

HOW TO BE BLESSED

SERIES ON THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM

FIGHT FOR WHAT'S YOURS, GIVE GOD WHAT'S HIS (Week 3)

OPENING: Did you ever have to fight for anything? What is it and why?

PRINCIPLE: *FIGHT FOR WHAT'S YOURS, GIVE GOD WHAT'S HIS.*

READ: GENESIS 14:5-24

DIG DEEPER:

In this part of Abram's story, he finds himself in a literal battle—a battle to claim back a family member and to stake his claim on what God promised to be his inheritance. An important lesson we find in this passage is: Sometimes, we need to fight in order to stake our claim. If we know for a fact that the promise is in jeopardy, it is important that we don't let go. The third principle is two-fold:

FIGHT FOR WHAT'S YOURS

The first half of this third principle encourages us to remember what God has given us and fight for it. It wasn't really Abram's battle. As far as we know, he was living in relative peace. But things changed when he learned that his nephew Lot had been taken captive when Sodom (where he was living) was overrun by the kings from the east. Now Abraham faces a moral crisis. Suddenly, it became his battle. Even though in Genesis 13:10-13, Lot chose to separate himself from Abram, Lot is still family, and Abram knew that his family is part of God's promise/blessing.

- The enemy is like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). Like a lion, the enemy usually preys on the weakest member of our family. That is why, according to that verse by St. Peter, we must always be alert/sober. We must not let our thinking and our spiritual eyes be clouded, nor should we be distracted. Mosaic is a family, our role is to watch over each other, especially those who are young in the faith and help strengthen one another. What are you doing as an individual to watch over the weak and help strengthen them? Have you embrace the role being a disciple-maker, the calling that God wants all of His followers to pursue? Will you let people who love God watch over you and allow them to have a voice in your life?
- Be sure you do not become the weakest link. When Lot chose to live apart from his uncle, he thought he was doing himself a favor, when in fact he was taking himself from the will of God. That move made him to be the weak link in the chain. What do you do if you think you are indeed the weakest link? Consider the following questions: Do I read my Bible daily? Do I have a regular time of prayer? Am I serving? Do I regularly participate in worship (not just attend)? Do I have a genuine concern for others? Do I share my faith and bring others to Jesus regularly? Do I give generously? Do I have contagious joy? Am I the bearer of positivity? When your answer to those questions is negative, then you may be on the weak side?
- Make this declaration over yourself:
 - ...Even if I am misunderstood – I will fight for my blessing!
 - ...Even if I have to delay gratification – I will fight for my blessing!
 - ...Even when staying married is tough – I will fight for my blessing!
 - ...Even when honoring God in my relationships seems impossible – I will fight for my blessing!
 - ...Whether I have much or I have little – I will fight for my blessing!
 - ...Even when I am discouraged & all hell breaks loose – I will fight for my blessing!

GIVE GOD WHAT'S HIS

The second half of the third principle gives us the opportunity to bring back to God what truly belongs to Him. After the battle, Abram gained a lot of riches. Then he met with a man named, Melchizedek. Melchizedek is one of the two persons in the Bible who holds three unique roles: prophet, priest and king. The other person who holds that title is Jesus (. In that meeting, Melchizedek pronounced a blessing-prophecy over Abram in verses 19-20. We know little about Melchizedek. But many Bible scholars consider Melchizedek as an Old Testament appearance of Jesus (read Hebrews 7:1-4). The theological term for the appearances of Jesus in the Old Testament is *Christophany* (*face of Christ*) or *Theophany* (*face of God*). Abram recognized Melchizedek's authority and brought his tithe as an offering. This is where we get the idea of bringing our tithe back to God. The lesson is: when God provides for us and blesses us, it is important to give back to God what belongs to Him.

- Tithing is an ancient principle and not a new teaching. All across the scriptures, we find many examples of people bringing their tithe. The promise of God when we tithe is can be found in the book of Malachi 3:7-12. Read the verses and list down the promises that God gives when we tithe:

- Malachi 3:10 is the only verse in the Bible in which God challenges us to "test" Him.
- Will you take God's challenge to test him and see if He's faithful to fulfill His promises?
- Remember that it is very important to own the principles we're learning and put them to practice. If we truly want to be blessed, apply the principles God gives us in the His Word. What principles have we learned so far?

ANNOUNCEMENT: SUMMER BAPTISM BASH – AUGUST 7 (Right after Sunday worship. BBQ Lunch party)
If you have received Jesus as Lord and Savior and you want to take your next step of faith, SIGN UP FOR BAPTISM!