

ROAD TRIP DEVOTIONAL

WEEK 2

The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

“Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward. But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”



Genesis 15:1-6

Then the word of the Lord came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

Do you have a favorite Road Trip song? I’m pretty sure “Don’t Stop Believing” by Journey would be at the top of Abraham’s list. Abraham’s life can be summarized by the tests that he faced and the faithfulness of God in the midst of less than promising circumstances.

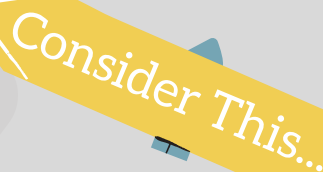
In Genesis 12, at the age of 75 years old, God calls Abram to leave everything he knows behind and start over. God gives him the name Abraham, meaning “father of many nations”. But there is a problem. Abraham and his wife, Sarah, aren’t able to have kids. The circumstances just don’t add up.

Then, in Genesis 15, God takes him out at night and says, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.”

Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

Then it says, simply, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

Although things just didn’t seem to be working out, Abraham believed God. This doesn’t mean he didn’t have doubts. I wonder how often he questioned whether he understood God correctly.



Consider This...

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It doesn't mean he knew how it would all work out. In fact, he comes up with several creative solutions to the problem that God hasn't yet overcome. This is not how we, in the modern church, often talk about belief "in" God. It is not about having the right set of doctrinal beliefs, though these are certainly important. The Bible says Abraham believed God.

He believed God would do what God said. God said it. So Abraham took him at His word. Whether or not the circumstances seemed to validate it, Abraham believed God and built his life upon the promise God made.

From his calling to leave his home (which we looked at in our sermon this week), to this affirmation of the covenant, to the ultimate testing of faith after his son Isaac is born, (see Genesis 22) Abraham's life story is "Don't stop believing".

Believing God is true righteousness. Righteousness is right relationship with God and one another. Abraham's faithfulness is the first step in the reversal of the curse—the curse that led to exile when, back in the Garden of Eden, the serpent asks the first humans, "Did God really say...?"

What is it in our human nature that causes us to question God's faithfulness?

Really, the story of Abraham's life is even more about God's faithfulness than Abraham's faith. If you pay attention to the details, there are many times when Abraham is anything but a hero of the faith. We want to make our Bible characters heroes of the faith, but the reality is they are a lot more like us. We find them struggling between moments of failure and moments of faithfulness.

The one constant in it all...actually, the main point of it all, is to teach us about the God who is always faithful. The ultimate expression of this faithfulness is, of course, seen in Jesus. Let us remind ourselves of the Apostle Paul's encouragement...

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—Romans 8:38-39

Wherever we are along the road, God is with us, and we can trust Him.



Consider This...

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The Prayer

Lord, help me believe. Even in the areas of my life where I have not seen the solution, help me trust you. Help me hold tightly to the promise that you will never leave or forsake us. When I am tempted to doubt, allow me to see the signs of your faithfulness which are around me each day. Like Abraham, allow the story of my life to point to your faithfulness. Amen.

- Have you ever struggled to trust God because of the circumstances which challenged your faith only to later realize that God was with you in ways you weren't aware?

The Questions

- In what ways might God be calling you to trust Him more? Is there anything in your life that you haven't fully trusted God to handle?
- How can you encourage others who may be in a crisis of faith? How can you help them see God's faithfulness?