

Genesis 12

As we start our time together today:

- Each person share what they are particularly thankful for over the past week.
- Spend time thanking God in prayer, and asking Him to guide our time together.
- Read Genesis 12:1-9 together & share how God spoke to you Sunday's sermon.

God's Good Purposes

Genesis 12:1-3 is often referred to as the "Abrahamic Covenant", a key event in salvation history. What is your understanding of the importance of these three verses?

What specifically are the promises of God to Abram in v2-3?

- In what ways does Abraham see these promises fulfilled in his lifetime?
- In what ways does the coming of Jesus fulfil these promises to Abraham?¹
- In what ways are the promises to Abraham still ongoing, or yet to be fully realised?

Why do these promises also involve the instruction for Abram and his family to leave?

Why would God choose to work his plan of salvation out this way, through this man and his descendants? What does this tell us about God? What does this tell us about the church?

Why is Matthew 1:1 especially significant to Jewish readers in light of Genesis 12?

The example and journey of Abram

Verses 4-6 succinctly record Abram's response - try to imagine what that would have been like. What emotions would you feel? How would you logistically manage such a task? What actions would you take knowing that all your loved ones are with you and that 'the Canaanites were in the land'?

How is faith the appropriate word to describe how Abram responds to this call from God? Read Hebrews 11:1, 8-12 to get a better picture of this faith: could you have responded and lived that way? What was it that motivated and enabled Abram to do so?

Read the next part of his story in Genesis 12:10-20.

- What does this story reveal about the character of the man God has called?
- What does this story reveal about the nature of the journey Abram would go on to follow the word of the Lord?
- When we consider our own path of following Christ's call, we are not perfect either nor the journey always easy, comfortable or safe. How does the life of Abraham inspire, challenge, confuse and teach us as those living by faith to the call of Christ to "follow me"?

¹ Try Galatians 3:13-14

The challenge to us

Read the following quote from Eugene Peterson from his book "The Jesus Way":

Abraham left Ur and Haran freely obedient to a command of God, a single-syllable imperative, unsupported, unexplained, unadorned: "Go." He went in what we might call good faith, that is, without calculation, without suppressed motives, without superstitious fear. He wasn't enticed; he wasn't bullied. He was commanded, "Go."

How do you respond to Peterson's quote?

- Does this clarify or challenge the way you have viewed faith before?
- Is there something that you are facing right now which requires you to take a step of faith? What is stopping you?
- As you look back over your life, can you think of times when you have responded with a faith-filled 'yes' to the things/calling of God? Share with the group how taking that step impacted your relationship with God.

Consider Genesis 12:2-3 in light of Galatians 3:7-9, 29.

- In what ways are the blessings promised to Abram our current experience and inheritance? In what ways are they not?
- How should the promise 'that all peoples on earth will be blessed through you' now characterise the way we live and interact with the world around us?
- List some of the ways that we as Abraham's children can and should be blessing the world around us? How will you be a blessing to others in the name of Jesus this week (be specific!)?