

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

Feb 5th

Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)

1. We are right now in end of February. If you could get away for a week long winter escape, where would you go?

Bible Study Questions

1. AW Tozer says that what you think when you think about God is the most important thing about you. Do you agree or disagree? How does your view of God impact the way that we live?
2. Read Genesis 12:10-20
 - Abram follows God to the Negev and experiences a famine. How do you think that impacted his faith?
 - When was a time that you were surprised by suffering in your faith journey?
 - The Bible talks a lot about suffering, but Christians don't often talk about it. Why do we tend to avoid that subject?
3. Abram chooses to lie about his marriage in order to protect himself. How did that decision play out?
 - What view of God do you think prompted him to do this?
 - It has been said that sin is the result of not trusting God. Do you agree or disagree? Tell of a time in which you made a wrong choice. How would trusting God have changed that situation?
 - Why do we so often decide to trust ourselves instead of God?
4. How does God show up in the story? By his actions, what does God teach Abram about his character?
5. How do you feel that God looks at you when you act faithless? How does God's mercy and restoration of Abram encourage you?

Feb 5th: Abraham: When Famine Strikes

The most important question that we could ever ask ourselves is, “who is God?” Many of us answer with an image of God that we piece together from our family and culture. However, God is who he is not and who we invent him to be.

The story of Abram starts off with him leaving his country and security to follow God to an unknown location. When he takes this risk, the big question is, “Can God be trusted?” or “what kind of God is he choosing to follow”. In Genesis 12:10-20, Abram experiences a crises of faith and God begins to answer the question as to what kind of God he was.

I. Abram’s question: Can God be trusted in the midst of suffering? Abram has followed God to a wilderness called the Negev. We are told in verse 10 that there is a famine in the land. This must have been quite confusing for Abram. He likely assumed that God’s calling would be full of blessings, but instead God has led him into a life threatening situation. He is asking the question, can God be trusted in this midst of this famine? Or is the famine just outside of God’s control?

II. Abram’s answer: God is too small to be trusted with the most serious matters: Abram responds by going to Egypt where he is guaranteed to have food. While entering into the country, he is confronted with the danger of someone killing him to take his wife. He decides that it is too risky to trust God’s protection. Instead, Abram decides to take control of the situation and lie saying that Sarai is his sister. Things quickly spin out of control when Pharaoh takes Sarai as his wife. God intervenes, but Abram ends up being escorted out of Egypt like a criminal full of shame (12:20).

God’s answer:

- **God will faithfully keep his promises to his people:** God had promised that Abram would be blessed and made into a great nation. He sends plagues on Pharaoh’s home and reveals the truth to Pharaoh. In doing so, God fulfills his promise to protect Abram. Even in the distant land of Egypt, God could be trusted.
- **God pours out mercy and restoration on his servant who had failed:** Abram was the one who was faithless and who created a mess. Yet God didn’t give up on him, but showed him mercy. At the end of the chapter, God has brought him back to the Negev and he is given another chance.

Abram gives us an example of what not to do in this story. But the focal point is about God. God reveals himself as one who is faithful to his promises. Instead of being an angry God, he is merciful and restores Abram. We can live with that same confidence today. As we go through life, we don’t go blindly, but have a guide who is full of faithfulness and mercy.

Conclusion