was well settled in Ur and most likely was a very successful business man. His family was in Ur and he had lived there some 75 years. This was his comfort zone.

But God had other plans and in order for God to bless him and Sarah they needed to go to where God desired for them to be and that was the land of Canaan. It was a land which they had never seen before.

Hebrews 12:8

⁸ *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

Application:

If you are going to follow God then you too must be willing to follow God to places where you have never been before. I am not talking about another country although that may be where God wants you but it could also apply to areas of your life here.

Maybe you are a "behind the scenes" sort of person and God has impressed upon your heart to share the Gospel with someone you work with or someone who is a family member. The thought may make you very uncomfortable but might I remind you that you will not see the blessings of God until you go where He wants you to go.

Let me show you a passage which will be very encouraging.

Matthew 14:22-29

²² *And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.*

²³ *And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.*

²⁴ *But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.*

²⁵ *And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.*

²⁶ *And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.*

²⁷ *But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.*

²⁸ *And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.*

²⁹ And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

Until we are willing to step "out of the boat" we are not going to see the power of God in and through our lives.

Now I know the typical response, "I am afraid!"

Philippians 4:6-7, 13

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

¹³ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Hebrews 4:14-16

¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Following God means...

B. Facing tests of our faith.

Notice Genesis 12:7-10

When Abram arrived in the land of Canaan he was faced with a famine that was very grievous/severe. Now let me point out he is exactly where God desired for him to be and he is right where God has called him too and it is here that he is met by this famine. This was a test of Abram's faith and he would encounter many other tests as he continued to follow God.

Application:

We also can expect that as we follow God there are going to be tests of our faith. God is going to permit us to face situations which we have absolutely no control over. These times will be for the purpose of stripping us of our own self dependence. It will be through the trials and the storms of life that we will come to lean upon God in every situation we face.

Therefore we can conclude that the storms and the trials which we face are for our own spiritual good.

James 1:2-4

² *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

³ *Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

⁴ *But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

1 Peter 1:5-7

⁵ *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

⁶ *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:*

⁷ *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

God permits us to face trial after trial so that we will learn to rest completely in Him no matter what it is that we face.

This Christian life is not about comfort but it is about you and me learning to depend upon our heavenly Father for every situation.

Following God means...

C. Exercising patience.

Notice Genesis 12:1-4

When Abram was 75 God promised to make of him a great nation.

Genesis 21:1-5

And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

² *For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.*

³ *And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.*

⁴ *And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.*

⁵ **And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.**

Abraham had to wait 25 years to see the birth of Isaac. Let me show you something from Isaac's life.

Genesis 25:19-21, 26

¹⁹ *And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:*

²⁰ *And Isaac was **forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife**, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.*

²¹ *And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.*

²⁶ *And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was **threescore years old when she bare them.***

Isaac began to pray for Rebekah when he was 40 years old. The boys were born when he was 60 years old. Therefore Isaac had to wait and pray for 20 years before he was able to see the results of his prayer. Patience is very important as we walk the path which God has appointed for us. There are blessings which come when we exercise patience.

Lamentations 3:22-26

²² *It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

²³ *They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

²⁴ *The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.*

²⁵ *The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.*

²⁶ *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.*

Let me show you the words of David in Psalm 27.

Psalm 27:1, 11-14

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

¹¹ *Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.*

¹² *Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.*

¹³ *I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.*

¹⁴ *Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.*

Conclusion:

Following God is not easy. It can often be like driving a car in the thick fog. There will be times when you cannot see beyond the moment you are in. But the blessings which come as we walk in the will of God far out-weigh the trials and the struggles we encounter on the path.

James 1:12

¹² *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*