

HOW TO BE BLESSED

SERIES ON THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM

STAY THE COURSE, NO SHORTCUTS (Week 4)

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

READ: GENESIS 15-16

DIG DEEPER:

When it comes to being blessed, God gives us a track to walk on; a system to live by; a direction to pursue and a promise to claim. When it comes to being blessed, there are no shortcuts.

The Conversation and the Covenant (Genesis 15)

1. What did God say to Abram and what do you remember from yesterday's sermon about this amazing promise of God in verse 1?

What does the *Presence* of God in our life give us? _____

When does the *Protection* of God come around us? _____

What is the *Portion* promised to us? _____

What happens when we take ourselves from the center of God's will for us? _____

What is the real *blessing* believers received according to yesterday's sermon? Why is it so? (Psalm 16:5)

2. What was Abram's response to the Word of the Lord in verses 2-3? Why do you think did he respond that way? What are some of the most common ways we respond to the Word of the Lord?

3. In verse 4, the Word came to Abram again, with another assurance, God repeats His promise.

What do you remember from yesterday's message about the content of God's promise to Abram?

How did Abram respond to the second Word that came to him?

A. Believe – Do you remember the Hebrew word for believer? What is it?

To believe God is to say "Amen" to his promises. That means, you place your entire self on the truth of what God has said or done. Believing God means receiving His Word and relying on it. How should we respond to the Word when it is spoken to us? What are your biggest issues in receiving the Word when God speaks through a sermon, Bible study or a mentor?

God gives directives, not suggestion. That's why we always go back to the first principle on how to be blessed—trust and obey. How can we grow in receiving God's Word? Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

B. Credited—This is a banking term that means to "credit to one's account." God credited Abraham's "account" with righteousness (right standing with God) because of his faith. Read Romans 5:1-5.

C. Righteousness—The only way for us to have a right standing with God is by believing His Word (Hebrews 11:1-2). Abraham believed all that God had said and in response God credited his account with perfect righteousness.

4. In verses 7 to 21, God makes a covenant to Abram. What do you remember from the sermon yesterday about this covenant that God made? What does it tell us about the character of God? How can this part of the story help you grow in your trust in God?

The Shortcut.

In chapter 16, we find Abram taking a shortcut to fulfill God's promises.

- Sarai presumed God's will by using the word "perhaps" and led to take a shortcut in trying to get God's promises fulfilled.

What can we learn from this experience of Sarai and Abram?

- Why is it important to not presume, guess or assume the will of God?

How do we know the will of God? (Romans 12:1-2).

- Pastor said, "There are no 'perhaps' in God's Will." Read 2 Corinthians 1:20. When the specific will of God for us seems yet unclear, we must learn

- Stay the course and walk on His way, because it is in His way that we learn more about His will. The best place to learn God's will is by walking in

- the way (Read Psalm 23:1-3). When we are not walking in His way, our tendency is to presume.

What areas are you struggling with at moment regarding the will of God for your life?

How can our story help you grow in knowing the will of God? Based on the story of Abram, what could be some of the reasons why we end up assuming God's will for us even though we have received a strong promise from God?

In verses 3-10, we find the "victim" of Abram and Sarai's decision, a woman named Hagar.

What can we learn from her story? And what does that tell us about how good God is? (Roman 8:28)."

From a place of "perhaps," God gave Hagar an assurance when she was on the road to "Shur." God does not want us to live in confusion or assumption. He wants us to live in the land of assurance and trust. He commanded Hagar to return and take no shortcuts with an assurance that her son will be blessed. God wanted Hagar's son to live within the "will of God" in the presence of his father, Abram.

The Real Questions we must ask ourselves.

Are you on the right course or are you on the wrong track? Pastor said we can wait on the wrong track all we want but nothing's ever going to happen there. Are you sure you're in the center of God's will for you? Or are you just assuming that you are?

ANNOUNCEMENT: DreamTeam Convergence – AUGUST 14 & 28 (Right after Sunday worship.)

This gathering is for all who serve as a volunteer in any ministry at Mosaic.