

Message Notes



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ABRAHAM: Grateful for His Friend's Promise... While Living In The Gap!

*"The deepest believers are the ones who are bent over because they are leaning so heavily into their relationship with God, knowing that they can do nothing without utter dependence on Christ. The greatest Christian is not the one who has **achieved** the most but **rather** the one who has **received** the most. God's grace, love and mercy flow through the people the most who walk in total dependence."*

Cymbala, Jim, *Fresh Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993) 45.

Abraham and God were friends!

Three times this phenomenon is mentioned in Scripture. (James 2:23; Isaiah 41:8; and 2 Chronicles 20:7) As God's friend, Abraham was able to live all of his life in the gap between God's promise, and the contradictory reality he saw around him that seemed to go against that promise.

Abraham staked his life on the invisible faithfulness and friendship of God. Everything visible, external, validating, supportive, was taken from him. God's promises to him absolutely ran counter to what he experienced in his life. Yet he trusted the invisible God, more than the visible circumstance.

- ✦ The first thing: ***The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you."*** (Genesis 12:1)
- ✦ The next thing: God promises that Abraham is going to inherit all the land around him.
- ✦ The next thing: God comes and says, ***"Abraham, your descendants will be as many as the dust of the earth."***
- ✦ The next thing: Sarah, Abraham's wife is declared barren and Sarah suggests a shortcut! ***"...so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her. Abram agreed to what Sarai said."*** (Genesis 16:2)
- ✦ The next thing: Finally Isaac is born when Abraham is 100 years old—twenty five years after the original promise of God had been given.
- ✦ The final thing: God tells Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. ***"Please Abraham, take your son, your only son, the son whom you love..."***
Now, Abraham had nothing to rely on, no scripted ending. All he had was faith in God's friendship and His promise.

"When everything was hopeless, Abraham believed anyway, deciding to live not on the basis of what he saw, and what he couldn't do, but on what God said he would do... He didn't tiptoe around God's promise asking cautiously skeptical questions. He plunged into the promise and came up strong, ready for God, sure that God would make good on what he had said... But it's not just Abraham, it's also us! The same thing gets said about us when we embrace and believe the One who brought Jesus to life when the conditions were equally hopeless." (Romans 4: 16 and following selected verses, The Message)

How to have an attitude of gratitude while living in the Gap...

(1) **Godly** Friends... who (2) **Accept** reality and (3) **Proclaim** the promises of God!