



Pause. Listen. Act. be You.

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MONDAY 6.20.22

Promises, Promises

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-2

God's command to Abram seems ridiculous. Abram couldn't just leave his home with all of his stuff for no good reason. God asks Abram to sever ties to his larger nation, his larger group, and his father's house. It requires loyalty and commitment generate by a powerful promise. God will be with him.

- How have you heard God's promise?
- What would it required for you to go to a new place like Abram did?

Prayer: Life-giving God, heal our lives, that we may acknowledge your wonderful deeds and offer you thanks from generation to generation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

TUESDAY 6.21.22

But, What about before?

Scripture: Genesis 12:3-4

the tower builders in Genesis 11:1-9 had built their tower with the purpose of making a name for themselves (verse 4). Their self-centered and heaven-storming strategy led only to confusion and scattering. But God now promises to give Abram a great name as a gift with the purpose that "you will be a blessing." – *from Dennis Olson's commentary on Genesis 12:1-4a*

- If God got mad at the tower builders for the same reward God offers Abram, what do you think is the difference between the two situations?
- How is a promise different when we ask for one instead of waiting for someone else to offer it?

Prayer: God of all who wander in the wilderness, you go before us as beacon and guide. Lead us through all danger, sustain us through all desolation, and bring us home to the land you have prepared for us. Amen.

WEDNESDAY 6.22.22

Nobody Special

Scripture: Genesis 12:5-6

God lifts up Abram precisely because he isn't anybody special. It is tempting to skip over the genealogies of begats and begats, but in this case, it shows us Abram was just like us – a normal person who received an abnormal call from God. God promises blessing to Abram, but it is not because Abram has done anything to deserve it and neither is it for the sake of Abram himself, but for the sake of showing God's power to bless. Abram is blessed to be a blessing.

- Do you avoid listening to God's call because you think you aren't enough?
- All God asks is Abram tell how he became blessed. What is his testimony? What would be your testimony?

Prayer: Faith giving God, help us remember we are valuable and important, even when the world tells us we are not. Enable to act out of security in your love, not the insecurity of our own vulnerability. Amen.

THURSDAY 6.23.22

First Chapter

Scripture: Genesis 12:7

Abram's story is the beginning of a series of stories about folks hearing similar calls from God to go into the world. In the immediate context of Genesis, Joseph — Abraham and Sarah's great-grandson — will save Egypt and the nations surrounding it from famine (Genesis 45:5). Later, Israel is called into covenant at Sinai to be among all the nations of the world a "priestly kingdom and a holy nation" As a priestly kingdom, they are to be witnesses to God in the world. Nations will come to their light (Isaiah 60:3) and will worship on God's holy mountain (Isaiah 2:2-4). And for Christians, of course, the blessing that is promised through Abraham and Sarah is fulfilled most fully in Jesus. — *from Kathryn M. Schifferdecker's commentary on Genesis 12:1-9*

- What is the beginning of your story?
- Where could you go if you saw yourself as one part of a larger story?

Prayer: Redeeming Sustainer, visit your people and pour out your strength and courage upon us, that we may hurry to make you welcome not only in our concern for others, but by serving them generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

FRIDAY 6.24.22

Pinky Swear

Scripture: Genesis 12:8-9

God's promises don't just bind the receiver. God is bound by the agreement too! There are two parts to the covenant agreement. When Moses argues with God, he does it by reminding God of the promise made to Abram when Abram decided to go. It's a two-way street. We hold up our end, God holds up the other end.

- God promises good things to people over and over again. What does it say about who God is?
- God's promises limit God's actions, too. Why do you think God is willing to limit options for himself?

Prayer: Lord, sometimes we think we cannot do what is needed on our own. We studied for a test, but fear we don't know all the answers. We did not study and know we don't know the answers. We have been assigned a task we fear we cannot do. We are tempted to cheat or plagiarize. When we are scared, help us not to be tempted by the whispers of sin. Amen. - Prayer by Carolyn Brown

SATURDAY 6.25.22

Neighborhood

Scripture: Exodus 20:12-16

Modern people also regard freedom as unimpeded access to any choice, as unlimited choice, as always keeping one's options open. This is not the Biblical understanding of freedom. Instead, the Bible reminds us freedom actually flourishes in relationships where boundaries are respected and expectations are clearly defined and met. When we see our neighbors as someone to whom we choose to show respect, it allows both people to grow into who God calls them to be. God loves our neighbor, God knows we sin, and so God sets up some boundaries to help us remember how act from the freedom of God and not the bindings of sin.

- How can rules be good news?
- What responsibilities do you believe we owe to our neighbors, family, and friends?

Prayer: God of covenant, you promised Abraham land, descendants, and blessing so that he might be a blessing for all. Show us how to honor the covenant, so that we might be a blessing to others. We pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.