

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

March 5th

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

1. Tell us about your first job. What did you do and how long did it last?

Bible Study Questions

1. Read Genesis 14-15. What do you notice about Abram and God?
2. As the victor, Abram could have claimed his kingship over the land. Why does he refuse to do so, not even taking the bounty offered by the king of Sodom?
 - There are multiple times in the Bible where a character rejects “taking” what is there’s and instead trusting God to provide (David with Saul, Jesus with Satan). What does “taking” look like today?
3. Genesis 15:6 says that “he believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness”. What does this mean? How would you define Abram’s faith?
 - Pastor Michael said that Abram’s knew in whom he was placing his faith. How does having a relationship impact the way that you trust someone? How had God revealed himself up to this point?
4. Read Romans 4.
 - How does Paul relate Abraham’s faith to our faith today?
 - What does this teach you about becoming someone of deep faith?
 - As Christians, we believe that we cannot earn God’s love and need to trust that he has taken care of our salvation. In what ways do we continue to try to earn God’s approval? How do we find freedom from doing this?
5. Genesis 15 ends with God taking Abram through a treaty ritual. The message was that if God didn’t keep his promise, then Abram had a right to tear God into pieces. Why did God do this for Abram? What does this tell you about God’s character?

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March 5th: Father Abraham

In Romans 4:16, Paul called Abraham the “father of all who believe.” What does that mean? Genesis 15 tells the story of how this happened.

- I. **Abram decides that God’s promises are not to be taken by force:** In Genesis 13, God promises to give him the land wherever he steps. In 14, Abram goes into battle to save his nephew and ends up defeating an alliance of kings. In that moment, he has a opportunity to declare himself the conqueror and declare himself to be king. Instead, he frees his nephew and walks away. He was going to wait for God to provide instead of taking it by violence. This is why God appears to him saying that he would be “shield and great reward (Genesis 15:1)”
- II. **The faith of Abram**
 - a. **Moves forward armed with nothing but the promises of God:** In the promise of children, Abram had biology going against him. All that he had from God was God’s promise.
 - b. **Confidence based on knowing in whom he has placed his faith:** Abram had been following God for a decade and had seen God’s faithfulness in action. That experience convinced him that God could be trusted.
 - c. **Fully trusts God to do what he can’t do on his own:** The nature of his faith was that he knew that on his own he could not have children, but that God could provide it.
 - d. **His faith triggers God to declare that he is righteous:** 15:6 tells us that God credited to him as righteousness. Abram was declared to be one who was now right with God. Note that this wasn’t due to some great act, but the decision to have faith in God’s promise.
- III. **Abram’s faith becomes the template for our own salvation:** Paul will talk about Abram in chapter 5 of Romans. We do not receive our salvation by impressing God, but by trusting that he has done what we are unable to do. We trust that Jesus lived the perfect life and then paid our debt on the cross. By placing our trust in him, we find ourselves declared righteous.

Conclusion

In the 2nd half of Genesis 15, God gives Abram a sign. Abram reenacts a ritual used in the making of treaties. God walks through a path of dead animals declaring that if he fails to fulfill his promise, Abram can tear him apart just as those animals. Usually both members of the treaty walk

through that path, but God does it twice. Later, it will be God who will be broken and suffer on the cross because of our failure to uphold our covenants.