

Southeast Sower

September 2018

Volume 33, Number 9

The Southeast Church Of Christ Meets At:

- 35 Walnut Ct.
Mogadore OH 44260
- Phone: 330.628.7432

Services:

SUNDAY:

10AM Bible Study

10:50AM Worship

6PM Worship

WEDNESDAY

7:30PM Worship

God's Plan of Salvation

Hear Rom.
10:17

Believe Heb. 11:6

Repent Acts 2:38

Confess Matt.
10:32

Be Baptized Mark
16:16

Stay Faithful Rev.2: 10

Hebrews 11:8a

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place he would receive as an inheritance.."

Lessons From Abraham

Do you know of Abraham, the friend of God? Have you read about Abraham in your Bible and read of his faith? Most likely each of us have heard stories or references of this man Abraham from our youth. Do you know why Abraham is discussed and referenced in articles (such as this one), sermons, classes, etc? Abraham is brought up throughout the Bible and throughout our lives so often because he is one of the best role models we have to show us how we should live our lives. Abraham is one example of what true faith really looks like. So, let's study a couple lessons we can learn from Abraham's life.

First Lesson: Complete Trust in God and Obedience to His Will is Good. In Genesis 12:1-5 we read of God calling out to Abraham and instructing Abraham to leave the land of his father. The Lord had told Abraham that He would make Abraham a great nation and would make Abraham's name great. (v.2). Now, as we look at Abraham we often think "Well of course Abraham completely obeyed God's instructions because he was going to be rewarded greatly and blessed." Is it odd that we tend to use this line of justification for our shortfalls or lack of faith, especially when we struggle with finances etc and we can read of Abraham having great wealth? I think so. See, we are also promised a reward if we completely trust in God and follow Him, wherever He may lead us. Are we not given the promise of a home in heaven? Remember also that Abraham had the free-will to decide whether or not he would follow the Lord... Do not try to justify your lack of faith with lack of physical means. We can say, by the life Abraham led, that he believed in life being more than food and the body more than clothes. (Matt. 6:25). Do you? If you do, then you will not worry so much about your physical means but instead will rejoice with the spiritual blessings of the Lord.

The Second Lesson I want to bring out is: Complete Trust in God Requires One to Forsake All for Him. In Genesis 13:2 we read of Abraham leaving his father's house and possessions, comfort and memories to follow the Lord. The Lord then, because of Abraham's faith, obedience and trust, blessed Abraham with exceedingly great wealth. Also, Abraham was faithful to God before and after he was blessed. James 2:14-26 explains how we are to have faith and works, meaning our faith is put into practice. How long has it been since you last demonstrated your faith in the Lord? If we hope to receive the promise of heaven we need to be willing to give up anything and everything for Christ so that we can "make our calling and election sure" (II Peter 1:5-11).

Third Lesson: You Cannot Follow God Unless You Listen To God. "Speak for Thy servant heareth." (I Samuel 3:9-10). Are you tuned into what the Lord is trying to tell you? Abraham did on several occasions. "Abraham went as the Lord had spoke..." (Gen. 12:4), "Arise and walk through the land...and Abraham picked up his tent..." (Gen. 13:17-18). If you have not taken time to read

Genesis 12:1, 4

"Now the Lord said to Abraham: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you"...so Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken to him..."

Genesis 13:2-4

"So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground and said, "My Lord, if I have found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree."

James 2:23

"And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God."

through Genesis 22, please do. Read Genesis 22:1-14 and you will see the fullness of Abraham's faith and obedience. In this passage God tells Abraham to take his son Isaac as an offering to the Lord. If you recall this is the son through whom Abraham's seed would be blessed. Notice v.5 for Abraham said, "the lad and I will go yonder...and we will return." Abraham had such faith in the Lord that he trusted the Lord would, somehow, keep His promise and bless Abraham's seed through Isaac. Abraham heard the words of the Lord and trusted in them. What about you? Are you trusting in the words of the Lord? Are you even hearing what the Lord is telling you? Abraham received many blessings and is called the "father of the faithful" (Romans 4:11).

Fourth Lesson: The Faithful Individual Must Esteem Others Higher than Themselves. Christ served and put the needs of others before Himself. Evidence? Did Jesus (God the Son) come down from heaven to take the form of a man to teach His creation the path to salvation and sacrifice Himself so that all might have the possibility of forgiveness, if they so chose to abide by the requirements of the Lord? Are we not also called to be imitators of Christ? We need to possess the mindset of Christ and be willing to help others in their walk of faith, without losing sight of our own faith. In Genesis 13:1-18 Abraham demonstrated his willingness to serve. Abraham esteems Lot by giving Lot the choice of land. Although Abraham was the leader of the family and could have told Lot which direction to go, Abraham did not. Likewise, in Genesis 18:1-8, Abraham was not burdened by caring for the strangers. Abraham sought them out and insisted on the strangers to come to his home and eat. Then, Abraham had the food prepared as quickly as possible, not lagging in his service to them. In Hebrews 13:2 we, as Christians, are told "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for in doing so you entertain angels." I Peter 4:9 says, "Be hospitable to one another without grumbling." The Christian is to find pleasure in the time spent with other Christians. We should not feel burdened to help one another, or feel it is an obligation we must fulfill. Rather, we should be like Abraham and take the initiative to help one another and serve one another.

The Final Lesson is this: One Can Be Imperfect and Yet Still Be a Friend of God. In II Chronicles 20:7, Isaiah 41:8 and James 2:23 Abraham is called the friend of God. In Romans 4:11 he is "the father of the faithful." High praise for a man is it not. Yet, recall that Abraham did sin by omitting the fact that Sarah was his wife on two separate occasions in Genesis 12:11-20 and 20:1-13. We should not focus on the faults of others as justification for our own shortcomings. That is not why I draw your attention to Abraham's sin. The point is for each of us to understand that Abraham was a human like us for he was imperfect. So, find encouragement in this: you will not be perfect, no one is but God. You will slip and fall into sin, but there is still hope. If you possess a heart like Abraham you can be a friend of God. To be considered such requires that you are honest when you have done wrong. You must feel godly sorrow for your sin and make a change in your life to avoid giving into that same temptation again. You must be repentant. You must be humble enough to admit your sin and your faults. Unless you are willing to do this (not able, because we are all able) you will not grow. To grow in the Lord requires you to strengthen those areas within your life where you are weak and lacking faith.

So, are you like Abraham? Are you a friend of God? Be honest with yourself. There will be a day coming when the Lord will require you to give an answer for the life you lived. Every thought, word and action of yours will determine your eternal fate. Are you prepared and comfortable with what your fate may be?

-Jordon Smith